

Tents, Igloos, Caves Available; Houses Join Museum Relics

By MARILYNN JACOBSON

"What about housing?" they yell—the students who are living three in a room meant for two, the ordnance research workers, the townspeople and the trailer campers. "Well, what about housing?" we asked ourselves. Here's what.

The man behind the desk at the ordnance research laboratory wasn't very thorough that day. He asked only a few dozen questions and stared only a few minutes. Finally, when permission was granted, the switchboard operator called the secretary of the man who knew all about housing the 152 odd workers who are employed at the laboratory.

As chairman of the housing committee, Laymon Miller, assistant professor of engineering research at the laboratory, explained that about 100 staff members have come to State College from at least 20 states. Literally they hail from Maine to California, he said, and about 25 of them have come without their families.

Miller Explains Shortage
"When the situation was getting desperate," explained Professor Miller, "we had to do something. We organized the housing committee and from then on, we've had some unusual things happen."

"When we left Cambridge," he said, "we were asked if we wanted a two-car garage, a large living room, and two bathrooms. When we arrived in State College, not only was the first empty apartment found in Phillipsburg, but the first empty room had a personal bath—in the back yard."

Professor Miller went on to say that some of the staff members want only temporary residences since they intend to build their own homes here in the spring. But others, he said, want to rent rooms permanently.

"The ordnance research lab is a permanent fixture on the College campus," he explained. "Just because we do Naval research does not mean that the program will be disbanded as soon as the duration is over."

Housing Committee Helps
The immediate purpose of the housing committee was to take care of the men who had come here without their families, he said. Right from the start, it was necessary to coordinate all efforts at finding rooms. This saved time and trouble for both the men who were looking for rooms and the people who didn't have them.

"One night," Professor Miller said, smiling, "we were called out of bed with the startling news that several miles out of town was an old mansion which was going to be remodeled. We broke all speed records. We almost broke our necks before we found out where the house was. Old mansion! When we arrived at the sight, we found an ancient dilapidated ghost house that probably housed soldiers before this—in the Civil War.

"Speaking of wild goose chases," he continued, "we used to drive up and down all the country roads near town. If we saw a half-empty sack of cement or a farmer sawing wood, we decided he was remodeling and maybe he'd have room for a couple of people. Usually we were wrong, but once in a while our efforts were rewarded."

With Professor Miller's information on hand, the next step was to find out how many people were planning to build. Borough engineer Charles Eder volunteered these figures:

Houses Offered
From March to November, 1945, permits for 20 one-family housing of about six rooms each were granted. In addition to this 27-two-family houses were set down on the records, and one apartment house containing fifteen apartments of three and four rooms each.

This was solid information, concrete facts. But after that it wasn't so easy.

"Labor is a big problem," volunteered Harry Norris, town contractor. "Materials are hard to get and probably will continue being scarce for another year or year and a half. We're trying to

maintain what we have—there's nothing much we can possibly do about the housing shortage right now."

Contractor Vernon J. Dietz added, "We intend to relieve the housing shortage with about 15 or 20 low-cost homes by early spring. These homes should be ready for occupancy by late spring or early summer. And," he said, "by spring we are anticipating some relief in labor. Right now we train raw recruits because efficient labor is so scarce. We also anticipate relief in materials very shortly."

Representing M. Shapiro and Sone, Miss Edna Mansfield volunteered the news that the construction company was working on 40 double-unit homes, which would house 80 families. These residences, called College Park Homes, are duplex houses with six rooms to a unit—living room, dining room, kitchen, and three bedrooms.

Construction Started
"The construction was started early in October," she said, "in order to supply homes as soon as possible. But bricks are still a problem. We hope to have most of them ready by May 1, but this date is tentative."

When asked if any of these buildings, still in the making, were rented yet, Miss Mansfield said that 22 units have already been rented and 44 sold, leaving only 14 units not accounted for.

"Apparently South Atherton and Third Avenue is a pretty good location for these people," didn't have an outdoor telephone booth!

Soldiers Prove Good Teachers

GI's attending the American University at Shrivensham were not only good students, they were good teachers.

So reports R. U. Blasingame, head of the department of agricultural engineering at the College, who only recently returned to this country after teaching agricultural engineering at Shrivensham for nearly five months. "I learned more from the students in my classes than they learned from me," Blasingame asserts.

Students came from every state in the country. Blasingame says he learned from them many ways in which farm machinery is used in different sections of the United States.

"The potato grower of Idaho, the farmer who raises sugar cane in Louisiana, or the Arkansan who grows rice on irrigated land—all use farm machinery, but use it differently," Blasingame learned.

The students from different localities would discuss farming in their home states and explain alterations and improvements which they had devised for farm machinery for their own specific needs.

Through the generosity of American industry and British importers of American equipment, Blasingame was able to obtain necessary farm machinery parts, training films, charts, publications and even lecturers for his courses.

Blasingame sailed from this country last July 5 and was on hand for the opening of the first term at Shrivensham on August 1. About 3600 soldiers, all applicants to attend the University, composed the student body for the first term. Their average age was 24.

Approximately 4000 soldiers, with an average age of 22, were enrolled for the second and final term which began on October 8 and closed on December 5.

Shrivensham University was situated seven miles east of Swindon, Wilts, on what formerly was one of the best British Army posts. It had been used by American troops until after "D-Day" and in less than six months after V-E Day was converted into an American university, complete with laboratories, "dormitories," a faculty of 295 officers, enlisted men, and civilians, an operating cadre of 1500 soldiers, and a student body of officers and enlisted men.

Poor's Old Main Fresco

(Continued from page five)

importance. The mass of Old Main behind them helps their significance to be felt. The flanking groups round out a central unit which is framed and given scale by the columns beside the stair.

Since its execution the mural has received widespread acclaim. However, it is still incomplete, being only one piece of the fresco intended to extend completely around the balcony. Lately, students and faculty members have realized the great advisability of finishing this work of art now. All-College Cabinet allocated approximately \$3,500 toward this purpose last semester, and the class of February '46 followed with a gift of some \$2,200. In all, about \$10,000 will be needed to complete the fresco.

With this money, Mr. Poor could proceed with his original intention which he stated when he submitted plans for the present section:

"The whole mural has been kept in a very human, rather classic, mode rather than definite illustration of historic or present incidents. My suggestion is, that with this as the central main

mural decoration, it should be extended around the balcony to make a complete whole, the smaller broken spaces would be devoted to the more specific and present-day activities of the College—to the right those activities in the mechanic arts and to the left those of agriculture and home industry."

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Veteran's Plan To Organize

Organization of a Penn State chapter of the American Veterans Committee is now underway.

Robert Rolontz, field representative from Philadelphia, is aiding the group.

The recently-formed group of World War II veterans, backed by several military leaders, have an ambitious platform.

The committee is striving for adequate financial, medical, vocational and educational assistance for every veteran; a job for every veteran; thorough social and economic security; free speech, press, worship, assembly and ballot; disarmament of Germany and Japan and elimination of the power of their militaristic classes; and active participation of the United States in the United Nations Organization to stop any threat of aggression.

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A California woman tried to crash from the end to the front of a stocking sale line-up. She got some socks—but they weren't nylons.