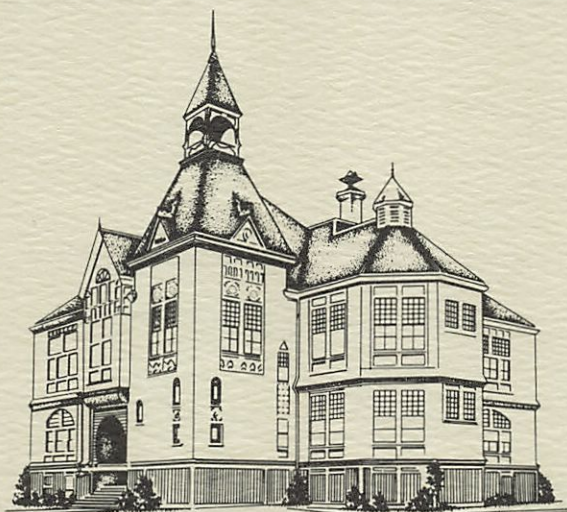
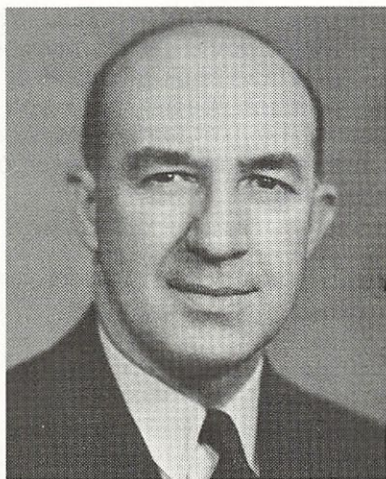


FOURTH and MADISON



A History of the Eugene Vocational
School 1938-1965 by David Butler

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Dedicated to O.D. Adams,
who found an idea in the Puget Sound
backwoods and who proved it could work
in a time when nothing was working
in the Willamette Valley, Oregon.

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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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.

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.

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.

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?

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.

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 new 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.

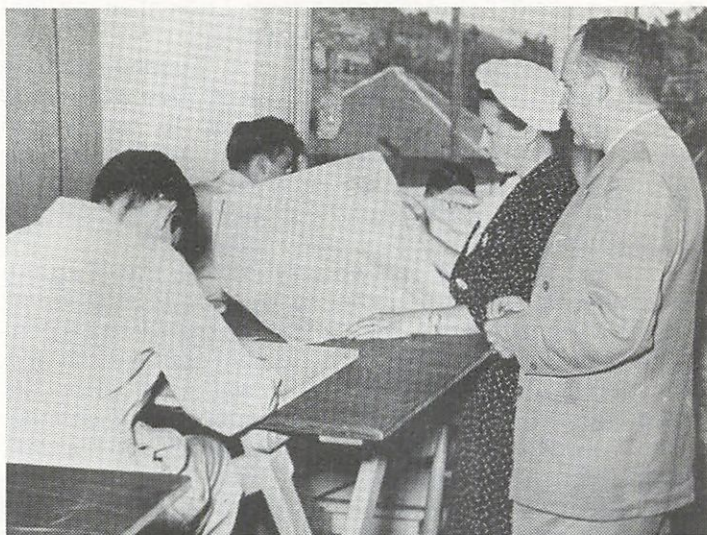
A week or two earlier, Adams had picked his staff. Martin Johnson, a local carpenter, was hired as a part-time instructor for the carpentry class. And Lillian Van Loan, a former Adams assistant in Salem, signed on as the school's only full-time teacher for the continuing education/personality development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

Chapter 3

The United States had never seen the likes of Franklin Roosevelt. A product of the New York aristocracy and a victim of polio—which made him the only physically handicapped president in the nation's history—Roosevelt attacked the depression with a vengeance. Modifying his cousin Theodore's campaign slogan "Square Deal" into the "New Deal", he revolutionized the role of the federal government in national politics and the national economy.

Other presidents—Jefferson, Lincoln, Polk, Jackson and Monroe come to mind—had flexed a certain amount of federal muscle in domestic affairs, but, with the exception of Lincoln, had limited it mostly to what Andrew Jackson like to call "Manifest Destiny", a public relations term the Indians and Mexicans called more appropriately, the rape of the land. Even cousin Teddy had pushed for federal control of millions of acres of wilderness and forest land for national parks.

But FDR was something else. As the Depression swept across the land and the economy tumbled like so many toy building blocks, Roosevelt initiated sweeping reforms in government and began the unheard-of practice of federal takeover of private enterprise.

That was just the beginning. The Depression was just hitting its peak in the early and mid-Thirties when Roosevelt made his most dramatic move, the Work Projects Administration. In the WPA, the federal government became once and for all the nation's largest employer.

Almost instantly, millions of unemployed men and women were put to work in thousands of government-funded projects. The Grand Coulee and Hoover/Boulder Dams were built on the Columbia and Colorado Rivers.

Timberline Lodge went up on Mt. Hood. Bridges appeared everywhere, including a very special span across the Mississippi from Illinois to Hannibal, Mo., the boyhood home of Mark Twain. Roosevelt personally attended to the dedication of that bridge.

Closer to home, the WPA was active all up and down the valley. In Eugene, WPA workers built Civic Stadium on South Willamette St. and operated a day-care center during the first few months of the Eugene Vocational School's trial period in the winter of 1938, then moved it in 1939 from Geary to a new building on Blair Blvd.

Success of the Work Projects Administration led to a number of subordinate agencies. The Civilian Conservation Corps was probably the most famous, and for a few years a CCC camp was located north of Skinner Butte in what is now Skinner Butte Park.

Another, less noted agency of Roosevelt's alphabet soup administration, was the National Youth Administration, created in the late Thirties specifically to help train the millions of out-of-work teenagers in America. In its early years, the Eugene Vocational School was affected as much by the NYA as it was in 1956 by Sputnik.

Over the years the National Youth Administration camp at Skinner Butte supplied hundreds of students from throughout the state. Many of them, including Lorie Cross (front row, center, with hands in pockets) stayed on after the war and became permanent Eugene residents. Camp Skinner Butte was originally a Civilian Conservation Corps camp but was turned over to the NYA in the late 1930s.



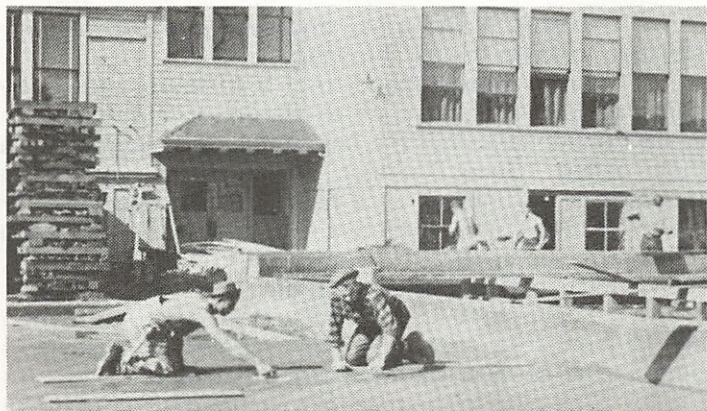
Built in to the philosophy of the National Youth Administration was an all-encompassing, almost singular goal: vocational education. Economists were predicting better times ahead—the war in Europe was already creating more jobs at home—and the federal government was determined to provide the trained manpower for those jobs from a previously ignored labor pool, the nation's young.

The timing couldn't have been better. The Eugene Vocational School, in spite of its early success during the winter trial period, still faced some potential problems. If Adams' optimistic efforts at dramatically expanding the school's curriculum fell on its face, the school could be seriously hurt. What he needed was a dependable source of students to keep enrollment up. That's exactly what he got from the NYA.

He also got a bonus. In addition to their education, NYA students were required to work at least 50 hours each month on "local projects" during their stay in the program.

What that meant to the Vocational School was that living practically next door was not only a perpetual supply of students but also a seemingly inexhaustible supply of free labor. During the next few years, NYA students would make every major addition to the vocational school including the auto, metal and aviation shops and many early repairs to the Geary Building. All for a monthly federally-paid salary of \$16.

Laying floors for war surplus buildings to be added to the Geary School. With the trowel is Fred O'Sullivan, a retired Eugene fireman. O'Sullivan and the others were all members of the National Youth Administration camp at Skinner Butte, and all were EVS students.



Not much, even by Depression standards, but enough at least to buy a quart or two of Old Grain beer from time to time and to treat your girl to a dance at the union hall above the Oregon Outdoor Store.

The NYA came to town in 1938. Fifty-two unemployed boys—mostly straight off the farm—were trucked in during a bitterly cold winter's night and dropped off at the rickety old CCC barracks at Camp Skinner's Butte.

Fred O'Sullivan remembers that "there was snow on the ground. It was very cold and when we went into the barracks they told us if we wanted a mattress to sleep on that night to fill our ticks with straw which was piled up in a corner.

"The boys that got there first were the lucky ones. Each building had only one woodburning barrel heater right in the middle of the floor, and that was the only place you could get warm, near the barrel.

"And, of course, once the heaters got going, they melted the snow on the roof and water started leaking in. You'd just get settled down when a leak would start. I think we spent all night just moving around from one dry spot to another."

Life during the days of the National Youth Administration camp at Skinner Butte was disciplined. In many ways it had all the trappings and feel of an Army boot camp, and in other ways it was Boys Town.

Lorie Cross, who got to the camp from his home in Lafayette by hitching a ride on the back of a flatbed truck, said he's never seen anything like it.

"We had a system there I've never seen anywhere else, and the amazing part about it is, it worked. We elected our own representatives to the camp government, we elected a sheriff, a mayor...it was just like a town.

"Everyone had a say and everyone had responsibilities to keep things shipshape."

Things were indeed kept shipshape, mostly by camp director Bill Lyons, an ex-warden from the Oregon State Penitentiary, and the chief cook and roustabout, a man called "Sailor". Sailor could easily have been typecast in the movies as a hardnosed top sergeant or crusty old Navy chief, which is exactly what he had been for several years. Many NYA boys had run-ins with Sailor, but O'Sullivan was one of the first.

"The first job I had when I got to camp was to mop the kitchen area every day after meals. Anyone who's been in the service will know what that's like.

"The guys in the barracks who had the floor detail would always grab the mops—there were about a dozen

of them—on Friday night and hide them so they'd be done early on Saturday morning and be allowed to go to town for the afternoon. I was still green and hadn't figured out what was going on, so on the first Saturday I was supposed to work, I looked around and—no mops.

"I went in to Sailor's little office and told him I couldn't mop the floor without a mop and what did he intend to do about it. Sailor just said, like he would have in the Navy, 'You will mop that floor with or without a mop', period.

"I told him where he could go and went to see Bill Lyons. He told me to go back and tell Sailor to order 12 more mops and I could go on into town if I wanted."

Sailor was furious that O'Sullivan had gone over his head but eventually forgot about it and the Great Mop Crisis passed. Meanwhile O'Sullivan had become notorious because of the fearless way in which he had stood up to Sailor and was elected camp sheriff.

As sheriff, O'Sullivan patrolled and helped police a camp that had grown to 125 boys (a girls NYA camp would soon be in operation on the east side of the Butte), sometimes by himself and sometimes with the help of a "deputy" who invariably was the winner of a recent boxing match in the champ ring. "We were all pretty good fighters in those days," remembers Jack Dingman, "the Elks always tried to get some of our boys to come down for their smokers."

The Elks weren't the only people in Eugene who wanted to cash in on the presence of the National Youth Administration. EVS, of course, was first in line; Mrs. Van Loan could hardly wait to get her aviation and auto body shop. And then there was the Army Corps of Engineers, which was about to turn a huge basin west of Eugene into Fern Ridge Reservoir.

The only problem was that there was a forest in the way. It had to go, said the Corps, so the entire NYA camp turned out with crosscut saws and turned the forest into firewood. Only later did they find out what the clearing project was for and today several of them claim that Fern Ridge, now a popular swimming and boating lake, would be free of stumps had they been told earlier. "Heck, we could have taken those stumps out if they had told us," one of them said.

NYA's impact was definitely being felt in Eugene. Not surprisingly, there was a certain amount of backlash felt too, a resentment that eventually resulted in spotted criticism of the vocational school. "It's become a government school", the critics said. "Our local boys and girls

can't get in because of all the outsiders. It's that Roosevelt, that's what it is."

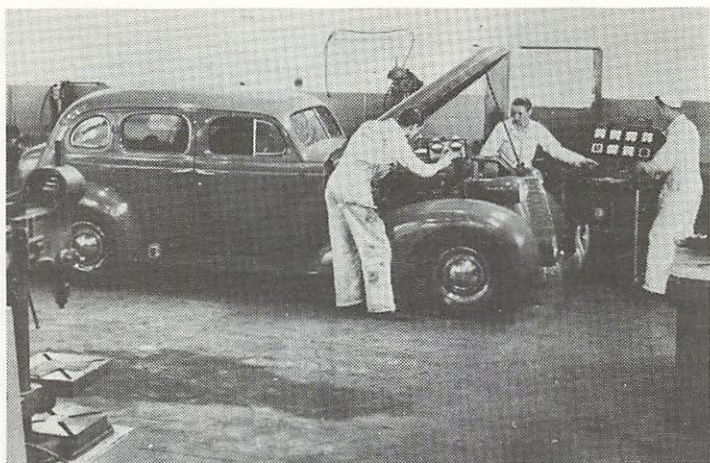
Hindsight being what it is, of course, EVS was not a government school—though a great deal of federal money was poured into it over the years—nor was it's enrollment restrictive. It was conceived as a local school for local students—a point the Register-Guard and Mrs. Van Loan continued to make throughout the pre-war years. True, Adams had encouraged the local Board to open the school's enrollment to students from throughout western Oregon, but with so much state money involved in the project, even that rider was understandable and the Board went along with it.

But these were volatile, very political times. Eugeneans were descended from midwest and downeast stock, fiercely independent people who were likely to look twice at any project or program that added yet another federal finger to their local pie. While they generally were willing to accept the NYA's presence in town—even welcome it—many of them remained suspicious of how much effect the NYA would have on the vocational school. As it turned out, they need not have worried.

The NYA had a huge, almost incomprehensible impact on the school—all of it positive. NYA students fed new ideas, new perspectives into the classroom. They were hard workers, sometimes working all night to meet a deadline. They were good students ("The whole philosophy of the NYA was centered around school," said Lorie Cross. "If there was ever a matter of conflict—work or school—school won out. That's why we were there.")

Why they were there became evident in September 1938. Adams and Mrs. Van Loan had scurried around and hired 22 teachers for the beginning of fall term, among them Art Clough, who had finally found his "Golden Age" (see appendix). Even old Geary was getting a once-over. The Board, apparently caught up in the enthusiasm of the new year, the *first* year, unanimously approved more than \$900 to spruce up the building. Jessee Godlove was awarded \$261.50 for his bid to replumb Geary, and G. H. Latham received a check for \$657 to paint the building's interior.

On the first day of school, 1938, several hundred students (the exact number is unavailable) showed up for classes and were promptly handed a student handbook. It spelled out exactly where they were and what was expected of them.



Tune-up students in the auto shop at Geary.

