

Lane County Historian



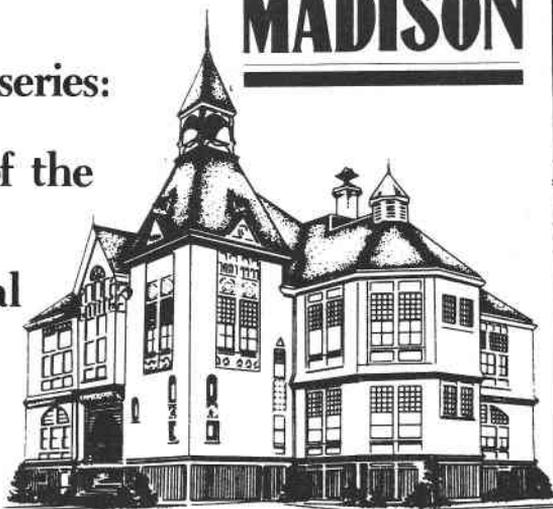
THE WAY IT WAS

FOURTH and **MADISON**

First of a
five-part series:

History of the
Eugene
Vocational
School

by David
Butler



The Lane County Historical Society

Vol. XXIII, No. 1

Winter, 1978

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Dedication to Merle Moore

When Josephine Harpham (Mrs. Everett) decided to do something about the almost defunct Lane County Historical Society, she called a meeting of anyone who was interested. Surprisingly, back in 1954 several people turned out. Enthusiasm was evident and **MERLE MOORE** was elected president.

This was a fortunate selection. Merle was a dedicated and thorough worker; proud of his pioneer heritage and able to share his enthusiasm. At the first meetings of the board of directors, with no money in the treasury, the "Hat was passed" to cover necessary expenses.

Merle inspired the members with his persistence and hard work, slowly rebuilding the tired, old society that had started in the days of Eugene Skinner, Charnel Mulligan, Walker Young, Mahlon Harlow and a score of others of that time in local history.

Merle not only spearheaded the drive for increased membership, but laboriously edited the HISTORIAN; encouraging budding writers to submit pioneer stories and family anecdotes. His major project was the collection of more than 1,000 old and rare pictures. These were reproduced with the help of Dotson's photography store and are in daily use at the Lane County Pioneer Museum. Lane County owes this tireless man a debt of gratitude.

To Merle Moore, for your devoted and untiring work in behalf of this society, we say a grateful **THANK YOU**. Your vast accumulation of friends join in wishing you continued good health and the best for 1978. We appreciate your contribution to the collection and preservation of our local history.



Merle Moore [left] accepting deed to the 1853 County Clerk's Building from the Salvation Army.

Hallie Hills Huntington

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MUSEUM NOTES

Translating the 19th Century Record of Lane County Dairy Farmers

by Lois Barton

“The name of Albert Ruegger is associated with one of the finest and largest stock farms in Lane County - - -

Albert Ruegger’s grandson, Ralph - Ruegger of Gresham, has graciously allowed Lane County Pioneer Museum to copy his grandfather’s family account book detailing income and expenses from 1878 to 1909. Beginning entries in the book are in old-fashioned German script, since German was the native tongue of the Ruegger family. Over the years entries were made in “hybrid” German-English words, and later almost entirely in English.

Born in Switzerland August 10, 1842, Albert Ruegger came to America with his wife, Rosina and two children, Emma and Edward, in 1871. He lived for a time in Nebraska, then in Kansas and Missouri before moving to Portland in 1875. There he rented a farm for three years at the site of the present international airport. When his landlord would not sell him that farm he came to Lane County and bought 1700 acres on Camas Swale in partnership with his nephew, John Ziniker -- land now part of the Christensen Brothers Ranch.

The 1903 “Portrait and Biographical Record” says, “For a residence he (Ruegger) built a large frame dwelling, and added barns, out-houses and general improvements, carrying on dairying, chee-

se-making, general farming and stock raising. His farm became known as one of the best appointed ones in the county, and the stock which found its way to the markets from his farm was representative of the best that could be raised in Oregon.”

We learn from the account book that Ruegger sold hundreds of pounds of cheese per year, often in 100 pound lots, to merchants all over Oregon as well as to neighbors such as Thurston Goodpasture. One entry even mentions a sale to a Cheese Haus in Pennsylvania. For some time he supplied the St. Charles Hotel in Eugene with a weekly shipment of 70 to 80 pounds of butter, quantities of cheese, potatoes, a 40 to 50 pound pig, in addition to other goods in season.

Ruegger brought a good Holstein bull from the East to improve his dairy herd, and the book contains some record of bull service to neighbors’ cows. Other pages include a detailed farm inventory related to the partnership, listing wagons, harness, milk strainers, pitchforks, lanterns, etc., with monetary values. There is a notation that he bought 18 head of cattle from Orville Phelps, the Spencer Butte nurseryman, when Phelps sold out. (Phelps’ story appeared in the Spring, 1977, issue of the HISTORIAN.)

Professor Jimmie Gilbert



He was an austere, demanding, and inspiring teacher who engendered a considerable mythology of Jimmy-Gilbert-horror-stories. A strong administrator, highly regarded by

presidents Campbell and Hall, he might himself have been named president had it not been for the politics of reorganization in the state's system of higher education. Equally interesting and much less well known, is the drama of his rise from limited opportunities.

by Robert D. Clark

James Henry Gilbert was born in 1877, at Erwin, Tennessee, halfway up the Smokey Mountains -- his brother Jake said not three miles from the North Carolina border.

He was the fourth of ten children. In 1885 his father, having read in a Tennessee paper that land was available for homesteading in the Pacific Northwest, moved the family by train to Walla Walla, found no land, drifted across the border to Pendleton where he bought a half section from two young men who had proved up their homesteads.

The Gilberts struggled for a year against isolation, loneliness, sickness, the death of one of the children, then sold out, packed their belongings in a covered wagon and trekked across the Cascades to Salem. They remained two or three, perhaps four years, then by train moved to Watsonville, California. Their nomadic wanderings not yet over, they returned to Tennessee in 1894, found it not to their liking and once more, (and finally), a year later made the transcontinental journey back to Watsonville.

Young Jim Gilbert was to compensate for those early migrations by the 70 years he lived in Eugene.

The children went to school as they could, at Waldo Hills in Salem and again in Watsonville. Jim, persevering against interruption and delay, completed high school in 1898 at the age of 21. Never able to shake off the spell that Oregon had cast over him in his boyhood, he worked for a year, then caught the train for Eugene to enter the University.

The catalogue told him that the campus lay southeast of the town, about a mile and a half from the post office, and that the city of Eugene, with 4,000 inhabitants, was "Surrounded by scenery of great natural beauty." The campus contained 27 acres on which were six buildings: Deady, Villard, the men's dormitory (Friendly), Collier Hall (Faculty Club), the gymnasium, and the light and power plant (Architecture). The campus itself, a slight rise above the level of the town and the river, not quite a knoll, barren save for two giant oaks when the University opened in 1876, now was dotted with young firs and spruce and pine, and the six buildings were joined together by board walks. The entire enrollment was 231 students, 190 of whom were

undergraduates in the "academic" departments, ten in the graduate school, and thirty-one in Music.

The men's dormitory accommodated ninety students at \$2.50 each per week for board, room, steam heat, and electric lights. The University charged no tuition, either for resident or non-resident students, and the incidental fee was only \$10 per year. But the dormitory rates were more than Jim Gilbert could afford. So he found a job as custodian at the First National Bank for \$15 a month and a bed to sleep on. (In his retirement he once startled a boy who was washing windows in the modern building of that same bank, by tapping him on the shoulder and saying, "Young man, sixty years ago I had your job.")