From the Forward: "No effort has been spared to establish for the Youth of Eugene and Oregon a vocational school that meets the great need for training. The Eugene Vocational School selects students for various fields carefully, trains them thoroughly, and assists them in finding positions.

"It is the hope of the State Board for Vocational Education that the youth of this area will make the most of the opportunity offered by this school, (signed) Mr. O. D. Adams, director of the State Board for Vocational Education.."

Following was a list of VIP's every student was expected to be familiar with: J. F. Cramer, superintendent of District #4, Charles A. Sprague, governor, Floyd Githens, local Apprenticeship Commission chairman, and commission members Githens, J.F. Ford, W.R. Worden, Howard Fish, Cramer, and Mrs. Van Loan.

And then a Statement of Aims and Policies:

1. "To provide training for the normal young men and women in this area, fitting them to hold satisfactory beginning positions."

2. "To instill in them the necessity for fair dealing and cooperative understanding for both employer and employee."

3. "To give them sufficient background and knowledge of occupational trends to allow them to make an intelligent decision of the field they wish to follow. Also



Students in one of Mabel Phelps' sewing classes.

to give them a comprehensive understanding of their own abilities and capacities."

4. "To assist young people in finding positions to which they are adapted both by aptitude and training."

The handbook goes on, outlining a few "pertinent facts": "The Eugene Vocational School allows young men and women 17 years or older (note: since at that time there were no age requirements for public schools, some students were as young as 14) who are serious in the desire to have training that will fit them for a definite occupation. These young people must be normal in their ability to grasp training and comply to the standards set for each department. Young people may come to this school from all parts of Oregon.

"This school offers training in trades, crafts, and skills, depending upon the aptitudes and interests of the student body and upon the possibility of jobs in the area.

"The instructors are successful men and women from the trades. They must have been engaged in their own occupation for the past seven years and must have the rating of a foreman or better. They must be recommended by others in the same city, engaged in the same occupation.

"Placement is the objective of the vocational school."

Then, for their monthly \$2 "materials fee" (there was no tuition), students were told what classes were available. Among them were poultry raising, photography, home service, radio, salesmanship, business training, auto mechanics and others.

And finally, a pep talk: "You are a privileged person if you have been admitted to the Eugene Vocational School. Only a limited number of young men and women have this opportunity. Make the most of it. Show your appreciation from day to day by getting the most out of your training. Remember, you only get out of life what you put into it, and this is equally true here in this school.

"Develop a job attitude: the most successful students in the school have been those (remember, EVS already had four months of classes under its belt, not including a tiny summer school program) who constantly maintained a business-like attitude. These were the young people who found the positions when they finished their training.

"Small things go into the making of such an attitude as this. Some of these things are: entering the building with that air of going places! Going immediately to work (if you were not 17, you wouldn't be here—act accordingly); being courteous always, working hard and accomplishing much, expecting a good deal of yourself each day; business firms are sorry, but work must go on whether or not you have a headache. (If you have too many, they are no longer sorry, they just get new help)."

The handbook ended with a few instructions on how you could get there from here. "The city bus line is on Fifth Street. The bus that runs every half hour connects with all other bus lines. The fare is 7 cents, or tokens may be purchased entitling the holder to four rides for 25 cents. Time schedules may be secured from the driver."

And with that, the Eugene Vocational School was open for business.

From there, weeks, months, even years are blurred for many people who were there from the beginning. We are all like that. We can tell you what we were doing when our father died, or who we were with when the war ended, but the small details of life became stashed away in the attics of our minds. From time to time we sort through them and find a yellowed photograph of a face we once knew, a place we once were, a friend we once had, but they are elusive to us. We were all so much younger then.

It is clear, however, that three people of the two or three dozen major figures involved were in the thick of

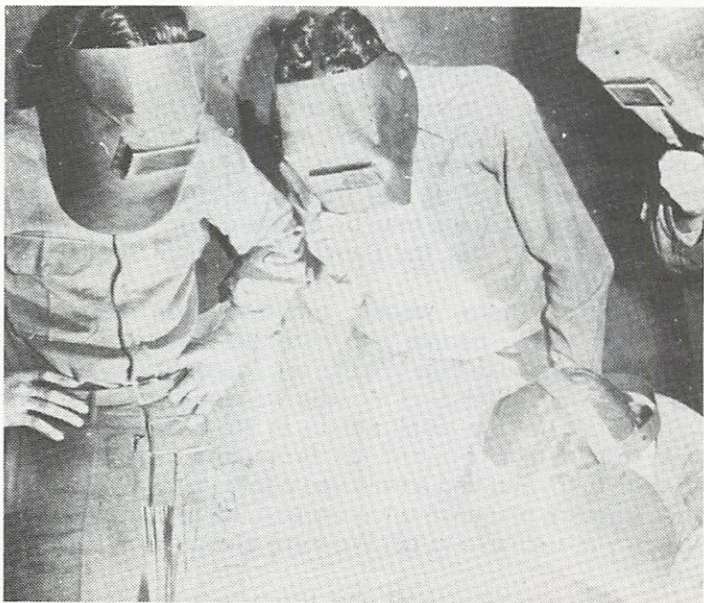
things those first few months: Adams, Mrs. Van Loan, and Art Clough.

Adams was like an expectant father. He was professionally and philosophically committed to the Eugene Vocational School; his whole career was riding on it. He was still walking around with the same educational commitments he had made a quarter of a century before in Bellingham.

To Adams, the word "education" was not complete unless it had the word "comprehensive" in front of it. He felt education, vocational and otherwise, should be accessible to everyone. Catherine Lamb once said that Adams dreamed dreams far ahead of his time, and that one of those dreams was the development of a school, a diverse school, where a student undecided about what he or she wanted to be in life, could easily shift from one goal to another. Mrs. Van Loan remembers a time, somewhere in the early Forties, when a vocational education expert from Georgia visited EVS and Adams, Lillian, and Mahlon Sweet were showing him around.

"All at once O. D. stopped," she said, "and he just looked around for a minute. Then he said, 'You know, we

Welding students.



should be able to have a complete educational facility someday, a place where vocational training and higher education could be under the same roof." The community college movement and O. D. Adams missed each other by less than 20 years.

During those first few weeks of classes in the fall of 1938, Adams hung around EVS every time he could get away from the office in Salem. His devotion to, and the state's financial investment in, the school had already ruffled a few feathers among vocational educators throughout the rest of Oregon and he realized he would soon have to back off some and let the school move along more or less by itself. But Adams, loaded with the foresight that marks an excellent administrator, had bought some insurance.

In Lillian Van Loan, he had a ringer. Since the old days at the Continuing Education School in Salem, Mrs. Van Loan had broadened her own experiences in education and become a good administrator herself. And she had also become something of a marvel at working with people, a talent that got its first real test after the school opened.

As a rule, most of the trade unions in town favored the vocational school. Purvine had discovered in the survey that most tradesmen were eager for trained workers as long as (a) the workers didn't threaten their jobs, or (b) drop the bottom out of the already low pay scale by flooding the market with surplus labor.

That was expected. And Adams, in his initial statement to the press when the vocational school was still in the planning stages, went to great lengths to calm the unions' fears.

But a business agent for one of the locals wasn't buying any of it. He staunchly opposed EVS from the start and would not cooperate with Mrs. Van Loan when she asked for his union's backing.

She went to see the man. Nowhere. She wrote. Nothing. She went to see him again. Same story. Finally she said, "I don't care what you say, I'm going to your next meeting and talk with the other members."

"If you do," he said, "I'll have you thrown out."

At the local's next regular meeting, she was there 15 minutes early, greeting the men as they came into the room, explaining who she was and why she was there. The business agent showed up to start the meeting, noticed Mrs. Van Loan in a corner, and told one of the union men to escort her from the room.

Several men protested, "We want to hear what she has to say", "yeah, let her stay."

She stayed and convinced them that the vocational school was more likely to help their trade than hurt it, but that she needed their help as much as she felt they might need hers. There was no question about it. They overwhelmingly voted to give the school all the support it needed. Even her old antagonist, the business agent, seemed convinced and agreed to teach at the school, ending up as one of the most successful members of the staff and one of her best friends.

The story, however, has a bizarre ending. Mrs. Van Loan remembers that "It wasn't long after all of this before I received an anonymous phone call telling me not to train union workers.

"I ignored it, even though it seemed strange; but soon another call came, and then another. Then I got two letters, both anonymous, telling me again not to train union workers.

"I ignored them too. But then a third letter came, threatening to put sand in all the machinery if the school didn't stop training union labor. That's when I got worried and turned the letter over to the FBI, because we were using a great deal of government machinery."

FBI agents went to work immediately and soon had their man. It was her friend, the business agent. During all that time—even as a highly successful teacher—he apparently was still frightened by the vocational school and what he thought it meant to the future of organized labor.

The Eugene Vocational School did, of course, train union workers. A few at first, then a few hundred, and then thousands. Eventually, the unions would strike an outright partnership with EVS to establish an extensive post-war apprenticeship program.

But back to 1938. With Adams attempting to spend less and less time at the school, Mrs. Van Loan soon found herself as EVS's chief administrator in spite of the fact that for official purposes O. D. continued as director.

It was Lillian Van Loan, not O. D. Adams, who had to telephone Fred O'Sullivan at the NYA camp to ask his help in getting wayward NYA boys in line. It was Lillian Van Loan, not O. D. Adams, who had to cope with the drop-outs from Eugene High School which had given up on them as losers and banished them to EVS. And it was Lillian Van Loan, not O. D. Adams, who finally convinced

them to return to high school to pick up academic credits they would need to help them complete their vocational training.

It was Lillian Van Loan who ran the Eugene Vocational School.

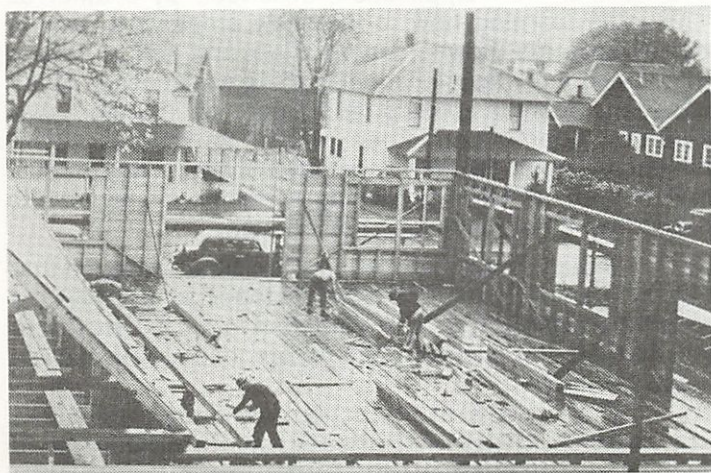
Well, part of it. There was a part of it that belonged to someone else, a little man who remembers passenger pigeons and clipper ships, who remembers looking for a "golden age" in America and then remembers finding it in Eugene. His name is Art Clough.

Art Clough was, and still is, a genius. It is not mere coincidence that the Eugene Vocational School was called the Eugene Vocational School and not the Astoria Vocational School or the Salem Vocational School. Much of the credit goes to the wood carver from Bellingham.

Clough was Adams' advance man. His close ties with Adams, stretching back to boyhood when the two dreamed of the potential of vocational education, influenced O. D.'s preference for Eugene as the site of his Great Experiment. Clough had made something of a name for himself among local lumber interests in the late Twenties and Thirties—a relationship that would pay off handsomely in the years to come.

He had also decided that Eugene was the site for the elusive "golden age" that he had searched for from the turn of the century. Not since his days at the foot of

Working in the rain with donated lumber, carpenters fashion a new shop at Geary.



"New York Mountain" in central Washington (see appendix) had Clough felt better about a place to live and work, and he passed that feeling along to Adams.

At 47, Art had still not reached the peak of his career. In fact, his new career had barely begun. Though he had not been in a classroom in many years, Clough threw himself into his work at the Eugene Vocational School in 1938 like he had never been away. He fought with the pigeons for space and fought with the custodians to maintain what Catherine Lamb called "orderly disorder" in his classroom.

Clough was the creative design department; it was made for him, partly as a concession to Adams' philosophy that a total education includes attention to the Three R's and the arts as well as vocational training, and partly to allow Clough to prove to skeptics that art can play an important role in industry.

In the years following 1938, Clough's creative design department proved it beyond all expectations.

Considering they were doing something that had never really been done before, the staff and students of the new Eugene Vocational School got through that first year without a scratch. The shops in the basement and on the first floor were humming day and night. NYA students were working hundreds of man-hours shoring up walls and patching holes on the second floor. Plans were being made for more shops to be added by the beginning of the next year.

The work application program began, headed by Eve Collins. Work application, described by Cramer as "including learning how to interview employers, how to qualify for a job, how to secure a job, and how to keep a job. It also includes individual work in weaknesses of the applicant, such as spelling, arithmetic, writing, etc.", was another Adams/Van Loan effort to involve "total education" at the Eugene Vocational School. They and the rest of the staff felt that training someone simply how to rebuild an automobile was not enough.

Indian summer ended and the Board realized that the rains were coming, and on October 19 approved a recommendation from Mrs. Van Loan to cut a driveway to the west side of Geary so the automobile repair classes could be inside.

Other areas of the school were expanding too. The carpentry classes had already run out of things to do by the end of 1938, so on Dec. 7—three years before Pearl Harbor—Board member Victor Morris moved that

carpentry students be allowed to seek out special projects, such as private home construction, as long as the trade unions didn't mind.

And a week later, the Board heard state NYA director Ivan G. Munro say that the NYA would furnish one-half of all material costs in addition to all labor costs to build a new shop. The Board agreed to match the \$600 federal grant, but balked at a request by Adams for more local money for a larger building. "If they want a bigger building," said the Board, "they'll have to pay for it." Adams was testing the Board, but it wasn't budging.

Growth was so rapid and programs were being added or expanded so quickly that often the supply couldn't keep up with the demand. Or the cash on hand.

Supplies came from everywhere. Teachers scrounged materials from their union buddies or from stock-piled industrial hand-me-downs. Art Clough used his contacts in the lumber industry for free wood. The state shipped in equipment from shops throughout the state—leading to further grumbling from vocational teachers who were afraid the Eugene school was receiving too much attention. Local merchants donated or loaned materials. Even the U.S. Army got into the act. Crates of Army surplus tools, still packed in cosmoline, were routinely shipped to the school and checked out to NYA students who had not bought their own.

By this time, the NYA had integrated itself firmly into the school and the community. The old CCC barracks were gone—torn down by the students themselves and replaced by modern apartments. A girls' NYA camp had begun in a rambling old house on the east side of the butte and soon camp life had added another dimension: a social life. Such as it was.

"Most of us were from straight off the farm," said Lorie Cross, "and knew next to nothing about the social graces.

"They'd have dances in the secretarial area at the school—we'd have to push all the desks out of the way first—but we were all pretty slow about mixing. Most of us didn't know how.

"All the teachers would show up, even Mrs. Van Loan, and help us get things going. One time I was dancing with this girl—neither of us were doing very well, so one of the counselors pulled me aside after the music stopped and said, 'Don't dance three feet apart like that. When you dance with a girl, you've got to put your arm around her and hold her close. Now go out and try it again.'