It wasn't unusual work for students. Homer Angell, future congressman, was at the same time janitor at Deady Hall; Allen Eaton, future art historian, swept floors and lighted fires and coal oil lamps at the Presbyterian church; Marion McClain, Gilbert's close friend and confidant, was janitor at the competing Savings and Loan Bank, but for only \$13 a month, and no bed.

Jim Gilbert's advantage over his fellows was that, in his second year, he added to his duties as janitor those of a clerk when business was good and his services were needed. Allen Eaton was filled with wonder, for no other student job compared to working in a bank.

An outstanding student, Jim Gilbert earned A's in all of his classes, every semester, with two exceptions: He received a B in his senior year in Economic Problems and B's for most of his classes in speech. Although he enrolled every semester for four years, he could never quite master the "elementary" or "advanced" "vocalization and gesticulation" that passed

for public speaking. In rhetoric, however, under the tutelage of Luella Clay Carson, he was awarded A's with the notations, "excellent" and "above criticism." Many years later, after he had retired and when he was presiding over the Browsing Room lectures with such mastery of the succinct and aphoristic statement, I asked him one night if he had studied Genung's "Practical Rhetoric" when he was young. He smiled faintly. He had. That was the textbook Miss Carson had used.

He excelled in the classics, "The best student in the class," Straub said of him. He enrolled in Latin or Greek, or both, every year until he was a senior. He dipped into literature to study Wordsworth and Browning with the young and popular professor, Herbert Crombie Howe, and he took one course in mathematics, "spherical trigonometry," in his freshman year. His major study was economics, with politics and sociology, taught chiefly by Frederick G. Young, a learned teacher and a force within the University for many years.

However busy he was with work and studies, he had a good time in college. He went fishing when he could, hiking into the hills and whipping the streams for trout; he joined his friends in tally-ho rides to Seavy's Ferry south of Springfield; went on excursions to gather blackberries and wild strawberries and pick up fire wood; he hiked with them to the top of Spencer's Butte to watch the sunset, always with a stop at the white farmhouse for a glass of buttermilk.

He was not much involved in student activities. He didn't belong to either of the men's literary societies, and he didn't try-out for the athletic teams -- he thought football a waste of time (an opinion he was to change in

his days as professor). But he did work out regularly in the gym and one high school student, Merle Chessman, watching him juggle 50-pound dumb bells, and admiring his bulging muscles, thought him "the strong man of the University."

The one organization to which he did belong was the Classics club, "Societas Quirinalis": He was an officer, fourth in rank "Quaestor," that is, treasurer. He was one of five associate editors of the second year-book, the "Webfoot," edited by Allen Eaton and published 1902. The junior year photograph of Jim Gilbert, by the way, shows him a serious, square-faced, rather handsome young man, his hair parted in the middle, his chin cleft, his eyes deep set. And opposite the photo, the lines from Chaucer's Clerk, which characterized him then, and all of his life: "Of study took he most care and heed;/Not a word spake he more than was nede."

His most responsible student position, which he held in his senior year, was editing the campus paper, The Oregon Weekly, predecessor to The Daily Emerald. He took his duties quite seriously if one can ascribe to him both the oversight of the four-page paper and the writing of somber editorials on oratory and debate, athletics, and the literary societies, all lamentations for jobs ill-done and exhortations to do better, both for the self-improvement of the students and the good of the University.

Once, in the spirit of his successors to the editorial chair of the Daily Emerald, he essayed a criticism of an assembly speaker, a congressman, whose rhetoric was "apt in diction, forceful in arrangement, and rich in figure and allusion," but whose "trite maxims" on hard work were scarcely

applicable save to the few successful men whom he cited.

Gilbert, working at the bank and continuing his studies at the University, weighed the two careers, banker or university professor. He engaged in long and "solemn" discussions with his closest friends: Should he remain at the bank and wait for his promotion "over some one's dead body," or go to Columbia University in New York City for his Ph.D.? He chose Columbia.

For at least a part of his years at Columbia he won the Garth Fellowship in Political Economy with a handsome annual stipend of \$650.

He completed his thesis, on "Trade and Currency in Early Oregon," mid-way through his third year, the last of his classes in June, and was awarded the Ph.D. in 1907. But he had no job. With some support from the Carnegie Bureau of Economic Research and a part-time job as an instructor at the University of Oregon, he spent the year teaching, studying, and writing a report on the "History of Banking in Oregon."

Meanwhile, the enrollment at the University having doubled since the time when he was a student, the department of Economics persuaded President Campbell that it was entitled to a second man and named Gilbert an assistant professor effective in the fall of 1908.

He had come back to the campus well instructed generally in economics and politics and the best informed scholar in the state or nation on the history and status of Oregon's financial institutions. He was glad to be back. He liked to tell a story of the contrasting cities. In New York he lived on 116th Street, next to the "L." At first he could not sleep because of the noise but in time he became accustomed to it. Back in Eugene, he

found the silence of the night oppressive. He thought of hiring a noisemaker, but his problem was solved when the Kappa Sigs moved in next door!

Jimmy Gilbert 'horror stories'

He was inclined, one male student remembered, to favor the women in his classes. Certainly he asked them more questions. The wife of that same student, who was also in the dean's classes, did not regard the questioning as a favor! He "called on every woman every day the class met." It was not, she said, that he was a male chauvinist in the current sense of the term. Women had to persuade him that their intent was serious and by his questions "he saw to it that their motivation never flagged."

One day he bluntly asked a student who called at his office: "Well, young lady, what do you want?" When she replied that she wanted permission to enroll in his course he said, "I don't like women in my classes. Most of them are just here to catch a husband." But he admitted her, she did well, and took all of his classes.

With a little of the vaudeville performer in him, he played straight man to the students' unintentionally comic answers. The conventions of classroom humor in his day permitted him to belittle without seeming to degrade. So he could reply to a student whose answers were rarely correct: "Once again, Mr. K....., two eminent economists must disagree. You are wrong."

An ill-prepared student exhausted his time with uninformed answers long before he had completed his examination. To make amends or plead for mercy, he concluded his paper with the note: "No time to write more." The professor commented, on the margin: "Thank God!"

He used humor to instruct, if not to illustrate the point, then to command attention. Serving much the same purpose was his creation of fictional roles of authority for his students. He once asked a girl "what nation has the fairest system of taxation?" She guessed three or four countries, Dr. Gilbert shaking his head at each response, and then in desperation said, "it must be heaven." Thereafter, he directed to her what he called the "celestial" questions.

His eccentricities were widely known, and celebrated. He was stubborn. Wary colleagues and subordinates learned never to elicit his opinion on an unsettled question. Quick to make a judgment, he could not be budged from a position he had taken.

He once decimated a young faculty wife when she and her husband first had the Gilberts for dinner. A superb cook, a hostess with a touch of elegance at her table, she served shrimp cocktail for the first course. Jim wouldn't touch it. Fruit salad. He would have none of it. And in that day of reserved decorum, not a word of explanation. For her, the dinner was a disaster. The college boy who waited tables in the faculty dining room and who

(continued on page 30)

FOURTH and MADISON



The first in a five-part serialization of David Butler's history of the Eugene Vocational School.