"I looked around and then went over and asked Tina Fergusson, the director of the girls camp, if she wouldn't mind dancing. I was holding her close like he said and looked over at the counselor to see if I was doing it right. He was just standing there shaking his head and had this look on his face like, 'not with the camp director, you idiot!.' "

Dances at the school and at the Union Hall downtown helped bring the boys' and girls' NYA camps together and, as might be expected, produced several romances. At least nine marriages were recorded between the two camps during their four years at Skinner's Butte. One of the grooms was Fred O'Sullivan who met his wife while he was climbing a tree.

"A bunch of us were playing football when a friend of mine says, 'Hey Sully, let's go around to the other side. I want you to see this new girl. But she's really shy so when we get there, you'd better climb up a tree and hide. You can see her when she comes out on the porch with my girlfriend.'

"So, I climbed up the tree but, of course, when she came out of the house my friend said, 'Hey, I want you to meet a guy', and there I was, stuck. She stood there kind of embarrassed for what seemed like hours and then said, 'Well, you might as well come down and talk.'

O'Sullivan later found out that romance also has its own peculiar occupational hazards.

"We were building a shop, I can't remember which one, when I looked up and saw my future wife watching me from one of the windows across the way. I got so distracted I hit myself right in the mouth with the hammer."

Like everyone else at the vocational school, the NYA students had to improvise.

During that first year—and throughout the Forties—most students were expected to make their own machine parts and in some cases their own tools. The Eugene Vocational School never was a particularly rich school. Its expenses for 1938-39, for instance, totaled only \$27,590 including almost \$18,000 for salaries. Supplies and operational expenses came to only \$4,000.

Such shoe-string budgets created a rather stark fact of life for EVS students and staff: If you wanted a work bench, or a child care center, or a new furnace, or a radio studio, or a new welding shop, you built it yourself. Even Lillian Van Loan went that first year without a desk until Martin Johnson and Ray Cornelius built her one from

an old Black Walnut tree that had stood at the corner of 13th and Oak.

The emphasis on improvisation, of making do and of scrapping for every dollar in an economy where there weren't many dollars, touched them all. Particularly the students. Frankly, most students didn't have a dime.

And no one was more aware of the plight of the students than Mrs. Van Loan.

"It wasn't long after we started that we realized something would have to be done for these students, some sort of financial aid program.

"We started looking around for a way to raise money and realized we would probably have to do it ourselves. So we did."

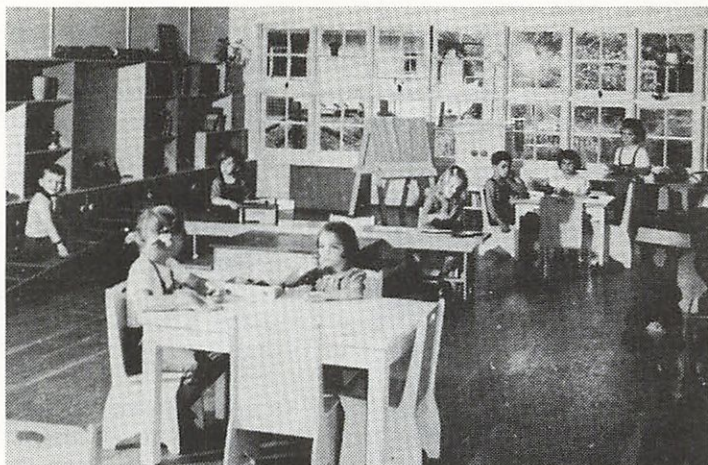
Mrs. Van Loan has a way of understating things. The beginnings of the Eugene Vocational School's financial aids program was significant for several reasons. It was typical of the school—a bootstraps operation that said in essence: "No one else is going to do it for us, therefore, we must do it for ourselves." Doing it for themselves amounted to realizing they were sitting on possibly one of the most productive gold mines in the city, and then turning that gold mine into cold, hard cash. In other words, a giant garage sale.

Students and teachers worked overtime turning out items for sale—household goods, gadgets, art work, tools, spare parts, anything they thought would sell. They were understandably nervous about the sale; not only was it a chance to raise a few dollars, but it was also the first opportunity the school and the citizens of Eugene had had to meet face to face.

But if anyone lost any sleep over it, they needn't have bothered. The sale was a smashing success. Merchandise went like hotcakes and the visitors were impressed. So impressed that from that time on, the special financial aids fund never faded.

The vocational school had made its place in the community. Even die-hard zealots who had opposed the school on grounds that vocational education was a waste of time were admitting its legitimacy.

Its first year had been one of growth, of settling in, and of riding out the tail end of the Depression. Looking ahead, school officials were predicting continued growth. They promised more programs, more placements, more services. They anticipated that more students from other areas of western Oregon would find their way to Eugene, and that the Eugene Vocational School would soon serve



This child care center was remodeled by EVS students and staff members in a private resident across the street from Geary, fronting Madison.

as a model for similar schools throughout the state, even the nation.

But as the year ended, few of them realized that within another year the Eugene Vocational School would be turned around, that the quiet and determined little school in a small town on the Willamette River would suddenly be propelled into the position of a national leadership and that things at Fourth and Madison would never be the same again.

Even those with their ears to the ground could never have guessed what would happen.

The Eugene Vocational School was on the verge of growing up in a hurry. Almost overnight.

Enter World War II.

Chapter 4

"In these troubled times, the world is realizing more than ever before that one of the first lines of defense for any country is the system of public education. In totalitarian states, the entire educational system is devoted toward instilling one particular philosophy of government and economics into the minds of the next generation. They strive for conformity to the prevailing ideology, for docility and obedience to whomever may be in power; for willingness to give up all individual rights and privileges for the sake of the state." J. F. Cramer, 1939.

J. F. Cramer was one of those with his ear to the ground. And what he heard was alarming.

From Berlin to Tokyo, the world was falling apart. It was summer 1939 and in less than a year, Hitler would invade the Low Countries and the fight would be on. The United States and Japan had already exchanged blows on the high seas and in China.

As an educator, Cramer was particularly nervous. His articulate and timeless message to the citizens of Eugene (above) reflected what was regarded as Standard Operating Procedure in totalitarian takeovers: activities that touch the human spirit or mind are always the hardest hit, the first to go. Almost universally, they are the press, religion, and education.

Cramer was expecting the worst in 1939. A realist, he knew that the American economy—even though picking up slightly as the decade neared an end—was still weak. Ten years of disease leaves its mark. But if Cramer was concerned about the ability of the American economy to rebound soon enough to cope with the possibility of war, he was doubly concerned about what the Depression had done to the American people. Virtually an entire generation of Americans had grown up during Hard Times, and another generation had been unmercifully trampled by it.

Between the lines of his 1939 message to Eugene, he was pleading for the strength, common sense and support he was sure would be needed if the war—as he suspected—eventually reached the United States.

If and when the war came, there would be no time to second-guess priorities. No time at all. Cramer would have agreed with John Steinbeck who once wrote of time, "Time, Time, that awful Bastard Time".

There was indeed, very little time left. The honeymoon was almost over.

The Eugene Vocational School was racing against time. Summer was passing quickly and there still was much to be done. Enrollment would be up again and paperwork had increased to the point where additional staff members were being hired. A secretary, hired at \$75 a month, was put on the payroll. Roger Hougum, an early Eugene radio enthusiast, joined the staff and started the radio department. Hougum was doubly valuable because of his fine working relationship with Howard Baker, head of the University of Oregon psychology department. Over the years, the two of them worked out an excellent series of aptitude tests.

Like many departments that were born as much from enthusiasm as they were from lack of materials, the radio department started life with only six meters, a few old donated radios, a tube tester and some hand tools. In a year, however, it would join aviation mechanics and creative design as the heart of the vocational school's war effort.

Radio servicing class, taught by Roger Hougum.





Paint and Dope Shop Off-Reservation Training Insignia making section of work.

Aviation mechanics was also new. And like the radio department, aviation started with little. There was no money and it seemed there was even less equipment. Finally, Yale Smith, a local amateur flier and EVS staff member for several years remembered that in a remote wilderness spot up the McKenzie River there was a wrecked airplane.

Someone who knew someone who had a friend with a few large trucks to spare borrowed two for a weekend. Someone else borrowed a string of pack-horses. Then on a Saturday morning, Smith and a platoon of NYA boys hiked into the woods to the site of the wreckage, salvaged what they could (apparently a lot, the plane was in surprisingly good shape) packed it back to the trucks and on into Eugene, then rebuilt the aircraft from the ground up. Proceeds from the sale of the plane financed the department for a year.

The additional staff members, although they were needed to meet the promises made to the city in 1938, were putting a strain on the school's budget. But again Adams came to the rescue. On Sept. 11, he reported to the Board that \$20,000—an increase of more than \$2,000—would be available for teacher salaries for the coming year.

Everyone heaved a sigh of relief. School year 1939-40 began without a hitch.

There was none of the uncertainty that had accompanied the opening of school a year before. Students and staff members alike were self-assured, business-like, and professional.

Art Clough is a good example. New students in Clough's creative design classes were met by two requirements that Clough insisted on before going any further in the class.

"First, they had to build a pleasant shape," he said. "It had to be pleasant to look at from all angles.

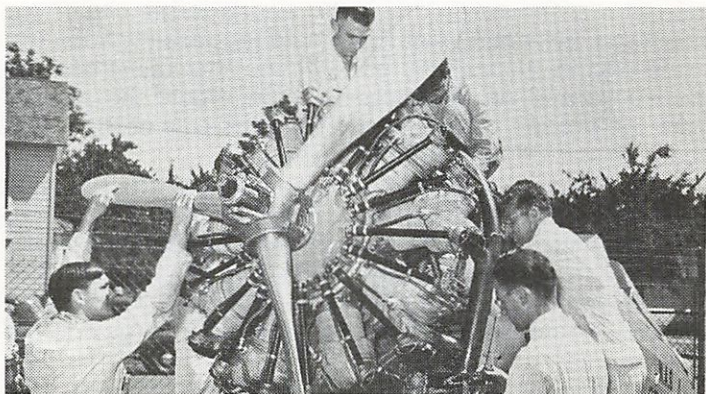
"Then they had to make a plaster mold of what they had made, and after that, they had to reverse the process. What that did was teach them the fundamentals of proportion, use of space, and positives and negatives.

"The second thing they had to do was guess a perpendicular using a yardstick hanging on the wall. The human eye is very accurate, and I wanted to show them how accurate it was. Most of them usually came within 1/32 of an inch of being perfect."

The practicality of that particular exercise—the beauty of Clough's art classes was that he was always practical—was demonstrated dramatically a few years later when the war had a full head of steam and many of Clough's students were working for Boeing in Seattle.

One of them, a graduate of Clough's plaster class, was on the fuselage assembly line along with several other former EVS students. Their job was a crucial one. Briefly, they were to plaster the panels of each bomber and fighter that came down the line. The plaster was quick-drying and—among other things—would be used to

General Aviation Mechanics boys working on aircraft engine at the Eugene Vocational School.



help detect flaws in the aircraft, flaws that could prove dangerous or even fatal to the plane's crew.

Because the plaster was fast-drying, they had to master a technique in which they could cover an entire panel in one sweep of the hand. Clough's ex-student was sweeping panels, hundreds of them an hour, when suddenly he stopped and looked at the part he'd just finished.

"Something's wrong here," he said.

"Looks all right to me," one of his friends said.

"No, something's really wrong. I can feel it."

"Sure there is, and my name's Eisenhower," said another.

Still convinced that something wasn't right, he walked off the line—something that was unheard of and could possibly get him fired—and went to get a supervisor. He persuaded the supervisor that something was indeed not right. The line was shut down until a team of engineers could get there. When they did, they tested the panel with their most sophisticated instruments and one of them looked up in amazement and said,

"This man has detected an error amounting to 1,000th of an inch."

During the war Boeing lusted for EVS graduates. They were good, unbelievably good, and they made a name for a little one-horse school at the bottom of Oregon's Willamette Valley.

Students in Mabel Phelps' homemaking class.



But war production was still a few months off in the fall of 1939, and the Eugene Vocational School was having the time of its life. Because what they were doing had never been done before, they made things up as they went along.

Grace Eldredge took a look at her dressmaking department and decided—because of her Bloomingdale's background—that she knew more about dress design than dressmaking and promptly started turning out fashion designers.

Dot Dotson's photography department was busy. Grant Orme, a newcomer from Pittsburg, California, was the backbone of the welding program.

Orme, who later bulled through World War II like it wasn't even there, was a fiery rugged man who felt that if you don't work hard, you didn't work. He was a master at his trade and an excellent teacher. And in his classroom, he was The Boss.

Mrs. Van Loan and Orme both realized that some sort of examination system would have to be added to the welding program, so Mrs. Van Loan turned to the University of Oregon for help. That was her first mistake. Her second mistake was when she tried again.

In defense of the University, it wasn't entirely at fault. Universities, especially in those days, were not accustomed to drawing up competence exams for welding programs. Vocational education still had, if not a bad name, at least a Second Class Citizen name throughout much of the college community.

But they were game. One morning, the first exam writer showed up in Orme's class and began circulating among the students. Although what exactly happened was not recorded, the results were.

"I was sitting in my office," said Mrs. Van Loan, "when Grant stormed in. He was furious. 'Get that man the hell out of my shop', he shouted.

"It turns out that the man from the University was talking down to his students, like they were nobodies."

That was bad. It was worse though when it happened again. Orme was at the end of his rope and the University was running out of people.

They tried one more time, this time with a petite woman named Leona Tyler. Leona was a natural.

She also circulated through the classroom but her approach was different.

"Why do you wear clothes like this?" she said, "What are those goggles for? What does this machine do?"



Off-Reservation people taking Aircraft Welding work at the Eugene Vocational School.

That one over there? How many different ways of welding are there?"

The effect was predictable. Leona charmed the socks off Orme and his students. And her finale won them over for good.

"How do you do all this? Can I try?"

Orme was delighted.

"Sure, there's nothing to it." Orme was ready to carve her initials into a tree.

Leona wasn't the best welder there ever was, but for a few moments that afternoon at the Eugene Vocational School, she was the only one. Naturally, the testing program went ahead as scheduled.

Meanwhile, in Europe the Second World War was going ahead as scheduled too.

Hitler was making all the moves. Despite a cautious political tack by the United States to stay neutral, and despite urging by the America First'ers, led by Charles Lindberg, for America to mind its own business, the war was reaching the home front.

Orders were pouring in for arms and equipment. Some Americans were signing up in the RAF. Others were fighting against the Japanese in China.

By the end of May, 1940 the writing was on the wall. If we weren't actually going to get into a shooting war soon (which knowledgeable observers believed without question), then at least we were going to be on the side of the good guys.

On May 10, Hitler invaded the Low Countries. The war was on. Just three weeks later, on May 28, Roosevelt appointed a National Defense Advisory Committee.



Changing shifts at the Eugene Vocational School of Off-Reservation Training. Civilian training for the Army Air Corps. Note uniform boys wear—white coveralls, black ties. Girls wear white shirts and blue coveralls and white caps. The white caps cover the hair entirely while the girls are on the job.

America, he ordered, would be ready whether it fought or watched.