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Acknowledgments:

It is customary in this section of a manuscript to thank everyone who was helpful and who had the patience and good humor to let the author have his way most of the time. In a book that is based solely on research, it is particularly important that the reader realize who really put it together—most are listed below. Many others gave encouragement, prodding the author along when he

became lazy, and they are too numerous to mention. Special thanks go to Bill Cox. Without his help many of the people interviewed would never have been found, and without his interest the book might never have got off the ground. And another special thank you to Pat Milligan (Milligan Stew) Carson, of Springfield, who was the first of dozens of former students to answer our plea in the newspaper for help.

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University of Oregon Library

Foreword

In four years the Great Depression would be over, buried under a hundred thousand tons of bombs and the gutted remains of the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, but in the gloom of a wet and cloud-grey December of 1937 the Depression still had Eugene on its knees.

Overseas things were not much better. United States and Japanese forces were already snarling at each other on the high seas and on mainland China, and in Europe the Second World War had started. For even the most optimistic, January 1938 was shaping up as a repeat of January 1937. It would not be a happy new year.

The new year would be even worse for the 2,500 unemployed young people who lived in the city. Unlike their country cousins who could always find something to do on the farm, the city kids had been all but demoralized by a childhood of depression.

Adults 23 and 24 years old were still called boys and girls by their parents because of a simple fact of life: they were out of work, had always been out of work, and weren't likely to find work. The Work Ethic still hung low over Eugene, depression or not.

They lolled around Seymour's at Tenth and Willamette or up at the bowling alley across the street. When they could find them they did odd jobs—splitting wood, running errands and the like. A few joined some of the federal programs and ended up building roads in the Cascades, dams on the Columbia and football stadiums in Roseburg.

Public education, strapped with problems of its own (like how to pay its bills), provided little help. Forced by the double whammy of circumstance and tradition, public education was reluctant, or unable, or both, to go beyond the Three R's into specialized training.

Vocational education, or manual training as it was called in those days, was kept at a minimum and in some places ignored all together. Meanwhile, steady jobs required training.

No one knew that better than the unemployed youth of Eugene. What they needed was jobs, and what they needed to get the jobs was the training. And yet the training was not at hand.

No wonder Eugene's young people felt impotent. They were children of an impotent age.

Of course some efforts had been made by the federal government, all on a grand scale with typical

Rooseveltian flair. The New Deal had spawned dozens of alphabet programs like the CCC, the WPA and the NYA. It may have been government by bailing wire and chewing gum, but in many ways it worked.

And here and there throughout the country were private and industry-supported "trade schools". But in most cases it was as difficult for a Eugene student to get into the Samuel Gompers Vocational School in San Francisco as it was for him to get into Harvard.

So as 1937 wound down, Eugene's young people continued to sit on their hands in front of the family radio and, in a delightful bit of American logic, made a ventriloquist act they could not even see the most popular radio program of the era.

At least Edgar Bergan and Charlie McCarthy were working.

Working also was the state's young director of vocational education. In his office in Salem, 60 miles to the north, O.D. Adams huddled with Eugene school superintendent J.F. Cramer to iron out the final details of a unique project that would turn education around in the southern end of the Willamette Valley.

The leg work for the project had started in the fall of 1937 when seven state vocational education officials quietly circulated a lengthy questionnaire among the city's employers, service and fraternal organizations and trade unions. The questionnaire asked many questions but essentially it only asked one: what kind of training is needed to make the unskilled and unemployed youth of Eugene skilled and employed?

In a sense, the two men—along with a handful of other civic leaders in Eugene—were inventing the wheel. The spokes of that wheel eventually reached out across Oregon, the northwest, and finally, the world.

It was a question that had been asked many times before in many towns across the country. But often in anguish and frustration and seldom with a motive. Nowhere had it been answered.

In Eugene, it was answered. By late December the street-pounding, door-knocking and phone-calling had been completed and on the fourth day of 1938 the Eugene Register-Guard announced on one of its inside pages that there was a strong possibility that a vocational school would open in the city within 30 days and that it would be a cooperative venture between school district #4 and the state department for vocational education.

Two days later on January 6, the Register Guard said, "such a school can grow into the community's

program of development, supplying those elements of skill and originality now lacking in many trades.”

And so it went. On February 1, 1938, in a broken down old grade school at Fourth Avenue and Madison Street in Eugene, the Eugene Vocational School opened for business. It was to stay in business for 27 years.

Author's Note

In 1973, as it was approaching the end of its first decade, Lane Community College looked backward to its roots. In many respects, Lane's roots are in the old Eugene Technical-Vocational School, a stepchild of the Eugene public school system that lasted 27 years, from 1938 to 1965. Farsighted persons at the community college decided that, in order for their foresight to be accurate and useful, a little hindsight might be in order. That's the reason for this book.

Operating for most of its existence out of a ramshackled old school building and student-built shops at Fourth Avenue and Madison Street in Eugene, ETVS was the first municipally-operated vocational school in the country.

It was also a place where marvelous things happened: The resurrection of a decayed, abandoned old school building into a vital, living institution; the time when Fred O'Sullivan looked up from his work building one of the school shops, spotted his girlfriend in the window, and got so excited he hit himself in the mouth with his hammer; Lillian Van Loan's Model A car, Bouncer, the only "staff car" the Eugene Vocational School had; the days during the war when ETVS—then simply EVS—operated around the clock and students and teachers alike went through class sessions standing at their desks so they wouldn't fall asleep; the day Eleanor Roosevelt stopped by for a visit; the day-in, day-out exhibition of Art Clough's genius; and most of all, the conversion of a farsighted man's dream into something very real, something that worked.

What follows is the result of two years of research and writing. It is a close look at the vocational school, the curious times in which it began, the heady success of the early years, its graceful middle age, and its quiet demise. It could only have been written with the support of the Lane Community College administration, former ETVS teachers and students, and dozens of cooperative persons throughout the state who simply were interested.

Chapter 1

It boomed before it busted. The heady years of the Twenties had made millions of people rich and had created what eventually became the backbone of America—its middle class. There was money, there was progress, there were jobs, and there were even a few places where a thirsty man could buy a drink.

Technology was going crazy. Commercial radio was barely off the ground when radio with pictures was developed in a television lab in New York City. Airplanes were no longer curiosities; they were a major industry. Every week new machines, new appliances, new conveniences, and new gadgets were invented and in another week were sucked into the rampaging economy. America had changed to long pants.

In Oregon, technology boosted, if not revived from the dead, an entire industry. Logging. It is no secret that the virgin forests of Oregon had been spared the rape of Eastern lumber companies through a simple fact of life: They couldn't get here from there and if they did, they couldn't get back out again unless they carried the logs on their backs. Access to and from the state was controlled by the railroads which, for many years, were interested in exporting only one major wood product—railroad ties.

Art Clough, now 83, remembers what it was like. "By the time I got to Eugene, logging had been going on around here for years and years, but mostly by a lot of small family outfits.

"They cut the easy trees on the contour of the land, let the other ones go and then turned around and reseeded right away. In those days, all the hills around here looked like virgin timber.

"They did it that way because there wasn't any other way to do it. But in Washington (Clough and his family moved to a village near Bellingham in 1903), it was a different story. Big companies from the East moved in because it was cheaper—all the deep water ports—and started cutting down all the trees.

"I remember standing on a hill looking down into the harbor at Bellingham and watching clipper ships load

the lumber, mostly flooring for Australia, and then riding out into the country with my family and not seeing any trees. They'd cut them all down."

So, Oregon was ripe for technology. Rail lines were built into the woods. Freight rates became competitive. Fine deep water harbors at Coos Bay and Portland were developed. Logging and sawmill equipment became more sophisticated and thousands of men flocked to the woods and to the mills to feed the nation's lust for homes for its middle class.

At the bottom of the Willamette Valley, Eugene was showing signs of becoming a bustling little city. In many ways, it had all the trappings: breweries, street cars, large department stores, a public market, automobiles, a couple of radio stations, and several schools. In 1924 two new junior high schools were built, Roosevelt at 18th Ave. and Agate St. and Wilson at 12th Ave. and Madison.

And one of the city's most successful saloons, Luckey's Club Cigar Store, continued doing land office business.

The New York Stock Exchange should have been so lucky. As the country rolled into 1929, economists began fretting over danger clouds they saw on the horizon. Unchecked speculation was hurting the economy and many economists were predicting disaster if it wasn't stopped. Meanwhile, millions of Americans—many of them who didn't know a bear from a bull—continued to pump billions of dollars into the market. Some spent their life savings; others borrowed and spent money they didn't have.

Then, in October 1929, it all went down the drain. In the most cataclysmic day in the Market's history—a day called Black Tuesday—the euphoria and good times of the Twenties became a heap of scrap paper on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. The party was over.

Almost. Bea Chapman of Eugene, whose husband worked for Southern Pacific most of his life, said it took awhile for the hard times to reach Oregon but when they did, they were devastating.

"Right away it didn't matter much," she said, "because it hit the East first. They were the worst off. It took most of a year before we felt it here...then there wasn't any work, no jobs.

"All the men was laid off and I can remember how they all used to hunt and fish to feed their families. There wasn't anything else for them to do."

The cities were the hardest hit. Tent-city "Hoover-villes" sprung up in most of the nation's bigger towns. The Hobo became a familiar figure wherever the trains rolled, and in Eugene, the economy ground nearly to a halt. Jobs and salaries were cut. In 1929 the school superintendent was paid \$5,000 a year. Seven years later the salary had dropped to \$4,500.

The educational system, like everything else, had been caught with its pants down. It had not kept up with the technological boom anyway, preferring to stick with the traditional Three R's and maintaining an almost across-the-board distaste for manual training.

Life never had been easy for proponents of manual training. Traditional educators recoiled in horror at the mere prospect of it.

"You spend money on manual training and you take money away from education" they used to say.

That back-of-the-bus attitude reached from the lowest to the highest levels of public instruction, leading to separate governing boards and directors and separate budgets. In the Twenties, when grass-roots public vocational training could have been a very hot item, training workers to cope with the giant advances being made in technology, it was all but flatly ignored. The entire manual training budget for School District #4 in 1929 topped out at \$2,000, but less than half that amount was spent. A year later it was cut in half.

Vocational education, however, did have its supporters. To the north, Washington had somehow hired a state school superintendent who felt career training was as important as the Three R's and proved it by building shops in most of the state's high schools and even a few junior highs. In no time, Washington was 20 years ahead of the rest of the nation in vocational education and likely would have stayed there except for a major revolt by the state's teachers. The superintendent was subsequently sacked and the shops were torn down as fast as they had been put up and Washington ended its brief love affair with vocational education.

And only a few hours away in Salem, there was a vocational education zealot named O.D. Adams. Adams (a Bellingham transplant who grew up with Art Clough in a backwoods hamlet in the heart of lumber country) was the young director of the State Board for Vocational Education.

"Our town was so small it only had one school," said Clough. "O.D. and I were about junior high school

age then...in a year or so we were supposed to transfer to the high school in Bellingham.

"Our teacher we had made a deal with the principal in Bellingham to teach junior high subjects that were transferrable. But the first thing he did was build us a shop—something that was practically unheard of in those days."

In fact it was so unheard of that when the principal in Bellingham heard of it he hit the roof and practically wouldn't let them in high school.

"But it didn't matter much anyway. O.D. and I had both decided that manual training—right along with your regular classes—would be the future of education.

"We would sit and talk for hours about it. We both wanted to be teachers and find some rich district somewhere where we could build shops to show people that learning how to work with your hands wasn't disgraceful, that you could do just about anything with machinery.

"I decided that I would set up a junior high school somewhere and turn it over to our teacher." Several years later, he did.

And several years after that he wound up in Depression-riddled Eugene working for his old school chum where both of them helped make a junior high school fantasy come true.

In the meantime, Eugene tightened its belt. Businesses operating on marginal profits soon didn't have even those, and closed down. Mills went on split shifts. Major employers cut back on their experienced help with the effect that an entire labor force—Eugene's young people—never actually grew up. Because they had never held a job, men and women old enough to vote were still called boys and girls. And the frustration *that* caused made the hard times of the Thirties even more difficult.

But difficulties were everywhere. By 1932, the Depression had a firm hold on the entire valley and showed no signs of letting up. Reluctantly, the school board closed two of its schools—Geary and Patterson—to save money and pared its operating budget to the bone. In 1934 manual training only received \$600 to be divided between Eugene High School and Wilson and Roosevelt Junior High Schools.

The Board noted the passing of Geary School, which was to play a major part in the eventual Great Experiment in Eugene, the Eugene Vocational School:



The original Geary School at Fourth and Madison was a victim of the Depression, was abandoned because it was too costly to keep open, then was finally re-opened in 1938 as home for the vocational school. This photo probably was taken about 1900

“The Geary Building...is located at Fourth Avenue and Madison Street and is being retained in condition for immediate reoccupation, if circumstances should make that necessary.

“It is in a high population area and was closed only as an emergency measure to reduce costs during the Depression days. Both Patterson and Geary schools are structurally sound and remarkably well-preserved.”

Both schools were venerable reminders of times past in Eugene. Geary was built in 1899, only 34 years after District #4 was organized, and was followed in 1901 by Patterson.

In 1936—the year of a major measles epidemic in Eugene—Patterson School was demolished by the Sullivan Wrecking Company which was paid \$180 to haul it away.

It was also in 1936 that student enrollment in Eugene’s six elementary schools, two junior highs and two high schools (Eugene High School and the experimental University High School) hit 4,000.

Until 1936, Eugene High School had kept its industrial arts program at the usual—almost negligible—low profile. But during that year, the Board of Education approved a request (after intensive lobbying by

high school officials) for a modest metalworking course to be added to the existing woodworking program at the school.

With a small state grant, the high school bought and installed a metal lathe in a new frame building adjacent to the school and for the first time ever, offered courses in cold metal, general home repairs, shaping, welding, and tool making. As a final class project, students were allowed to work with ornamental iron which was all the rage then in Eugene homes.

It wasn't exactly vocational education at its best, but it was a start.

Vocational education at its best, of course, was an impossible dream. There were few, if any, models to follow. The industry or union-affiliated vocational schools were rich, well-equipped and thorough. They were also a hundred light years away from anything a struggling local school district could afford.

A few Eugeneans lusted after a full vocational program for the city but ended up looking like children lined up outside a candy store, their noses pressed to the window. Men like Mahlon Sweet, Gilbert MacLaren (the school board chairman), Register-Guard publisher William Tugman, and others had become more and more aware that vocational education was vital to the economy.

If it had done nothing else, the Depression had taught many Americans that technology and the jobs it often seems to create does not take care of itself. Like a hungry animal, it needs to be fed.

In dozens of bull sessions during those middle-Depression years, Sweet, MacLaren, and the others tried to figure all the angles. Everywhere they turned there was an obstacle. Mostly it was money. Machinery has always been expensive. Then there was the question of sponsorship. The school district would probably go along with the idea of a fullfledged vocational education program if someone else would foot the bill. Again money. There was even some opposition—mostly in the form of apprehension—from the trade unions. Many of them were concerned that their professions would be glutted by a surplus of workers; others were worried about the quality of instruction. Everywhere they looked, they ran into a dead end.