National Defense—the biggest and the most dramatic operation in the country's history—was scheduled to begin in the middle of July, less than two months away.

But in Eugene, a curious thing happened. Either because of the magic that touched the Eugene Vocational School, or because of the unusual organization of its administrators, teachers and students, or because of a combination of the two, EVS was far ahead of the rest of the nation.

On June 10, only 13 days after the president ordered the formation of the National Defense Advisory Committee, and a full month ahead of the rest of the nation, the Eugene Vocational School began a National Defense program in aviation sheet metal with 200 students. At that time, there were 416 students and 30 teachers in the school.

Four hundred-forty six people and maybe a dozen of them knew what a war was.

The rest of them were about to find out.

Chapter 5

During the summer of 1940, the Eugene Vocational School sandbagged for war. On August 1, Cramer appealed to the Board for an eight-foot fence around the aviation mechanics area to prevent "theft and sabotage". The request was referred to committee.

Staff members pulled together, including M. C. Buchanan, Art Clough, B. D. Dotson, Grace Eldredge, H. H. Harris, Roger Houglum, W. O. Harvey, Martin Johnson, Catherine Lamb, H. C. MacFarlane, Eldon Ripple, Clarence W. Sinniger, Harold Shogren, Lillian Van Loan, Frances Peterson, Ralph Clark, George Myrmo, John Quiner, Esther Greer, A. L. Hepner, Charles Winslow, and a newcomer named Mel Gaskill.

By August, the tone of the next five years was set. France had fallen more than a month before, on June 22. On July 15 more than 30,000 students nation-wide had signed up for National Defense Training. And by August

Off Reservation Training engine class.



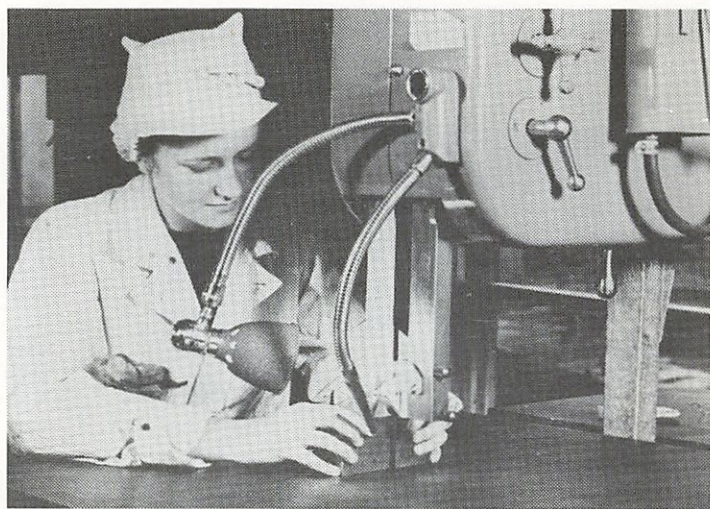
31, that number had jumped to 92,000. In eleven days, it would jump again, to 107,000, and at the end of the year, 325,000.

When students returned to school in September, they were met by an already active war program, described by Cramer as being "very effective in training men for the aviation industry, shipyards and other essential trades," and determination by the District to "provide a 1940 model of education for 1940 conditions."

1940 conditions were indeed unusual. Throughout District No. 4, students were taught crash programs in citizenship, social studies, and love of country. There were activities like the Americanization Oratorical Contest and the Children's Crusade for Children in which \$88.80 in pennies were contributed by Eugene's students to help needy children in Germany, Poland, Austria, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France.

Even teachers got into the act. The District went to great lengths to show its voters that Eugene's teachers were patriotic, God-fearing good citizens of the community by pointing out that most of them held church membership, belonged to service and fraternal clubs, contributed \$9,500 annually to charities, and had that most American of American pastimes, a hobby.

Off-Reservation Training student in machine shop.





Off Reservation Training instrument repair class.
Vern Nielsen (standing, left) instructor. 1942.

Everyone was being affected. Attrition was hitting the school staff as more and more teachers were called to active duty. Even high school boys were pulled into the National Guard. Then on November 11, the Eugene Vocational School's best friend, Lieutenant Commander O. D. Adams, was summoned to the Bremerton Navy Yard.

It became difficult to keep up with all that was happening at EVS. Boeing was already snatching up every Eugene Vocational School graduate it could get and wrote in February asking for more. In April, Hardy Steeholm, a consultant to the Office of Education for National Defense visited the school, then went back to Washington to spread the word: EVS was teaching national defense better than anyone else. Jack Lamb once said that the vocational school was better-known to the nation's capitol than it was to the citizens of Eugene. That was stretching it a bit, but nevertheless, the school was an instant hit with the war production bureaucracy.

In fact, the school's stature with the federal government resulted in a \$39,000 federal grant—\$10,000 more than its entire operating budget in 1939—for national defense training in 1941.

The federal money was put to good use. In addition to the 200 aviation sheet metal students, 60 more were added to the aviation mechanics course, all working 24 hours a day. Everyone seemed to be touched by war



Woman taking training for Boeing Aircraft Company. Note dresses worn by these trainees. It is their first day on the job. When they report back in the morning there is no doubt that they will be in proper uniform.

production. Automotive operated 12 hours a day. Electric and acetylene welding was too—supplying men for Portland's shipyards. In the machine shop, students worked 18 hours a day learning how to be shapers, drill press and lathe operators. Blueprint reading had gone to an around-the-clock schedule. The only National Defense gunsmithing course in the state began. Radio students were working 16 hours a day. Even a special WPA project called Training for Older Men started for 100 retired and semi-retired men. The idea was to draw from their work experience and apply it to the war effort.

In the first year, the National Defense program had grown to 500 students. Peak enrollment prior to war production had been 972 but it doubled in one year to 1,819. Nationally, vocational and engineering schools had increased their enrollment from two to three million students, and schools in 300 cities across the country had gone to a 24 hour-a-day operation.

The war was getting closer. Cramer, who had seen \$150,000 in government money funnel into his district, sent out another message to Eugene: "The unsettled world condition has made Americans stop and take stock of our own affairs. The preservation of American democracy as a way of life is a cause which is very dear to us all. The public school system is the first line of defense in this battle. Your schools are staffed by honest, sincere, patriotic teachers; the younger generation of Americans

are as fine a group as this country has ever seen. Your schools have done their part in developing American unity and patriotism."

Unity was a special product of the vocational school, involving both the students and staff. When Mrs. Van Loan was named director May 26, new shops were needed for woodworking and aviation. She sent memos to the NYA camp and to staff members telling them "you will report to such and such a location tomorrow at 7 p.m. to build work benches," or "you should be at the new construction site tomorrow night to pour foundations," or "please take three students to town today and pick up the following materials. Bouncer will be available."

(Bouncer was Mrs. Van Loan's Model A Ford that served as delivery van, staff car and errand-runner for the vocational school for many years. Everyone drove Bouncer, and no one remembers ever getting behind the wheel when the gas tank wasn't full. Bouncer is still alive and well in Corvallis, owned by an Oregon State University student.)

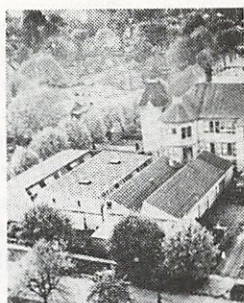
The National Defense boom put a strain on the vocational school's physical plant, both at Fourth and Madison and at the Airpark. Students at the Geary Building were running out of room almost before the program began. And at the Airpark, the facilities were dismal—the old hangars were falling apart; walls and roofs were rickety and full of holes, the asphalt runway was actually leaking (the landfill used to cover up the old swamp never did work, with the result that in some places, the

Off Reservation Training propeller class.
Rodney Jeans (kneeling), instructor. 1942.



pressure of a human foot could cause water to seep through the pavement), and it was a fire trap.

Mrs. Van Loan looked at her priorities and went to work. On October 13, 1941, with more than \$65,000 in federally-purchased equipment due anytime, she appeared before the Board to appeal for \$2,000 in construction funds. More space was needed she said. There would have to be room for an expanded electric welding program, plus a third shop building and a temporary metal storage and work area. NYA students would do the work.



Geary surrounded by
NYA-built shops.

Work had barely begun, however, when conditions overseas went from bad to worse. Europe was at total war and the Japanese fleet was sailing around the Pacific like it owned it. U.S. involvement was inevitable, only being a matter of time before something bad enough happened to force it into the fight.

The "something bad enough" happened over breakfast on December 7 in the territory of Hawaii. After Pearl Harbor, there was no question about it. The war was real, and it was here.

At its December 8 meeting, the Board calmly took note of the events of the day before and announced that "inasmuch as war was declared this date by the United States against Japan, the danger of sabotage immediately becomes serious."

Gilbert MacLaren then moved that a fence earmarked for Wilson Junior High School be erected instead around the vocational school. The Board agreed. And then MacLaren, who didn't become a successful businessman by giving things away, moved that the Board bill the federal government for a new fence for Wilson Junior High. That motion passed too.

The next four years are a blur.


Chapter 6

Students showed up for school on December 8 with global war staring them in the face. As often happens in time of great stress, there was a feeling of calm. Mrs. Van Loan, when she heard about the attack on the Pacific Fleet, gathered her staff together and made the terse announcement, "we are at war."

Those who thought that nothing more could be done, that longer hours couldn't be worked, that no more students could be crammed into that rickety old building at Fourth and Madison, had not reckoned with Lillian Van Loan and (the second billing is deliberate) a very powerful U.S. Government.

In a matter of days, the vocational school cranked up. Jack Lamb and his students tore through the school taking pictures of everyone they could find for the I.D. cards that Mrs. Van Loan had ordered.

(Later the photographic program would come almost to a standstill because of a shortage of silver, a prime ingredient in film.)

Eugene Vocational School		
	NAME <u>Lillian VanLoan</u>	
	<u>W</u>	<u>33</u>
	SEX	AGE
	<u>143</u>	<u>Brown- Ice</u>
	WEIGHT	EYES HAIR
<u>Lillian Van Loan</u>		
DIRECTOR E.V.S.		
<u>Lillian Van Loan</u>		
TRAINEE'S SIGNATURE		

775

In less than a week, every student and every staff member was walking around with an I.D. card pinned to his or her chest.

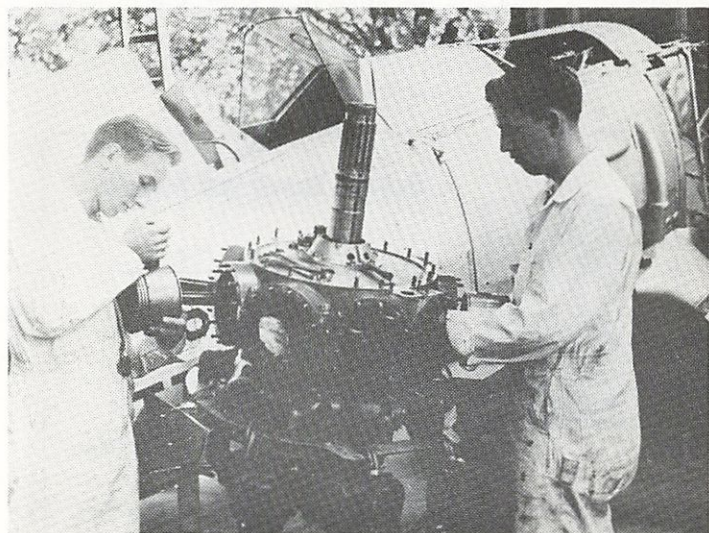
As other weeks passed, and as the war news grew worse, EVS seemed to forget about everything else and simply concentrated on meeting the demands of war production. Mel Gaskill's aviation students barely had time to unpack before they were packing again for the giant assembly lines at Boeing and the air fields at Tacoma and Spokane. Welders and metal workers were sent to the Portland shipyards as fast as they could learn to weld and work metal.

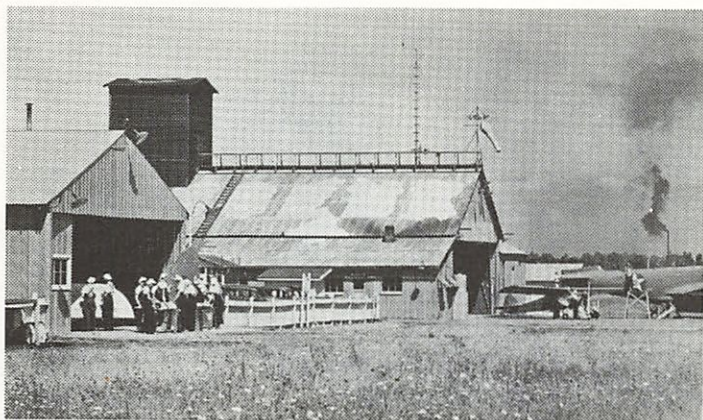
Placement jumped from 270 in 1940 to 1,026 in 1941 and would hit 2,310 before December, 1942.

To hit such placement figures, the vocational school had to operate 24 hours a day, 12 months a year. But that caused a problem, too: how to keep from being seen at night. The entire West Coast, still shaking from the ease with which the Japanese had slipped into Pearl Harbor, was under a strict blackout policy. In San Diego, one of the large aircraft manufacturing plants even built a golf course on its roof to camouflage the building from the air.

Old Geary was particularly vulnerable to light leaks and it was feared for awhile that despite their

Off Reservation Training engine students.





Eugene Vocational School Airport Annex showing two hangars.

necessity, the night operations might have to be abandoned.

Grant Orme didn't believe it for a second. "You want a blackout," he said, "I'll fix you a blackout."

Soon windows were shuttered, doors were insulted, and cracks in the ancient walls of Old Geary were plugged up. Orme had kept his promise.

But Mrs. Van Loan wanted to see for herself. For some time she had been in the habit of setting her alarm for 3 a.m. so she could visit each shift at least once or twice during the week.

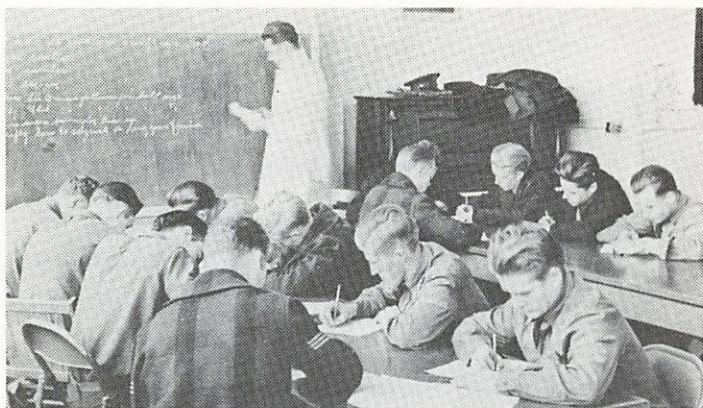
Shortly after the blackout went into effect, she drove Bouncer out to the school a few hours before sunrise to try to spot even the smallest shaft of light coming from inside. She was looking up at the second floor when suddenly a voice came down from the fence above her.

"It's okay. You don't have to be out here snooping around."

It was Grant Orme, the day-shift welder and the Phantom Blackout Maker.

The war bulled along and the school system found itself involved in a "sugar ration system, salvage programs for lead, tin, burlap," and in "air raid precautions and war stamps and bonds."