But in mid-1937, a series of events caused a shift in the educational winds. Unexplainably, manual training expenses for District #4 jumped several hundred dollars, almost 25 percent over the previous year. More than \$500 alone went to Wilson Junior High School. In Salem, O.D.

Adams, a former public relations man, was making some strong political allies and had made several trips to Eugene to see his old school buddy Art Clough.

Then in a special Saturday morning session of the Board of Education, Victor P. Morris moved, seconded by Austin P. Dodds, to hire Dr. J. F. Cramer of The Dalles as the new superintendent of District #4. The vote was unanimous and Dodds moved he be contracted for three years at a salary of \$4,500 a year.

Cramer was an energetic administrator. He was also sympathetic to vocational education and began meeting socially and privately with Sweet, Tugman, MacLaren, and Adams to discuss the possibility of a district-owned but state-funded vocational school for Eugene.

Finally, the frustration of the past two years was ending. The countless discussions were paying off. Adams, with support from the Eugene contingent, bulled ahead with plans to start the school. As summer closed, he continued to beat a well-worn path between Salem and Eugene.

O. D. Adams was a practical man. He knew there would probably be stiff opposition from some parts of the community and he planned to fight it with statistics. He wanted to show beyond a shadow of a doubt that there was not only room, but also a need, for a vocational education school in Eugene.

What he needed, he said, was a survey.

In early fall, 1937, Adams hired the former head of the Grants Pass mining school, Winston Purvine, as his Administrative Assistant for Research and sent him off with six other vocational department supervisors to canvass Eugene.

Purvine is now president of the Oregon Institute of Technology and remembers the survey well.

"There were seven of us...we were all from some field of vocational education.

"Earl Cooley was supervisor of vocational agriculture education; Walter Morse was in trade and industrial training—they were all specialists in some field or trade.

"We started making the rounds in October 1937 after O. D. told us to hit at least 70 percent of the community, and that meant mills, stores, private homes, granges, clubs, labor unions, workers. Just about everybody.

"The survey itself was quite long. Eighteen pages I think. It was divided into two parts with the first part being of a general nature and relatively nonfocused and the second part more specific, dealing with exactly what kind of *things* needed to be accomplished in Eugene."

Purvine denied that the survey was stacked in favor of the vocational school, although sometimes it seemed that way.

"It seems to me that while we didn't come right out and ask whether a vocational school should be established, we did ask most people their opinions on *how* it could be established and specifically, *what* should be taught. On those questions we tried to get a cross-section of responses. Like we wouldn't stop with employers...as soon as we finished with them, we would ask their employees what they thought."

What they thought was exactly what O. D. Adams and the rest of the pro-vocational school people hoped they would. Although the results have since been lost, all indications point to strong support from the community. The school board was even beginning to talk about vocational education projects during their public meetings, approving a plan to host a state school for janitors in November and a WPA proposal to hold a school for house maids later in the month.

Still, however, the Board was keeping mum on the vocational school, preferring to discuss the topic during work sessions. In the meantime, chairman MacLaren worked closely with the state's survey team and presumably kept the Board posted on the team's progress.

In Salem, Adams was using some of his political muscle to twist a few legislative arms. He wanted money. The federal act that had established both the Federal and State Boards of Vocational Education in 1917 had made provisions for some matching government funds for such projects as long as state and local governments kicked in some too.

Adams wanted that money. As much as he could get. He also wanted equipment. As much of that as he could get. From the beginning, it looked like the money would be easier to find than equipment. Eventually, Adams would look to the school's teachers, and students, and finally, to the incredible resources of a nation at war.

But in the early winter of 1937, the status of the vocational school was still fairly "iffy". The survey was going well, but Adams and Cramer were anxious. With the

Christmas season approaching, stores would be staying open longer so Adams sent an order down to Eugene for the survey team to stay on the streets until the last merchant closed his shop.

There was talk between the two—and probably with the Board during private work sessions—that if all the hurdles could be crossed, the new vocational school could open by January. February at the latest.

The survey had already proved that more than 2,500 young people in the Eugene area were jobless, and proponents of the school figured a winter opening might help some of them find work by summer. More realistically, there were also political considerations to a January—or February—opening.

Many people in the community were still skeptical of vocational education in general and a public-supported vocational school in particular.

“We had to show them it could work,” said Purvine. “O. D. and the others felt that four or five months of operation in the winter would prove to the community and the businesses that vocational education was effective.”

Purvine and the others stepped up their work on the survey toward the end of December and by the end of the first week of January, Adams and Cramer felt it was safe to make some sort of public statement about the state’s intentions.

On January 4, 1938, the Eugene Register-Guard published a short article outlining the objectives of the school, its location, and when it would open. It also let Adams have his say..

The ultimate public relations man, Adams went to great lengths to explain that the Eugene Vocational School—as it was to be called—would not displace workers from their present jobs as some craft unions feared and that “it is our aim to supply practical work wherever we find a real demand.” As a clincher for money-conscious Eugeneans, Adams pointed out that the free tuition of the new vocational school would be an attractive alternative to expensive correspondence courses. Two days later the Register-Guard said in an editorial, presumably written by Tugman, that “such a school can grow into the community’s program of development, supplying those elements of skill and originality now lacking in many trades.”

Now that they had more or less “gone public”, the school’s organizers moved quickly.

On January 10, Board members Gilbert MacLaren, Victor P. Morris, Mrs. W. S. Love, Austin E. Dodds and Lloyd A. Payne heard Superintendent Cramer explain the agreement made by the District and the State. It was the first mention of the school made by the Board during a public meeting.

Cramer said, "The state proposes to engage teachers in the various trades and industries, and to expend for salaries during the balance of the present school year approximately \$12,000, providing the district will expend not to exceed \$1,500 for materials and tools necessary for putting the Geary Building in usable condition for immediate occupancy, the carpentry classes to do the work."

The board promptly endorsed the project. Austin Dodds moved "that the building committee be authorized to employ the services of an architect to examine the Geary Building from the standpoint of safety as well as the feasibility of spending any great amount of money for repairs, and if that is needed, to perform the repairs."

The motion passed unanimously.

Earlier that day in an office at 77 E. Broadway, the Eugene Vocational School opened a registration and counseling center for some prospective students—some as young as 14. The next day work began on the Geary Building.

It needed a lot of work. Years of neglect had hurt the old building. Windows were knocked out, shards of glass were scattered on the floors; vandals had splashed paint and obscenities on the walls; layers of silt and dirt were everywhere; generations of pigeon families had left their droppings, sometimes as much as three feet deep; doors were off their hinges. But O. D. Adams saw none of the filth and damage. He only saw what it could become.

With a handful of other supporters and organizers, Adams drove out to Fourth and Madison Streets in the drizzle of a January afternoon to look at his "new" building. The majestic, turreted old Geary School stood on the corner; pigeons fluttered in and out of the broken windows and called to each other from the cupola. The place was a desolate wreck.

Adams and the others brushed through the weeds and walked up to the front door, unlocked it, and went inside. For those who had known Geary in her prime, it was heart-breaking to see what had become of her. It would take a monumental amount of work to recondition the classrooms, to rebuild the plumbing system, to repair the wiring. It was almost too much to ask.

But Adams looked past all of that. "What nice rooms," he said, "what large windows. Look at all the light they let in. This will work fine. Just fine."

Adams had discovered fire in Eugene, and he wasn't about to let a few January rain clouds worry him.

It took two weeks and \$1,200 to recondition Geary. Crews crawled over, through, and under the building like ants. Outside, weeds were cut or pulled. Windows were installed. Most of the pigeons were scared off or exiled to the attic. Geary came back to life.