Not everything was war oriented, however. One teacher fell in love and got married. She also got fired. The Board brushed off her appeal to stay on the job by citing standard Board policy that "in case the teacher under this contract is a woman, and she marries at anytime



Off Reservation Training class.

after signing same, said teacher agrees that this contract shall become null and void."

There were other priorities too. A hospital attendants program began along with a greater emphasis on homemaking and child care. There was also the Trade Training Program, a long-term well-rounded course of separate four-hour courses that included agriculture, auto mechanics, creative design, custom millinery and dress design, general aviation mechanics, home service, machine operating, office training, photography, radio, retail selling and general woodworking. And there was a night program called Distributive Education for waitresses, grocery clerks, shoe salesmen, package wrappers, window display, show card writing and general selling.

On the home front, World War II was a curious combination of commerce, flag waving, doing without, and business-as-usual. All along the quiet residential streets west of the business district, families grew Victory Gardens and pasted gas ration coupons on the windshields of their cars.

And all the while, the Eugene Vocational School continued to outgrow itself like a pimply teenager outgrows three pairs of long pants in a single year. By 1942, enrollment had grown to almost 2,500 students of which 2,300 had found jobs either in the Army, civil service or any one of the many industrial giants. That same year the Eugene Airpark was turned over to EVS for its aviation mechanics programs. A new municipal airfield, named after Mahlon Sweet, had opened up northwest of town.

With its expanded facilities, EVS promptly contracted with the Army and the Army Air Corps to turn out even more war workers in two major federal programs: Off Reservation Training and the Mechanic Learner Training Program.

Army Air Force mechanics and technicians were processed like carrots and squash during canning season. As Oregon's ORT training depot, the program was central to EVS's war effort and soon demanded the attention of not only its commanding officer (Maj. C. C. Minty of Ogden, Utah, Air Base) but also of war officials at the highest levels.

Off Reservation Training's companion program for civil service trainees was the Mechanical Learner Training Program.

MLTP was typical of the federal government's love affair with alphabet soup operations. It was also typical in that it worked. Beginning with 35 students, by June of '42, it had soon grown to 300 in a dozen different courses.

Nobody got rich in MLTP, especially by 1942 standards. A trainee, who had to pass both a civil service and medical exam before being accepted, received only \$75 a month while in school and \$125 a month on the job. But they were all dedicated, most of them were young, and thousands of them were women.

One of them was Pat Milligan. Pat, known as "Mulligan Stew" by her classmates, was 16 years old and working in Corvallis in 1942.

Woman being trained in Arc Welding for Oregon Ship Yards in Portland.



As one of four children of a widowed mother, Pat was at a dead end. Her mother could not support the entire family and had sent Pat from her home in Grants Pass to live with a family in Corvallis where she worked for her room and board. But that job ended and she was out of work and out of a place to live.

Her mother had heard about the Eugene Vocational School and wired Pat two dollars along with some advice: go to Eugene. By the time she arrived in Eugene, her two dollars were gone. She was desperate.

"When I got there (EVS), I talked to the director and the first thing he told me was that I was too young."

(Pat must have talked to assistant director Dale Perry because Mrs. Van Loan was still head of the school. Age requirement for full-time, non-high school students was 17, even though the school sometimes bent the rules a little, as it did in the case of Miss Milligan.)

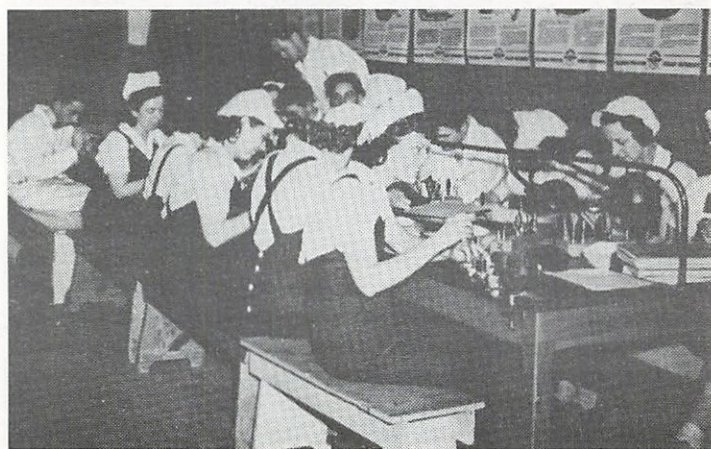
"After I told him I didn't have any money and no place to go, he gave in and let me take an aptitude test."

"Then he found me a place to live, a boarding house at 11th ave. and Taylor that was run by Mary Cothrell. A lot of the other girls lived there, too.

"Room and board was \$65 a month and Mrs. Cothrell was like a mother to us; and I sure needed that, believe me."

If a mother is patient, then Mrs. Cothrell was much like a mother to Pat. It was three months before she was

Off Reservation Training instrument class,
Vern Nielsen (right, background) instructor. 1942.





Nita Ziniker, 1942, was a war-time rarity because she was one of the few women students to own her own car.

paid, yet Mrs. Cothrell "carried" her on the books for the entire period.

Once in school, Pat enrolled in an aviation electrical class at the Airpark. From 11th and Taylor she could take a bus to the end of the pavement at Chambers St. and walk the last few blocks to class.

A World War II bomber came fitted with miles of electrical wiring and hundreds of instruments, taking months to learn. "Mulligan Stew" started in January of 1943. She would not finish until September.

In between, under the scrutiny of her instructors Barney Eastlick and Ed Conant, she studied diagrams, wiring, circuits, sandblasting sparkplugs—everything electrical that made an airplane tick.

In class, Pat wasn't exactly Rosie the Riverter, but she was close. She wore dark blue cotton coveralls, white shortsleeved blouses, "crazy caps" to keep the hair out of her eyes, and absolutely no hand jewelry ("it was too dangerous around the machinery.").

Safety was important. And so was security. Pat and the rest of her class, besides sitting through ten hours of first aid and being drilled on how to put out magnesium fires (magnesium is a major aircraft building material), learned that "a slip of the lip can sink a ship" and that even the Airpark in Little 'Ol Eugene was off limits to unauthorized visitors.

But Pat's lip was buttoned. Even the blueprints she worked with and those she drew remained locked up at night during those early dreary days of World War II.

They were dreary days; the big island had fallen and the United States was taking a beating. It would be well over a year before the war department would allow photos of dead American soldiers, scattered across a South Pacific beach, released to the public.

To fill the gap, the U.S. war machine was working overtime causing a shortage of almost every household and industrial item at home.

"When we first started," said Pat, "we were supposed to learn how to draw blueprints, sure, but we also had to be able to go out and design our own tools when we needed them. Because of the shortage, they just weren't around."

"One of my first projects, as a matter of fact, was to design and build a good 'peepsight'."

That was pretty heady stuff for a 16-year old from Corvallis.

The hours were long and the food was good ("the airport cook was a mom to everyone. But she sure could be stern if you misbehaved.") but wasn't without it's recreation or light moments.

Small town recreation at pre-war prices was still available in Eugene during the war. Movies were 35 cents ("we saw every one that came to town.") and canoes were cheap for a trip down the millrace on a hot summer's day. You could rent them at the east end of the "race" (near where the Black Angus restaurant is now) or you could swim in the pool that was located nearby.

During the fall, there were football games at the WPA-built Civic Stadium, summer bean-picking across from the country club, bowling above what is now the 88-cent store on Willamette Street, and dances anytime at union halls and fraternal clubs all over town.

And there were the wrestling matches.

"How we loved the wrestling matches! One night one wrestler chased another out of the ring and then out of the building and into the parking lot.

"He caught him (the other wrestler) out by one of the cars and started bashing his head against the fender...so hard it put a dent in it.

"That was bad enough, but pretty soon the owner of the car came out and I guess he got pretty mad about the dent in his fender and he started beating up on the wrestler."



Shortly after the war began eleven EVS instructors shipped out to North Ireland to work for Lockheed Overseas Corporation. Left to right: George Mast, Ed Conant, Harold Priest, Elhannan Thomas, Don Tilden, Mel Gaskill, Vic Watts, Yale Smith, Carl Kuhne, Earl McCarthy (first step), and Clarence Crocker, (upper step).

After graduation, most students found jobs—those that hadn't already been guaranteed placement—in the northwest, particularly in Spokane and Tacoma, Washington. One of them, Gladys Compton, hired on as an aircraft mechanic at McCord Field in Tacoma (now McCord Air Base) only after proving she could dismantle an aircraft engine into its 6,000 parts and put it back together again.

By 1943 great changes had taken place at the vocational school. Enrollment had climbed to more than 2,800; the NYA camp, after serving as disaster headquarters during the Big Flood of '43, had been turned over to the city; the Out-Of-School-Youth-Program (another division of National Defense training) was training truck mechanics, electricians and carpenters in Elkton, Spencer Creek, Oakridge and Bryce Creek; and city fathers were already talking about a veterans' rehabilitation program.

That program soon attracted the attention of *Yank Magazine*, which sent a sergeant by the name of Oliphant to write a cover story on it for world-wide distribution. Oliphant later became a well-known political cartoonist.

But in 1943, despite the optimism of the city fathers, the light at the end of the tunnel was barely visible. The Eugene Vocational School still had a war on its hands.

Not only was it a war against a far-away enemy, it was also a war against fatigue, time, and the ceaseless deterioration of buildings and equipment.

Old Geary was holding up fairly well, but the Airpark was derelict. Classrooms were lined in beaver board and the ceiling was sealed with flattened cardboard boxes. The hangar was heated by a rickety old wood-burner which was fed by 40 cords of wood a year, hand-cut by the staff and students.

"We were forever setting the walls on fire," remembered Mel Gaskill.

It was at the Airpark where a great deal of the Off Reservation Training program flourished. ORT, which was primarily responsible for enrollment jumping from 474 in 1940 to almost 3,000 three years later, was also responsible for backbreaking 24-hour-a-day shifts in the classroom and in the shops where students, sometimes doubling up to get out in three months instead of six, worked an exhausting schedule. On the graveyard shift, both students and teachers spent most of the time standing at their desks to keep from going to sleep.

Mel Gaskill was one of them, at least until the summer of 1943 when he and ten other teachers were sent to Ireland and a top-secret operation for the Lockheed Overseas Corporation. The war at home was over for George Mast, Ed Conant, Harold Priest, Elhannan Thomas, Don Tilden, Mei Gaskill, Vic Watts, Yale Smith, Carl Kuhne, Earl McCarthy and Clarence Crocker. They would spend the rest of it inspecting and working with such American warplanes as the P-38, B-17 bomber, and P-47 Thunderbolt. And the war was also over for Glenn Miller, whose plane plowed into the English Channel, and former instructor Lt. Harvey MacHewitt, whose plane smashed into the Texas hardpan.

But not all the news was so grim. Eugene housewife Goldie Burkhart took a woodworking class to build kitchen cabinets for her home; 17-year old Eugene High School senior Jim Hall built an 18-foot sloop, and George Zahn and his parents enrolled together in the aviation program—George, a Seaman Second Class, later beat out 982 other applicants for a post-graduate aviation training program with the Navy while his parents landed war production jobs in Spokane.

The Eugene Vocational School profited too. When ORT ground to a halt shortly before the war ended, Mrs. Van Loan leaned on Mahlon Sweet to lean on his friend, Gen. Hap Arnold, for some help in beefing up the school's equipment inventory.

Equipment sent to the school by the Army had been identified with the initials SVD—State Vocational Department (EVS people immediately turned that around to read "swiped from vocational department"), but Mrs. Van Loan, knowing the value of the equipment and machines on loan to EVS, wanted it to stay. It was to be one of her legacies to the school.

In a matter of weeks, Army enlisted men showed up at the vocational school with instructions from the top brass: anything EVS wants, EVS gets. Some of that equipment is still being used by Lane Community College.

By 1944, the war had turned completely around. Prophets were predicting an end in weeks. Realists were looking at a year, maybe a little less. Changes were being made.

Lillian Van Loan was gone, appointed a few months earlier as director of the placement bureau for the Oregon State Teachers Association. At her going away dinner at the Eugene Hotel, she received a gold watch from the staff and lavish praise from the Register-Guard which quoted her philosophy concerning the vocational school, a philosophy that hasn't changed in 30

Radio class, Eugene Vocational School.





A prized photograph of Eleanor Roosevelt and Lillian Van Loan touring Art Clough's creative design department

years: "Our effort is to find an answer for anybody who comes through that door whether his age is 17 or 70."

Dale Perry was her successor.

Perry took charge at a major crossroads in the life of the Eugene Vocational School. His staff had grown—Howard Monosmith was now director of the machine shop, William Henderson was director of the sheetmetal shop (earlier his students had constructed loud-speaker cabinets for ships of the fleet), and Russell Stokes was director of the foundry with its 45-foot cupola—but it had also shrunk. Several staff members had gone off to war and some, like Jack and Catherine Lamb who had opened up a photography shop, had returned to private business. Many of the old-timers were still around, however. Roger Houglum, his Signal Corps program virtually depleted of students and rapidly disappearing federal funds, was there. So was Art Clough.

Clough's war efforts were already well-known throughout vocational education and in the war production industry. It was Clough who spent 12 nights at drafting tables with his students developing a workable instructional kit for students of the Hamilton propeller—a packet of drawings and overlays that was adopted by the Air Force and used throughout the world until a few years ago.

Aviation was still the major EVS program in the waning days of World War II. More than half of Oregon's

contribution to the aircraft industry came from EVS at one time or another, 60 percent of it women including teenagers like Barbara Bjerke and grandmothers like Susan B. Lewis.

And it was aviation that finally put an end to the war on a hot August day in 1945. With Japan's surrender, the future of the Eugene Vocational School was uncertain. The classrooms and shops that had buzzed around-the-clock for four years suddenly were empty after 5 p.m. Some of them were empty, period. Programs that had gradually been cutting back for months were cut out entirely. Students disappeared and staff members were laid off. The Great EVS Drought began.

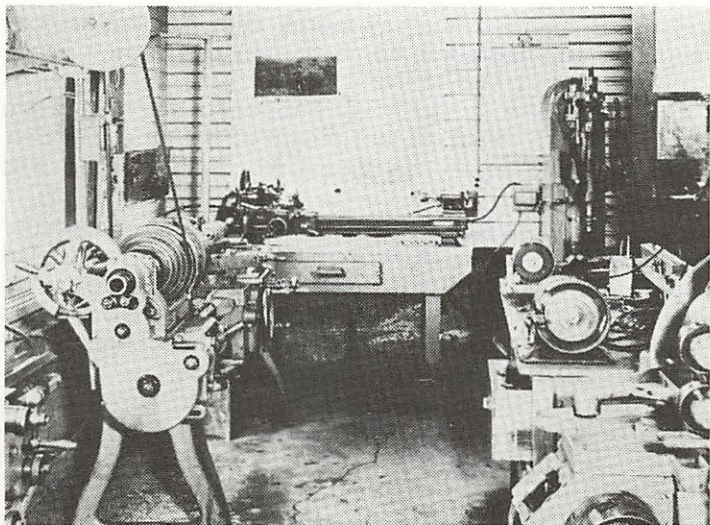
But on the horizon were noises. The noises were troopships docking in New York and San Francisco. And the troopships were filled with shorttimers on their way home to start the first trickle of the post-war baby boom. They were also on their way home to find jobs.

Someone had to train them for jobs, to turn them into qualified electricians, mechanics, draftsmen, radio announcers, shoe clerks.

EVS, which had just gone through one "golden age" was about to embark on another. It was an age of rehabilitation, of retraining, of rethinking.

It was an age of renewal.

The old machine shop, in the basement at Geary.



Chapter 7

Unlike the doughboys before them who had spent only about a year in the trenches, World War II's GI's had for the most part, been away from home for two, three and sometimes four years.

They had grown up in a demoralizing Depression and had shipped off to war in their teens, returning in 1945 and 1946, as one veteran put it, "knowing nothin' about nothing".

Most of them did not have a trade to speak of. Many had learned how to type or to operate a field radio or to perform hamburger surgery on a battered P-38, but wartime training had been expeditious, to say the least, with one thought in mind—get the hardware to the front in a hurry.

But 1946 was a new world. They had left as boys and girls and had come home as men and women, ready to work, to buy and to live it up.

Because it had never happened before, no one was quite sure what all that meant at the time, but they were willing to learn. The Eugene Vocational School was to learn in a hurry.

EVS had slumped badly in the months immediately following V-J Day. A school that had seen more than \$300,000 in federal funds pumped into it during a global war, suddenly was without—without students, without staff, without money. Much of its equipment, finagled from Hap Arnold, sat idle. But new director LeRoy Erdmann, who had taken over after Dale Perry left, had a strong background in vocational education. He had been instrumental in the embryonic beginnings of the Oregon Institute of Technology (until recently the Oregon Technical Institute) when it was still an R & R center for malaria-stricken marines.

He and assistant director W. W. (Bill) Cox—himself a vocational education expert from Astoria—went to work when the school was still quiet but while the rumblings in the near future were growing louder. They were the rumblings of veterans waiting in line to get in, at one point nearly 500 of them.

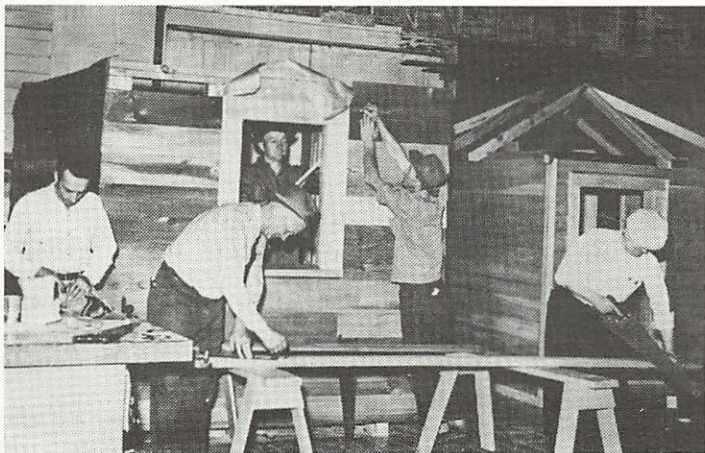
The rehabilitation program set up by the city fathers, and, in EVS's case, by Dale Perry, was about to roll. It had already taken hold across the country in the form of that second or third oldest of professions—apprenticeship training.

Bill Cox was hired a few weeks before V-J Day to formulate the veterans' apprenticeship program and to work closely with the University of Oregon in the still-new area of veterans' affairs. A satellite program for vets planning on returning to the farm was also started, with Earl Britton as director. Already the state employment service and the special U of O community rehabilitation program was processing the ex-GI's by the hundreds.

Still the vocational school waited. At the Airpark, the site of thousands of hours of around-the-clock training, the aviation mechanics and maintenance areas had fallen into disarray. Weeds overran the classrooms and rust ate away at the equipment. Mel Gaskill, who had returned from Ireland, was summoned to the school.

To get the aircraft program back on its feet, what, asked Erdmann, would Gaskill suggest. Gaskill looked around him. Pasteboard was still covering the cracks in

Apprentices at work.





Advisory committee. Left to right: Jenks Darr, Bill Cox, Lee Esting, Jens Horstrup, Joe Willis.

the walls and ceiling. Tables still sat about, one set of legs shorter than the other to compensate for the slope in the floor.

Gaskill submitted a list of suggestions to the director and, after a little man-to-man bargaining, agreed to stay on two weeks to make sure his suggestions were followed.

He stayed a little longer, retiring in 1974 as head of the mechanics department at Lane Community College.

Meanwhile Cox was busy. He was helping organize a local apprenticeship council comprised of labor, management and representatives from the general public. Later, when the program had grown up, separate councils were established for each trade: one for plumbers, one for electricians, one for painters and so forth.

But the year or two after the war were simpler times, times when the GI Bill paid for everything plus a few bucks on the side and when only two apprenticeship options were offered:

1. The regular three, four, or five year training program under a journeyman, and

2. A shorter irregular program for "unskilled" jobs such as retail sales. Later that program was expanded to make room for University of Oregon students who wanted the insurance of vocational training added to their more liberal arts instruction at the school on Thirteenth Avenue.

Apprenticeship and other post-war training did have its detractors, its worry-warts. Some felt it was too much too fast. Others, not so sympathetic to organized

labor, pictured it as a fast way for unions to fill their ranks and protect themselves against cheap labor. Not true said Bill Cox.

"By no means was the (apprenticeship) program ever a diploma mill. There never was any question about it being a cheap labor deal for the trades to take advantage of."

Indeed the union locals liked the program and worked closely with Cox to make it successful. Here's how it worked for one man, Joris Johnson. After he was discharged from the Army, Johnson reported to the Veterans' Rehabilitation Center at the University of Oregon.

"I took a series of aptitude tests and went through some personal interviews before I finally decided that I wanted to be an electrician.

"Hamilton Electric hired me and I was accepted, along with about 15 other guys, into the electrical apprenticeship program.

"My tuition was \$12 a term. I got 60 cents an hour at Hamilton Electric and \$90 a month from the GI Bill, which was cut little by little as I got closer to \$400 a month at Hamilton. On top of that, since most apprentices were expected to provide their own tools, the VA allowed me \$100 for equipment."

Johnson got credit for on-the-job training and eight stages of "related training" that amounted to 144 hours of instruction in such areas as blueprint reading, drafting, physical science and the actual "related" subjects that pertained directly to electrical work.

One of his classmates was a mechanics student named Robert Maxwell, a winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Johnson stuck with the program four years, finally earning his journeyman card and being accepted as a full-fledged member of the union. In a few years, he would return to EVS as a related-training instructor and eventually, at Lane Community College, would hold essentially the same position held by Bill Cox in 1946.

The apprenticeship program was not the only magnet drawing veterans to the vocational school in the 1940's. Art Clough's creative design class, which had made the transition from wartime production to civilian commerce as if the war had never happened, was still one of the strongest programs in the school.

His students made decorative wood carvings for Weyerhaeuser Corporation, the airports at Eugene and Medford and for just about anyone who wanted them.

Mrs. Van Loan still has a carving made for her by Lorie Cross, now a Eugene businessman.

His classes also served as a free house-design service for Eugene's booming home-building industry. Dozens of families came to Clough's classes, sometimes with only a dream, sometimes with a few sketches made on a napkin. They left with a complete floor plan. The service grew so successful and popular that soon the University of Oregon School of Architecture began sending students to Clough to pick up pointers.

Inventors also utilized the creative design class, calling on students to help them work up patent drawings and models. Some students designed and built their own boats. One designed a service station that became one of the busiest in the city. And when Eugene decided it needed a bridge across the Willamette River to connect the city with the growing northeast side, Clough decided his class should help.

While city engineers were busy plotting the best location for the bridge (i.e. the best intersection), Clough's students fanned out through the city and conducted what is believed to be Eugene's first traffic survey.

For three weeks, they watched traffic flows, made notes and sketches, and gathered together evenings to report their findings. Finally, using the technique of transparent overlays that had stood the Air Force on its ear with the Hamilton Prop Episode, they fashioned a complete study of every intersection in town, pinpointing all but one bad intersection.

Then, using the survey as a guide, they laid out a suggested bridge and ramp system that coincided with the city engineers' version in all but two respects: Clough's class had an elevated off-ramp exiting at 12th Avenue instead of Seventh and Eighth, and it had drawn in an extra ramp the city didn't have. Within five years, that ramp was added.

In the meantime, the rest of the vocational school pulled out of its slump and, in fact, began looking around for more space. Ironically, the "extra space" was 40 miles away.

Corvallis' Air Force station, Camp Adair, was virtually deserted in the late 1940's; buildings were empty, haunted with sounds of marching troops and memories of the days when busloads of NYA girls would arrive from Eugene for Friday night dances. Two Camp Adair buildings—two-story theatres—were simply sawed in half, loaded onto trucks and shipped to EVS down Highway 99

to provide space for 300 veterans in the vocational-agriculture, carpentry and machine shop programs.

The space was well used, for EVS was expanding, not only in its regular programs (Roger Houglum, for instance, was already putting the pieces together for KRVM) but in new fields it had never tried before.

In 1947 Cox looked at the night apprenticeship and newly-returned trade improvement programs and saw that there was an area still missing. It was the area of self-improvement, an area where students not necessarily bent on entering a trade could learn new skills or hobbies. These days it is the fastest growing form of education in the United States. It is called adult education.

At first an experiment (it did not become a fully-operational program until the late 1950's), adult education began with a few classes in homemaking, dress making, fitting, pattern alteration, meal planning, cake decorating and upholstery. Upholstery was an instant success.

When it began, with Mae Frye as the instructor, more than 300 students tried to sign up at once, setting a trend of packed classes that continued through the remainder of the vocational school's years.

1947 was also a big year for beards, fishing and radio.

Eugene was about to celebrate its centennial, a ritual that—as might be expected—produced an order

Barrel chairs were all the rage with Mae Frye's upholstery class. Location: the second floor of one of the war surplus buildings trucked down to Eugene from Camp Adair in Corvallis.





Early staff at a party. Left to right around table: Alice Barnhart, Bob Gehring, L. L. Erdmann, Oscar Johnson, Clarence Crocker (hidden), James Fortt, Roger Houghlum, Mel Gaskill (hand in air), Elmer Gifford, Mabel Phelps, Ray Cornelius, Carl Lemke, Art Clough, George Mast, Earl Britton, Archie Bell, Bill Cox (hidden), Ruth Thygesen.

from Erdmann that all male staff members attempt to sprout whiskers for the occasion. Meanwhile, female staff members were urged to wear nineteenth-century clothes. It was that kind of school in those days: close-knit.

Birthdays and holidays were excuses for staff parties. And every year, including 1947, the staff helped celebrate the beginning of fishing season with a cigar-smoking, card-playing trip to Diamond Lake.

But the biggest news of 1947 was the coming of radio station KRVM.

Roger Houghlum had dreamed of something like KRVM for years. Bill Cox once called it one of the three biggest advancements made by the Eugene Vocational School in its 27-year history; if nothing else, it played a big role in bringing EVS's net worth up to a record \$400,000 and job placements to more than 8,000.

Post-war prosperity had a dramatic influence on commercial radio. During the war, the federal government had placed a freeze on construction of new radio stations but soon after the last bomb fell, investors scrambled to get in on the action. In pre-war days, the majority of radio broadcasts had originated from cities and large towns. Eugene had been served by commercial radio from about 1924 when KORE first established itself as a successful station; before that, a one-horse operation called

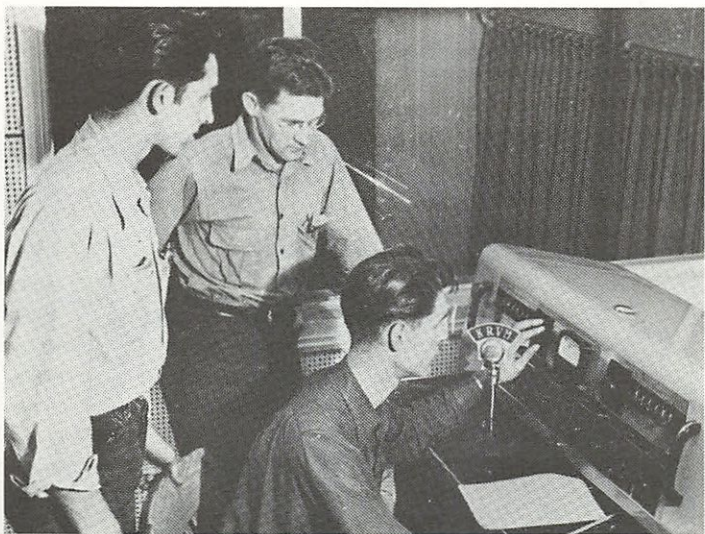
KFAT—run by two advertising dentists—operated intermittently but it folded in about 1923.

After 1945 radio took some giant steps to some very small places. Small communities, like Bend, Burns, Roseburg and Lakeview, which had never had local stations began to build them. Consequently there was a new job market for announcers, salesmen, engineers and managers.

Houglum saw KRVM as a training ground to feed that market. Early in the year he and Erdmann consulted on what was needed to operate a full-time radio station. They decided on a control room and two studios—one large, one small. Because of the money pinch, the studios would share equipment. The whole operation would be on the second floor of the Geary Building and would transmit primarily to the district's elementary, junior and senior high schools.

Later in the year, as construction on the station progressed, the FCC assigned the station the call letters WBWB. Houglum fired off a memo to Washington reminding the FCC that radio stations east of the Mississippi have call letters beginning with "W", while those west of the river started with "K". After an embarrassed silence, the new letters KRVM arrived.

The first broadcast of KRVM, Dec. 8, 1947. Left to right: Bud Wright, Harvey Brannan, Leo Reetz. Reetz is now director of transmitter engineering for the ABC network.



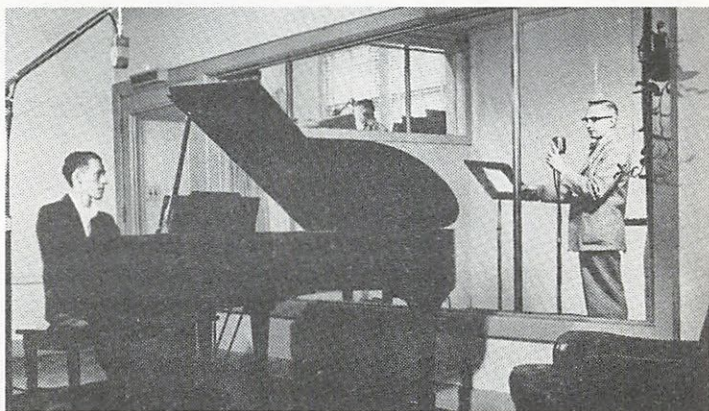
On December 8, KRVM signed on the air as the first educational FM station west of Minneapolis and north of San Francisco. It was staffed by students or volunteers. No one was paid.

Programming essentially came in two categories: 1) productions by local schools, such as "Singing Time" and "Art on the Air", and 2) electrical transcription. In other words, 16-inch records.