By the end of January 1939, the Eugene Vocational School was almost ready. About 30 students had indicated a desire to take either the part-time carpentry class or the personality development course—the only two courses that would be offered when school began. Things were shaping up. A February opening was definite.

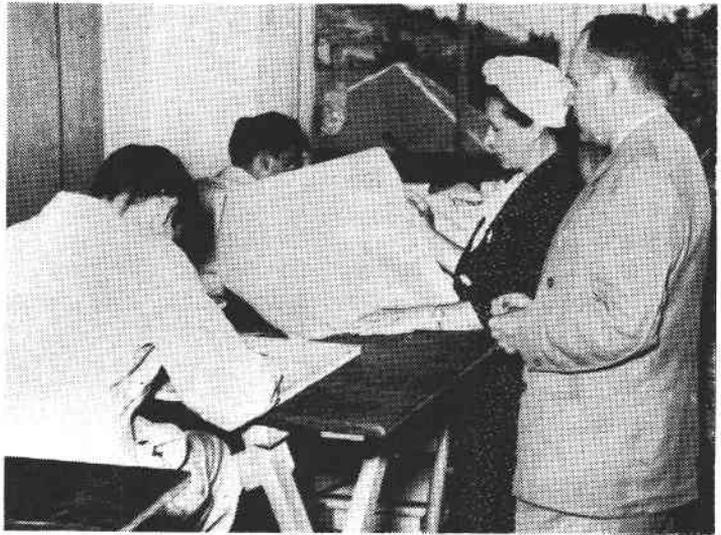
A week or two earlier, Adams had picked his staff. Martin Johnson, a local carpenter, was hired as a part-time instructor for the carpentry class. And Lillian Van Loan, a former Adams assistant in Salem, signed on as the school's only full-time teacher for the continuing education/personality development class.

Lillian Van Loan would eventually lead the school through its most explosive years and establish it as a national model for vocational education.

She got her first taste of making the unemployable employable, oddly enough, in 1926 in the basement of the old Salem High School.

Early staff members and representatives from the State Department for Vocational Education gather in front of the Eugene Vocational School. Front row, left to right: Art Clough, Barney Eastlick, Winston Purvine (now president of Oregon Institute of Technology), Wilda Parrish, Mabel Phelps, Virginia Miller, Ray Cornelius, unknown, Chet Stevens; Back row: Dale Perry, C. B. Smith, Elmer Gifford, unknown, Roger Hougum, Merin Lyons, unknown.





First director of EVS, Lillian Van Loan, escorting school superintendent J.F. Cramer through the drafting class.

The drop-out rate in Salem was high, and the unemployment rate among drop-outs was higher. That is a fact of life that has never changed.

In Mrs. Van Loan, O. D. Adams recognized a knack for reaching the socially and economically handicapped, a talent that he also recognized could be cashed in. She was, indeed, a natural. As a part-time instructor at the Continuing Education School tucked away in the Salem High School basement, Mrs. Van Loan quickly established herself as a "friend" of the students. She worked with them one at a time—possibly the first time any of them had been treated to "individualized instruction" which has since become the darling of educational innovators.

"O. D. had definite ideas about education," she said, "He felt everyone deserved an education, no matter what kind of education that might be."

To O. D. Adams, drop-outs were not losers and he transmitted that philosophy to his new protege. In no time she had turned her corner of the Continuing Education School into a bustling classroom and a homemade placement service. She built fires under her students; many returned to high school, others found jobs, and others learned for the first time how to get along and cope with society.

Along the way she stashed away a storehouse of impressions and thoughts on vocational education, its potential, its place in the educational scheme of things, and its impact on the working world. As she does today from her home in Corvallis, she recognized it as a legitimate and important function of education. In those days that was close to heresy. Less than 20 years later she would be honored as one of Oregon's leading educators.

But this was the late 1920s, a different age. In June 1928, she left the Continuing Education School to become principal at a private school in Medford where one of her students, David Sheldon, later went on to develop one of the first seismographs in the country.

Eventually her husband, Wendell, landed a job as principal of Roosevelt Jr. High School in Eugene and Lillian moved north again. Her timing couldn't have been better.

"I had heard through the grapevine that O. D. was setting up a vocational school in Eugene. That sounded so much like him," she said. "I was interested, of course, and wondered if there was anything I could do."

Indeed there was. It was almost as if the school had been made for her. Adams, who had spotted her talents a decade before in Salem, hired her on the spot.

So by the first week of February, all was ready. The Board wrote checks of \$35 to A. C. Dixon for rent on the downtown office which would be closed when the Geary Building opened and \$73.24 for "Supplies—Vocational School" to the Ford Nelson Mill Company. Other than those expenditures, the Board appeared content to let the state proceed as it wished.

The state proceeded. Adams had practically set up residence in Eugene as he tied the loose ends together. The survey had been filed away and Purvine was asked to stay on and oversee the school in Adams' absence after classes began and Lillian and Martin Johnson set up shop at Fourth and Madison.

On Feb. 1, a little over two weeks after the Register-Guard predicted its opening, Eugene Vocational School's time had arrived. Soon after the doors were unlocked in the morning, the first of about 20 unemployed young people drifted in and found a seat. In front of the room was Lillian Van Loan.

Soon the rest of the class had arrived and Mrs. Van Loan introduced herself and calmly said, "Shall we begin?"

Chapter 2

Those first few weeks went off without a hitch. Johnson and Mrs. Van Loan acted like they had been teaching at the Eugene Vocational School all their lives, and Adams was already thinking enthusiastically about expanding into evening adult classes immediately instead of waiting for the regular school year to begin the next fall.

He sounded out his friends on the idea and apparently found the support he was looking for. Although there wasn't a peep from the Board at its March meeting, Adams' habit of touching bases with everyone concerned points to the fact that he must have conferred with the Board members during their monthly work session.

One ally, the Eugene Register-Guard, thought it was a great idea and promptly reported that the Vocational School would soon be offering evening courses in welding, blue print reading, estimation for construction, billing and detailing, shop mathematics, theory of electricity and electrical codes, drafting, air conditioning and refrigeration, and diesel.

By then, Adams was fairly itching to start a night school. Classes, he decreed, would primarily be aimed at the already-employed workers who wanted to brush up on their skills or learn new ones to advance in their jobs or help them find new careers.

This was a whole new ball game.

Right away there was the problem of staffing. It was Adams' philosophy that to get the best you have to hire the best, so he directed Purvine to hit the streets again to find the best Eugene had to offer in the winter of 1938.

Purvine had a technique. "When I wanted to find a master tradesman in any one of the trades, I'd go into one of the shops around town and ask who they thought was the best tradesman around. I'd usually get a name or two then I'd go to another shop, a competitor, and ask the same question.

"It wasn't long before the same name, or sometimes two names, would keep coming up, and finally I'd go see this man and ask him if he wouldn't like to come and teach at the vocational school."

Usually he got what he wanted—at least for awhile.

“We had a pretty high turnover there for awhile,” said Purvine, “because the best tradesman was not always the best teacher. Sometimes I’d have to go out and start all over again to find someone who could teach.”

Anyone who has ever tried to learn a skill or craft can testify to the importance of being taught by a person who can unmystify the mysterious.

While Purvine was beating the bushes looking for instructors, the school put the word out it was looking for students to fill the new classes. It was a gamble. No one was sure whether people who had worked hard all day would be willing to give up their evenings to sit in a classroom. Adams and the others kept their fingers crossed while the Register-Guard continued to plug the program on its inside pages. And around town, a few workers here and a few workers there made plans to attend.