"Electrical transcriptions" were a part of KRVM for several years until tape recording was developed. Some of them were rented or purchased but most came free from companies like Westinghouse and General Electric. Some programs like "Great Moments in Oregon History" (from KOAC, in Corvallis), "Mr. Presidents" (KUGN), and "Favorite Story" narrated by Ronald Coleman (KORE) were loaned.

The success of KRVM closed out the 1940's on a positive note. The Eugene Vocational School had begun the decade as an experiment floundering around in an educational no-man's land on a nickle-dime budget. A world war had made it grow up in a hurry; maybe in too much of a hurry. In the 1950's that would soon follow, never again would the vocational school play such a dramatic role in the community or the nation. It would mellow, grow a little bit old, eventually be jolted somewhat by a fire marshall and the Russians, and, in the course of time, it would run out of time.

The large KRVM studio on the third floor of the Geary building.
Left is Don Anderson, an accomplished pianist, who got his background in programming and engineering at KRVM. The student announcer is Norman Nerseth.



Chapter 8

As the decade changed, the Eugene Vocational School had some new competition. While a couple of other communities—notably Oregon City—were developing vocational schools of their own, the state was also deciding the fate of Oregon Technical Institute in Klamath Falls. The Navy had given up the site as a rehabilitation center for malaria-infested marines and OTI was asking for statewide support for a solid funding base. The Register-Guard wondered editorially why OTI needed more money; EVS, it felt, was doing a fine job on a small budget and such an effort by an established school should be an example to the proponents of the Oregon Technical Institute.

EVS was indeed doing a fine job on a small budget. The Civil Aeronautics Administration approved the school as the only facility in Oregon for training aircraft and aircraft engine mechanics, a step that coincided with a decision by Cox (who was now director of the school) and Mel Gaskill to again attempt to recruit women for the aviation programs. Women had been informally excluded from aviation mechanics and maintenance since the end of World War II.

At about the same time, Clarence Crocker's students designed and tooled a precision lathe for Eugene High School and KRVM started a quiz show for elementary school students called "Information Please".

And also at about the same time, Bill Cox's second-most-important-advancement-at-EVS got underway. It was the Licensed Practical Nursing Program.

The Register-Guard reported in late November of 1950, when enrollment had hit 1,539, that the first LPN class had started school. But it was a false start, bogged down in red tape for several years until 1957 when Ellene Goldsmith led it out of the woods and into the classroom for good.

Mrs. Goldsmith remembers part of the problem was the curriculum approval process which first had to be "accepted by the American Vocational Association, the Oregon Technical and Industrial Association, the local advisory board, and the state nursing board" before it could begin operation.

Once that was accomplished, students were put to work, spending 400 hours of study over a year's period. Until they were capped (usually in October), they spent most of the time in the classroom and only three hours a day "on the floor" at Sacred Heart General Hospital. After capping, however, the ratio switched and the students began spending six hours a day at the hospital and only one day a week (Mondays) in the classroom.

In guiding the class (which she did alone until 1962 when she got her first assistant), Mrs. Goldsmith had some help—her little black book. The "little black book" was as much a fixture as bedpans were to the LPN students of the '50's; it contained prayers and devotions of all faiths, messages that were read each day before the beginning of class by the instructor or a student. There was a minor flap over the church/state issue for a short time but it subsided when Mrs. Goldsmith persuaded her critics that comfort of the patient was more important.

The patient's comfort was very important because the patient was fast becoming the vocational school itself. Despite new courses in aviation sheet metal, auto mechanics for women and an ambitious adult education program that was enrolling more than 700 "homemakers" a year, the post-war honeymoon was almost over. Enrollment had fallen off drastically in many areas and had leveled off in others. The radio course was down to three instructors—one of them working at night. For the first time in its 14-year history, it looked as if the vocational school might have to recruit students.

Performing a landing gear retraction test. Left to right:
Clayton Holteen, James Longacre, Lewis Mortensen, Mel Gaskill, Darrel Mansveld.





An early Licensed Practical Nursing class.

Barely three years earlier, students had been standing in line for classes; extra staff members had been brought in to handle the overflow; more buildings had been added. Why the sudden change?

Part of the answer lay in the New Economy. Technology had taken a new turn almost before anyone knew it had happened, creating a huge white-collar working world that had never existed before. Millions of middle management jobs popped up overnight in the nation's businesses and corporations. Countless new teachers were needed to handle the initial onslaught of the post-war baby boom. Wide-spread use of new gadgets like computers and telecommunication systems drained thousands of workers from the ranks of the unemployed. And with its emphasis still strongly limited to the traditional vocational programs, EVS was slipping slowly behind the times.

On the other hand, universities and colleges were experiencing a tremendous boom. Big business gobbled up all the college graduates it could get, setting a trend of fighting over grads that lasted well into the 1960's. Soon high school students—often at the insistence of their parents—began thinking solely in terms of college and the four-year degree. Even poor students were badgered by teachers, counselors, parents and their fellow students to put on the freshman beanie before the high school tassel was off the rear view mirror.

All of that hurt the Eugene Vocational School. That and the school's own slow decay. For many, the Great Experiment had long ago become the Great Ho-Hum. The

contributions and excitement of the World War II were forgotten by much of the community; and in its middle age, the vocational school had just become another part of District No. 4, no better nor no worse than any other school in the city.

Adding to those troubles was the physical decay of the school's facilities. Old Geary was failing fast, moving LeRoy Erdmann to say later that, "We were always terrified of fire there. It was just a big fire trap." A day didn't pass that someone did not regret a 1915 decision by the Board of Education that kept a concrete slab from being poured for the first floor. The decay reached into the instructional area too. Equipment that had been new in 1943 was old in 1944. There never was enough money to buy all that was needed, particularly when technology was advancing so rapidly that machinery became obsolete sometimes in a matter of months. The Board tried to help by boosting the budget when it could, and even went so far once as to allow EVS teachers to sell war surplus equipment on the side to raise money for new materials.

The newness of things—newness of the time, of other schools, of relatively inexpensive college educations that lead to high-paying jobs—all created a climate of uncertainty for the Eugene Vocational School.

In the next six or seven years, the uncertainty would level off as great changes were made in the physical plant and in the world's politics. Then it would rise again toward the end of the decade as there was a subtle shift from the college-degree-for-everyone syndrome to a more comprehensive system that combined vocational, cultural and liberal arts education under one roof.

It was what O. D. Adams had been talking about for 30 years, but it also was what would cause the end of the Eugene Vocational School.

Chapter 9

In those days when Bill Cox was beating the bushes for students (with a half-hour recruiting film called "Train for Tomorrow"), the rest of the vocational school was heading toward a showdown with the fire chief and the Russians.

Fire Chief Ed Surfus had declared Geary a fire trap in 1952, stating that a blaze starting at EVS could spread throughout the entire west side of Eugene, creating a major disaster.

A Register-Guard article at the time told how such a disaster could happen: "A spark on the shingle roof of the main building could burn a small hole through which embers could drop into the big, dry and dusty attic, touching off a pile of dry shavings.

Geary Building.



"A small blaze could drop the already sagging ceiling supported by sagging and weak trusses before an alarm had been given. And, it appears possible that the splintered and flaming ceiling could block exits from the top floor classrooms.

"Fire could spread rapidly through the drafty building and flames could jump to the woodworking shops 15 feet to the west or to the auto shop the same distance to the east. A breeze from the west could supply the last link in the disaster by peppering the old homes across the street with sparks."

The reporter explained that the same chain of events could begin in the basement, the photography lab or in the attic where "there are several tons of discarded equipment and long-forgotten student projects."

To add to the safety hazards, a new truss intended to strengthen the ceiling had been pulled a foot out of line by the weight of the ceiling.

Classrooms and the wartime shops were in better shape. "On the classroom levels, everything is neat and tidy and freshly painted. Fire extinguishers and hoses seem in good order and in adequate number. Hallways are wide and front and rear exits are double doors. There are, however, no outside fire exits on upper floors.

"Out in the shops—one-story buildings put up to accomodate the wartime crowd of students—things are in much better shape.

"Each room has a fire alarm horn, each with a centrally placed switch. Extinguishers and hoses are everywhere. They are well-placed near welding torches in the body shop. In the auto-paint shop facilities are good. Paints are stored in a special room at the end of the building."

For Cox and the 300-400 students it was a headache they were well aware of, one they shared with school superintendent Clarence Hines who said that "the staff and students would welcome a new building anytime the taxpayers would supply it. We do the best we can with a building of that age," but went on to say that improvements would be a poor investment and that a plain, two-story concrete building would be the answer. However, so much money was being spent on elementary schools to handle the massive rise in grade school enrollment that little, if any, could be diverted to the vocational school.

So they were stuck with a tinderbox that had everyone, especially the fire department, nervous.

Meanwhile though, it was business as usual. A boat-building fad was sweeping the school as Dick Collver made somewhat of a name for himself with his race-winning hydroplanes and Ivan Funke built a 20-foot cabin cruiser for the grand total of \$400.

About the same time, tape recording became advanced enough to allow KRVM to do away with most of its 16-inch electrical transcriptions and to subscribe to taped programs from the newly-formed National Association of Educational Broadcasters.

Another electronic breakthrough was also being felt at EVS: television. Portland's TV station, KOIN, had been on the air less than a year when the vocational school got its hands on Eugene's first closed-circuit television station, built almost entirely by KERG's chief engineer Cal Applegate, a descendant of THE Applegates.



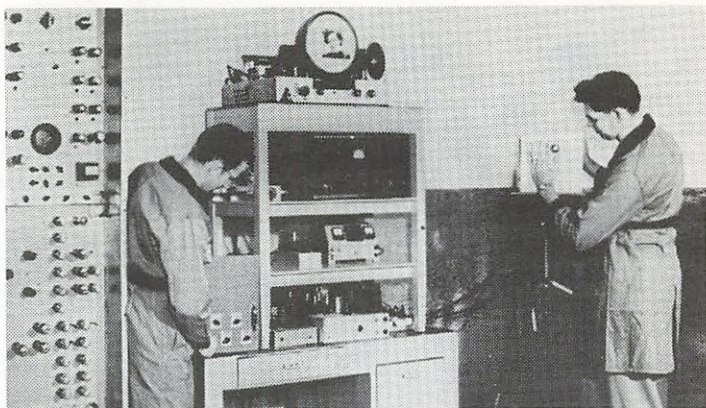
KRVM was an ambitious producer of local programming, usually featuring District 4 children in key roles. This 1953 photograph shows production of a fire safety program. In the background, right, is Eugene radio newsman Wendy Ray, an EVS graduate.

The newness of television had barely worn off in early Spring of 1954 when tragedy hit the aircraft program. Twenty-three year old Bobby Frank Davis was working on one of the engines when he looked up barely in time to see a propeller spinning crazily across the floor in his direction. In less than a second, the runaway engine had plowed into the young student, killing him.

An investigation showed that two other students had been working on the engine without making sure first that it was bolted down. Once started, the prop pulled it across the floor and into Davis. A suit by Davis' estate was eventually settled for \$1,750.

The death of Davis came at a time when the aircraft program was about to make some dramatic changes. Eugene was talking of junking the old Airpark to make room for developers who wanted to build houses and stores on the ancient swamp. Mel Gaskill and Carl Lemke were anxious to see it happen, providing new facilities were found where the programs could spread out. They had had enough of the crumbling hangars, soggy asphalt and especially of the gophers which burrowed constantly among the delicate engines covering them with dirt.

Coincidentally, in a few years they would be relocated on the site of what is believed to be the first airstrip in Eugene—a filbert orchard north of First Avenue and Monroe Street, a strip that pre-dated the Airpark by several years. It was also the future site of the ALL NEW,



Don Hostetler (right) adjusts home-made TV camera on Eugene's first closed circuit television system. It was constructed by Cal Applegate, chief engineer of KERG, and donated by him for training at EVS. The name of the student on the left is unknown. Circa: 1950.

improved Eugene Vocational School. Chief Surfus would finally have his way.

As the Fifties hit full stride—hula hoops, Marilyn Monroe, ducktail haircuts, credit cards and the Baltimore Colts—EVS hit middle age. The enrollment problem had been largely settled by active recruiting, maintaining a calm but quality public image, a strengthening evening program, and finally, a deal between the Eugene and Springfield school districts that allowed some Springfield High School students to attend the school.

So, enrollment wasn't much of a problem anymore. In fact, the student body began to look like every other student body in the country. It had a basketball team (called the "Roadrunners", coached at one time by a woman), a catalog (never needed until the slump of the early '50's), a student council, and one program, Licensed Practical Nursing, even had a yearbook called the "Voyager".

But in 1956, one thing the student body had always had that no other student body ever had was taken away. On April 19, after more than 18 years as a teacher, student of life and Resident Genius, Art Clough retired. True to O.D. Adams' word, he was not replaced and the creative design department folded.

Despite its importance in the past, the creative design department's days were numbered anyway—if you believe a survey taken during 1955 and released to the public in 1957.

Using as a base a 1954 Ford Foundation National Manpower Commission report on the need for long-range development of manpower resources, the vocational school's advisory committee (established in 1952), the school district, the Eugene Chamber of Commerce and others joined forces to study the vocational needs of employers in Lane County. It was only the second such survey ever taken and it revealed some startling facts-of-life for the Eugene Vocational School.

The survey team first looked at the national picture—General Electric was saying that in 1965 it would need to produce twice the amount of goods it was producing in 1955 with only an 11 percent increase in its workforce—and then at the local scene where most employers (about 80 percent) felt that pre-employment training was important, but 78 percent said they had never hired a graduate of the Eugene Vocational School. Somehow the two were not getting together.

Where was the flaw? Part of it lay in the potential students themselves. While nearly 40 percent of them were trooping off to college to train for professional, technical and managerial jobs, only 20 percent of Oregon's job openings fell into those categories. On the other hand, 29 percent of Oregon's employment outlook came under the heading "mechanical", while only six percent of the state's high school seniors wanted to be mechanics of any kind.

Another part of the blame was put to counselors, teachers and parents who, the report claimed, should make "occupational information and guidance services available at the senior high school level (so that they can) help many students make wiser occupational choices." At the same time, 34 percent of Lane County's high school graduates were going on to colleges offering a bachelor's degree, 25 percent were going straight to work, and only seven percent were going to "other" schools, namely business and trade schools. Read: Eugene Vocational School.

So part of the flaw could also be laid to the vocational school itself. While 257 employers (of 1,300) were saying they needed transportation mechanics more than anything else, 700 employers wanted something else or didn't know what they wanted. That was more than the next four categories—maintenance, electrical, food and metal—combined, not including those employers who doubled up on their responses.

Clearly, the vocational school was missing the point—and it was not entirely its own fault. At least it had



A business student in Ruth Thygesen's class.

moral support on its side: 74 percent of all employers questioned indicated that they would cooperate in hiring "pretrained" graduates of EVS if they fit their needs.

But EVS was between what the military likes to call "a rock and a hard place". As a district-wide, indeed, state-wide, service, it was bound to keep up with the economic times. At the same time, it was a feeder for local industry which hired 67 percent of its employees from Eugene, 20 percent from the county, and only eight percent from the rest of Oregon.