Some, like the painters and paper hangers union local, agreed to attend enmasse if an instructor could be found who could teach them wood graining and special effects. Purvine finally found one in Portland.

The big night drew closer. It was near the end of March, 1938 and the Eugene Vocational School was less than a month old, ready to take its first big step.

Adams was nervous as a cat for he knew that a failure here could damage the school beyond repair. It was on probation anyway, and one slip-up would be all the vocational education opponents (there was still a sizable force of them in Eugene) would need to start a campaign against the school.

Nobody remembers the exact date the night classes began; late March is the best guess. No matter. It only matters that on the night they did begin, Adams drove down from Salem for one last pep talk with his staff. Lillian Van Loan remembers it well.

“O. D. called us into one of the empty classrooms to tell us what he expected of us, and what we could expect from the students. He must have talked for ten or fifteen minutes from up in the front of the room. Those of us in the back could hear people shuffling around out in the halls, but O.D. couldn’t. He was too far away.

“He finally finished talking and then looked at us for a second and said very sadly, ‘well, it doesn’t look like anyone is coming anyway.’”

Adams was ready for the worst but he wasn’t ready for what awaited him in the hallways of old Geary.

As the door opened and the staff filed out, the halls were jammed. More than 300 students had showed up, more than anyone had ever expected.

The gamble had paid off and the Eugene Vocational School had, in about one month, established itself as a presence in the community. Now it had some breathing room.

Success of the night program was vital in other ways too. There was a war going on in Europe and the economy here was picking up. A few more Help Wanted ads were appearing in the Register-Guard's classified section. Jobs—nonexistent for nearly a decade—were reappearing; mills added extra shifts, people were beginning to work again. The Depression—though still a dark cloud over the nation—showed ever-so-slight signs of weakening. The Eugene Vocational School was filled with people determined to beat the Depression at its own game—when it showed a weak spot, a trained worker would jump in.

And there was the matter of planning. Adams was a meticulous planner. The success of those first night classes gave him the edge he was looking for. In Salem, he again began moving in legislative money circles and on April 7 appeared before the Board of Education in Eugene to announce a \$2,000 increase in the operating budget.

The budget he passed among Board members MacLaren, Love, Morris, Dodds and Payne showed income of \$22,000, of which \$15,000 came from the State Department for Vocational Education, \$6,000 from student fees at \$20 each, and \$1,000 from a federal grant. Expenses included \$15,000 for salaries, \$5,300 for new equipment and \$1,700 for general supplies. The Geary School was valued at \$25,893.13.

At the same meeting, the Board informally approved a request by Adams and Cramer for the District to provide heat, light, power and water for the school from what then was called the Eugene Water Board.

By this time—late Spring 1938—Adams was pushing himself day and night. He, Mrs. Van Loan, Purvine and the others were already preparing for the opening of the next school year. The course list would be expanded, new teachers hired. More daytime classes would be held.

On the drawing board for fall 1939 were classes in aviation mechanics, barbering, clay modeling, copper smithing, custom dressmaking and millinery, hair-dressing, heating and ventilating, jewelry making, leather

craft, metal casting and spinning, model building, office training, plaster casting, plumbing, production principles, radio studio work, retail selling, and sheet metal.

Those, in addition to the current course offerings of poultry raising, nursery and green house, pruning, budding and grafting, photography, painting and decorating, home service (listed as the best "field of employment for young women, as the demand is greater than the supply"), radio, salesmanship, business training, auto mechanics, welding, work application and woodworking.

The staff was growing just as fast. Eventually, 22 full and part-time teachers would be on the staff in September 1938. Among them were Dot Dotson who would be coming back to teach photography; a young radio pioneer by the name of Roger Houglum was hired to teach radio; Grace Eldredge, a New York dress designer who had once worked at Bloomingdale's, would head the dress making/millinery department; Eve Collins would teach work application; Catherine Lamb would help her; and to no one's surprise, O. D. Adams' old school chum Art Clough would be there to start a new department called Creative Design.*

At first glance, a creative design department seemed curiously out of place in a school specially geared for turning out auto mechanics and radio engineers, but over the next 18 years, it would prove itself as one of the school's most important departments as well as the most popular. Someone once asked O. D. Adams what the school would do when Art Clough left. Nothing, said Adams, there is nothing that could be done. There was only one Art Clough and he could never be replaced. When he retired in 1956, the department folded.

But a creative design department was just a gleam in Art Clough's eye when the first four months of Eugene's Great Experiment ended and the Vocational School closed up shop for the summer. Lillian Van Loan, who had originated EVS's one-woman placement service "for the benefit of all junior workers 16-24 years of age", reported to the Board that 180 jobs were located during the winter for some 200 applicants. Of those, she said, 62 were permanent, 75 temporary, and 43 were seasonal. The Board was delighted. In its summary of the first four months of operation of the Vocational School it said, "The Eugene Vocational School has expanded into a place of

*Art Clough was the Eugene Vocational School's "free spirit". Now over 80, he has become a definite presence in Eugene and his story deserves special attention. It is detailed in the appendix.

real service to the community and has attracted statewide attention and interest. Pupils have come from all parts of western Oregon to attend the classes," and "the only limiting factor of the school is the possibility of placement, and placement is the goal of all activities of the school."

The Board must have been delighted. When District expenditures exceeded the \$1,500 ceiling by \$655, and when Adams requested a second custodian be assigned to the building at a cost to the district of \$1,200, the Board didn't even blink. It simply signed the checks.

Curiously, however, the Board was still officially taking a wait-and-see attitude about endorsing the school's 1938-39 operations. It is one of those mysteries of a bureaucracy that while Adams and Van Loan were hiring teachers, planning a packed day and evening curriculum, and even drafting a student handbook, the Board had still not publicly given its blessing to a September opening. Only at its August 9 meeting, barely a month before school was to begin, did the Board do what it obviously had planned to do all along.

Adams appeared full of good news. The state he said, would pungle up another \$1,400 over the \$22,000 already committed for 1938-39, and the popular Lillian Van Loan would unofficially take over as the on-site director for the coming year. She had taken on an ever-increasing load of administrative duties anyway and Purvine was being transferred to Portland to open a counseling and guidance center.

Lloyd A. Payne rose and moved that the Board "heartily approve the plans...in assuming the superintendent take part in formation of policies of the Eugene Vocational School, approve all orders and requisitions for supplies and equipment, and consult with the State Department regarding the appointment of employed personnel on behalf of the Board, and assume the same relationship with regard to the Eugene Vocational School as to any other school in the District."

At the same meeting, the Board approved a \$482 bid by Jeppesen Brothers to paint the exterior of the Geary Building, spent another \$360 on insulation for the old building, and bought \$6.75 worth of magazines for the school.

The shakedown cruise was over and the Eugene Vocational School had just been commissioned for its maiden voyage. September was just around the corner and everything was ready. Everyone had had his say.

Everyone, that is, except one. His name was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Jimmie Gilbert

had heard the dean hold forth on delicacies for the palate, could have told her what was wrong. Salad dressing. Not for him. A camouflage, he said, it spoiled the true taste of the food. The hostess discovered the secret in her own way, subsequently served the cocktail plain. He ate it. And the plain salad!

He had a prodigious memory. It was a paradox that this austere man, so sparing with words, so conserving of time, could regale a dinner party or a campfire circle or a class with anecdotes, facts, recitations, carefully filed and indexed in his mind for ready use. Once, a student recalled, he outlined on the blackboard, without reference to notes, the entire structure of the United States Treasury. He could recite poetry by the page, and did, and quote passages from the Bible without number. Every year at the first meeting of the faculty he introduced new members, citing degrees held from what institutions, major fields of instruction and scholarship, all flawlessly, without notes, and for the twenty-five

or thirty or, just after the war, nearly fifty persons he presented.

He was physically fit and proud of his fitness, boastful of his daily cold bath. Nearly every day, all of his adult life, he walked from five to seven miles, to and from the office, home at noon for lunch, additional miles before or after dinner.

He went on walking tours and once he and R. C. Clark of the history department hiked in a single day from the Sisters over the crest of the Cascades to Belknap Springs. In 1942, when he was sixty-five years old, he walked from French Pete Creek to Indian Ridge Lookout to see his son. They ate the fresh food he had brought for lunch and he hiked back, a sixteen mile round trip, with a 3,000 foot change in altitude.

He once owned an automobile. It stalled on him and he sold it. He preferred to walk but he assigned to his daughter and his wife his reason for not driving a car:

*Having Madeleine
And Isolene
I can't afford gasoline!*

Ruegger Account Book

Continued from page 3

A penciled draft of a personal letter, possibly to the folks back in Switzerland, appears on ledger page 47, below entries dated 1896. The following translation shows that the U.S. election system and politics was getting its share of the blame for hard times even in those days.

Dear Lina,

We received your card and letter. We are fine, but we had a very dry spring. Since May it has rained only once, but we had a lot of hay which is worth a lot to us. Only cattle is very low in price. All together business is not very good. This is to blame on the election of a new president. When that is over things will get better again.

We are expecting Ida from Portland in a few days. She was away for a year, but then everybody will be at home again. The death (fall-death) of such a young woman as Mrs. Albert Rundgins is sad. It is hard to understand why these people eat horse meat. They did not write to us yet.

We wished you could come and visit us once, but I don't know if you would like it now, since everything is dry and yellow. But plums, apples and pears and potatoes are growing, only not as plenty.

We have now sold our land (?). We kept the part on which Hans Ziniker lives. That is the better land, better than the one we live on.

Please don't be angry with Edmund, that he did not write. He and Earnest have to do Birnbaum's work. They are building a big barn all by themselves, and have a lot of work to do, and it is very hot here.

Dean Gilbert's retirement was a long and happy twilight. Above all, it gave him to his grandchildren. "He treated little children seriously, as small people," his son said of him, "and his grandchildren loved him as a friend." He wrote tender and humorous verses for them, to Annie Pie, Peterkin, and Jamie, took them to football and basketball games. He walked in the neighborhood near the University daily, his wife, in her last years a frail wisp of a woman, supported on his arm; after her death he cooked and kept house for his grandsons.

And so he lived out his life, three score and ten years before he retired and afterwards twenty-six more years, vigorous and active down to the last few months before his death in 1973.

A student who had been an English major found the best words to define him: "I feel like quoting Hamlet on his father. 'He was a man, take him for all in all. I shall not look upon his like again.'"

BOOK REVIEWS

Trade and Currency in Early Oregon
by James Henry Gilbert
Columbia University Press
New York. 1907. 126 pp.

The History of Banking in Oregon
by James Henry Gilbert
Chap. XXIV. Vol. I. of the
History of Willamette Valley Oregon
by R.C. Clark
S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.. 1927

Two Books by Professor Gilbert

Review by Milt Madden

Two of Dr. Gilbert's works are **Trade and Currency in Early Oregon** and **The History of Banking in Oregon**. The first was published in 1907 by Columbia University Press while the latter is, in reality, an essay which was one chapter in **History of the Willamette Valley** by Robert C. Clark, whose piece on Jimmy Gilbert's life is included in this **Historian**.

Trade and Currency in Early Oregon, although 70 years old, is valuable to the layman, economist, and historian. A little over 125 pages long, it covers the economics of the fur trade, agriculture, gold and gold dust, and the problem of paper currency in the Civil War era.

Remarkably, Dr. Gilbert's style has not suffered with the years and difficult material is presented in a very readable manner. The concepts are of general interest, with few pages cluttered with names, dates, and statistics which so

often discourage the layman from reading studies of economics.

Instead, one can discover the value of a beaver skin (or a comb, a small mirror, or even a quart of brandy): how many such skins were harvested from Oregon Territory each year (75,000 plus, reported Gilbert, valued at over \$300,000); that, by law, wheat was legal tender (causing many complaints about the British use of the larger "imperial bushel"); that California gold fields bled Oregon of its laborers (two thirds of the men capable of bearing arms left the first year after the discovery); and the Oregonian attitude towards the paper currency of the Union (one who paid for greenbacks at face value became an outcast).

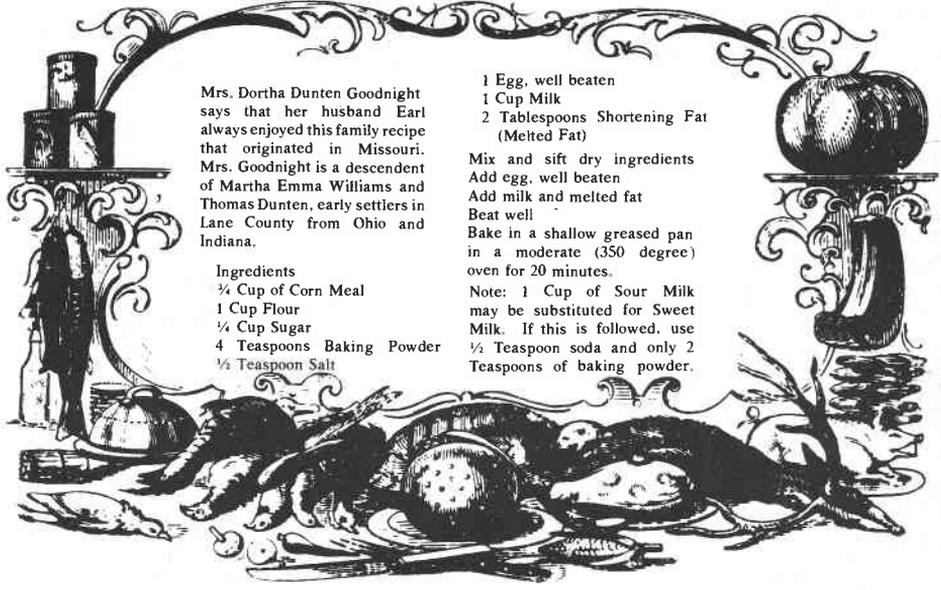
The volume has adequate documentation — often from manuscripts that are still considered important primary and secondary sources today.

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Family Recipe: Dixie Corn Cake



Mrs. Dortha Dunten Goodnight says that her husband Earl always enjoyed this family recipe that originated in Missouri. Mrs. Goodnight is a descendent of Martha Emma Williams and Thomas Dunten, early settlers in Lane County from Ohio and Indiana.

- Ingredients
- 1/4 Cup of Corn Meal
 - 1 Cup Flour
 - 1/4 Cup Sugar
 - 4 Teaspoons Baking Powder
 - 1/2 Teaspoon Salt

- 1 Egg, well beaten
- 1 Cup Milk
- 2 Tablespoons Shortening Fat (Melted Fat)

Mix and sift dry ingredients
Add egg, well beaten
Add milk and melted fat
Beat well
Bake in a shallow greased pan in a moderate (350 degree) oven for 20 minutes.

Note: 1 Cup of Sour Milk may be substituted for Sweet Milk. If this is followed, use 1/2 Teaspoon soda and only 2 Teaspoons of baking powder.

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