The school was at once trying to supply the employment needs of a wide area (eventually this would haunt EVS) and the peculiar needs of Lane County, a hat trick that even the tireless Bill Cox later had to admit was too much. When it was completed and made public, all the bar and circle graphs, statistics and data showed rather plainly that—despite its success in providing quality education—the Eugene Vocational School was not providing enough.

Somehow EVS would have to start filling the gaps caused by a shortage of qualified workers in the area's major industry groups, groups like the construction industry which claimed a 66 percent shortage of qualified workers, utilities with 46 percent shortage, and all manufacturing firms with a 40 percent shortage.

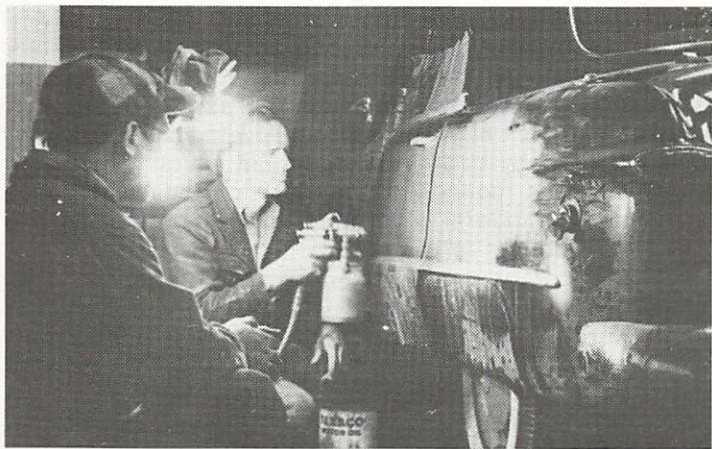
At the time of the survey, EVS had programs in thirteen instructional areas or shops: diesel, auto mechanics, body and fender repair, automotive tune-up, business-steno and bookkeeping, radio communications, radio, advanced radio and TV repair, commercial photography, machine shop, electrical repair, woodworking, airframe and powerplant. And of every hundred students who began training in those programs, 35 would drop out before the end of six months.

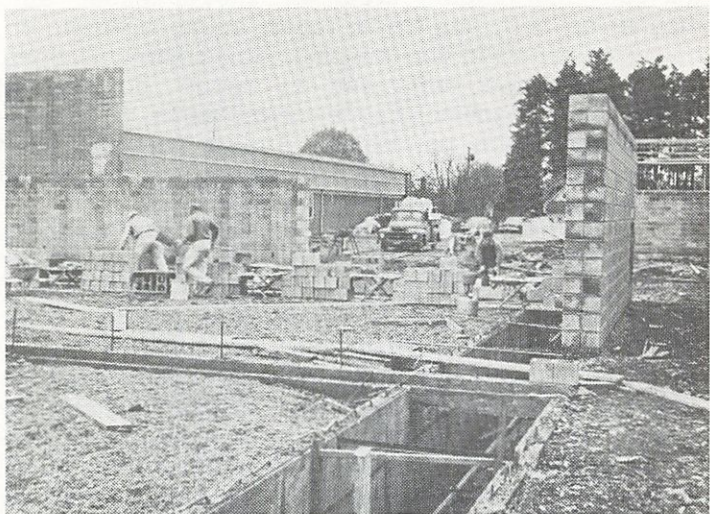
To help fill the requests by Lane County's employers for more qualified workers for more diversified jobs, EVS promptly proposed courses in barbering, cosmetology, the trowel trades, bookkeeping, sales, laboratory technician, dry cleaning, line and service electrician, engineering aide (covering eight occupations from designer to metallurgical engineer), firemen and security guards, cooks, baker, food service managers, graphic artist, law enforcement, painting and paperhanging, plumbing and steamfitting, practical nursing (which would be making a come-back), sawyer, sheet metal, stationary engineer, upholstery, and welding.

Still the biggest news was yet to come. The world—particularly the world of science—was about to go into shock.

On an October day in 1957—the year the vocational needs survey was published in Lane County—the Soviet Union launched a small instrument-filled satellite into orbit around the earth. It was called Sputnik.

Auto painting students.





Construction of the new facility at 200 North Monroe.

Sputnik was an instant sensation in the American press and soon became a synonym for the space age. But if the American press and public were excited by Sputnik, American education was stunned. It was producing nothing on a large scale to match Russian technology. Public schools felt embarrassed and a little bit impotent; articles appeared almost overnight "proving" why Johnny couldn't read his way out of a wet paper bag; cold war on the homefront came to a boil; and the public began to demand a greater control (i.e. greater emphasis on science, mathematics and technology) of its schools.

Elementary schools, long accustomed to plaster of Paris relief maps and Dick-and-Jane Readers began to add elements of advanced math and astronomy to their studies. Junior high schools followed suit, pumping millions of baby-boom teenagers into high schools to study calculus, college preparatory physics and space sciences. The federal government gave its blessings and millions of dollars to the effort.

The Eugene Vocational School fell in line. Cox looked at Sputnik as giving "us a new impetus, another surge of growth" at a time when growth was badly needed. An entire program grew from the new space race with the Russians—The Electrical Engineering Technician program, taught by Curt Raynes. EET was the third in Cox's three major achievements he felt the school made in its 27-year life.

At about the same time the community and the Board decided to get serious about finding a new home for the vocational school. A committee was formed, headed by Ruth Barnes, to look around for a new site. It finally decided on a plot north of First Avenue bordering the Willamette River. Located in an area that had once been a grove of filbert trees, the new site was also on the spot where Eugene's first landing strip had been located.

Two years later the Board would call for bids.

In the meantime, though, the addition of the Electrical Engineering Technician and other technological programs also caused basic changes in the Eugene Vocational School. It, in fact, no longer was called the Eugene Vocational School. The word "Technical" was inserted between "Eugene" and "Vocational", making ETVS suddenly a card-carrying member of the space age.

Advances in technology, the challenge of the Russians, unfulfilled needs in the community—all were not lost on Bill Cox. He, perhaps more than any other member of the Eugene Technical Vocational School, knew what was in store for the aging institution.

In another six years it would evolve into the school O.D. Adams had dreamed it would become all along, a place where students could get occupational training and a well-rounded education at the same time, all under one roof.

It would evolve into Lane Community College.

Chapter 10

From the 1959 "Voyager", the Licensed Practical Nursing class yearbook:

"July 21—School started today with the following 15 women in class: Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Braithwaite, Miss Conklin, Mrs. Dunn, Miss Heisler, Mrs. Horn, Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Hurley, Mrs. Hutchens, Miss Klitzke, Mrs. Lefever, Mrs. Moon, Mrs. Pierson, Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. White.

"July 22—Mr. Nyland and his assistant measured us for uniforms.

"Aug. 5—Officers were elected with the following results: President, Mrs. Baker; Secretary/Treasurer, Miss Klitzke; Historian, Mrs. Hutchens.

"Aug. 8—Mr. Cox read the following announcement to our class: all of the first practical nursing class which graduated from this school July, 1958 received passing grades in their State Board examination. One member of the class received the highest grade in the state.

"Aug. 20—Mr. Cox, director of the Eugene Vocational School, was remembered on his birthday. He was presented a gift...appropriately wrapped in a diaper held securely in place with safety pins, hypo needle, catheter tube, with a funnel on top for decoration.

"Aug. 26—All week this was quite an eventful week. Beginning on Monday morning, 3 SPNs went to Sacred Heart Hospital to help take TPRs and give a bath and make a bed. The students were rotated so that everyone had a chance to see how it will be next Tuesday when we start to work at the hospital. We are facing this with mixed emotions.

"Aug. 29—Friday, the last day of school until Sept. 6...we all agreed that we had thoroughly enjoyed our six weeks of school. At 10 o'clock we had a birthday party with cake, coffee and a gift for Mrs. Goldsmith who has a birthday on Sunday. When 2 o'clock came, Mrs. Goldsmith took all of us to see the University Library. It is a very beautiful big building, just full of thousands of deep interesting books—just think of all the things we don't know!



Bill Cox and Ellene Goldsmith (far right) with what is believed to be the first graduating class in the Licensed Practical Nursing program.

"Sept. 22—Today Mrs. Tipton brought the pink caps that she had made for some of us. She also brought enough pink "Bobby" pins to secure the caps of the whole class. The caps look beautiful. Hurrah for Elmer's Glue!

"Oct. 7—We have had Mr. Rehling to teach us skeletal traction for three classes at the hospital. He is a very practical and interesting teacher. He has fashioned some tractions of his own that are very effective. We had Mrs. Lefever on the Foster Frame (and nearly lost her on the floor), and Mrs. Robinson in Buck's Extension. Mr. Rehling also demonstrated Dr. Phifer's Exercise Board.

"Oct. 12—CAPPING DAY, 2:30 p.m. at the Vocational School...Mrs. Jackson, president of last year's class, gave us some good advice, ending with "wear your cap with love, kindness and dignity." We each knelt in turn on a pink satin pillow for Mrs. Jackson to pin on our caps.

"April 20—The class drove to Salem to visit the state hospital. There was an interesting program of tours, luncheon, panel discussions and a motion picture. We had a profitable day.

"May 11—Much of this A.M. was spent in working on our year book.

"June 28—Graduation exercises will be held at 2:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Auditorium. Dr. Arthur P. Martini will be speaker.

"June 29—This will be our last day at the school. We are planning a picnic."

There was an innocence about the students in the Licensed Practical Nursing program that set them apart from the technological grind of the late 1950s.

Many of them were mature women who had never quite let go of a childhood dream. With children grown and gone, or with the prospect facing them of being alone or of being the only breadwinner, they allowed the dream to take over. It consumed them, drew them together.

When one dropped out, a little part of every one of them dropped out. When one triumphed, they all triumphed. Early on they worked without pay, padding up and down hospital hallways, learning to spell words they could barely pronounce, working side-by-side with "real" nurses. In a few years LPN students would start receiving a stipend of 50 cents an hour, but in the beginning, it was learning for the sheer joy of learning.

The Class Motto for the Class of 1959 instructed its followers to "give service with love where the need is greatest". The same class that picked its colors as pink and white and its flower as the pink carnation also selected as its class prayer,

"O Lord, we beseech thee to make known to us more and more clearly each day the duties we are expected to perform if we are to fulfill our destiny. We plead for that serenity of spirit which trusts confidently that Thy will may, and must, and can be done on earth as it is done in Heaven."

What the Licensed Practical Nursing students lacked in up-town sophistication, a condition that is generally pretty boring anyway, they made up in enthusiasm, desire, and determination. Curiously, they seemed to characterize the typical ETVS student without caricaturizing him. From the beginning, students at the vocational school had been wide-eyed without being rubes, had been enthusiastic without being childish, had been dedicated without being zealots, and had been discriminating without being elitists.

For nearly 30 years, the vocational school was a microscopic melting pot of Back Forty and Main Street Americana. Farm kids from the valley learned how to turn a lathe next to dropouts from Eugene High School.

Boys and girls, young and old, whites, blacks, Indians, and even Indian Indians, winners and two-time losers worked together. And together they helped win a war—two if you count Korea—build an economy, and advance late into the 20th Century the American Work Ethic.



Groundbreaking for new facilities at 200 North Monroe.

They lived and worked together in an episode that was as much emotional as it was physical. From the paddle lines at the NYC camp at Skinners Butte in 1938 to the days when the basketball team was coached by a woman, ETVS students clung together. Like most Americans who had been brought up on a diet of Yankee Ingenuity, they had little use for things, or people, who didn't work; yet they also had almost a delicate feel for the human condition.

Finding themselves in a family, they became one—they had their fights, liked each other some, shared love, learned, contributed and received. What they brought to the vocational school varied. Some brought skills they could share. Some brought hard luck stories that were true. Some that were not. What you brought did not matter as much as what you got, what you left, and what you lost.

Almost everyone left part of himself; others left and lost their innocence, some lost their virginity, and some left their childhood in the instrument panel of a B-17 bomber. What they got is hard to measure. Along the line, most of them got a job. Some got a wife, or a husband. Others a trade. An education. But all of them got a look at each other and at life. And getting a look at life, and getting the best of it, was all that mattered.

In 1959, old Geary was at the end of its rope. Architects Hamlin and Martin submitted preliminary drawings for the new ETVS facility and a construction contract of \$348,778 was awarded to Industrial Building Company.

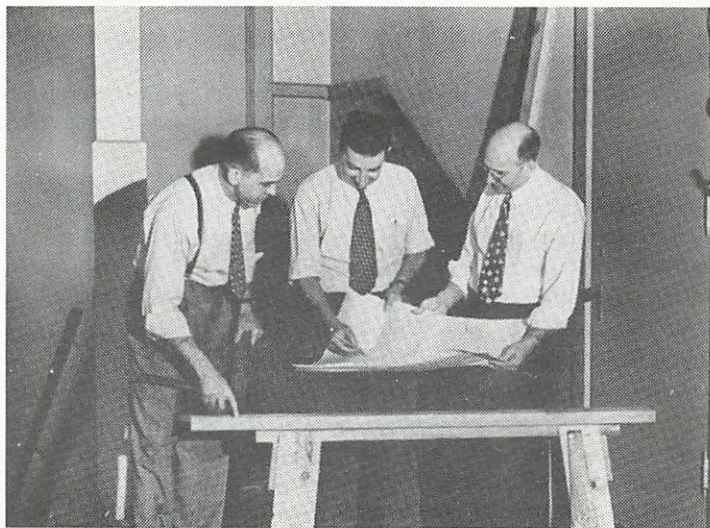
On September 18, at 11:30 in the morning, the old filbert orchard north of First Avenue felt the cut of the first shovel. A little over a year later an "Oregon-proof" Eugene Technical-Vocational School (covered walkways between classrooms) was open for business. Even with its new suit of clothes, ETVS had less than five years left.

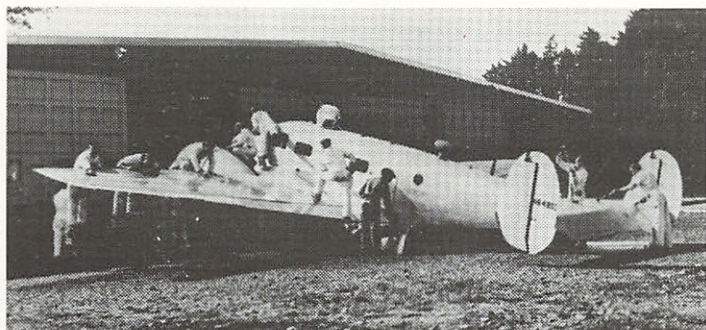
The last years of the vocational school were years of normalcy within the change without. While Mel Gaskill and his aviation students drew up plans for their portion of the new building, the state legislature came up with a study called "Plans for the Sixties", which established guidelines for development of area education and community college districts.

Local educators with their ears to the ground knew what that meant to the Eugene Technical-Vocational School. To follow the dictates of the "Plans for the Sixties", ETVS would have to expand both its facilities and its services to accommodate students from all areas of the newly-created district. That meant vocationally as well as academically.

If it didn't it would have to fold or grow into a giant regional high school, and there was already a movement afoot to establish a trade school in Eugene along the lines of Portland's Benson Polytechnic.

Predictably, the Board of Education was reluctant to spend the huge sums of money it would take to meet





Students from an airframe and powerplant class at the "new" school, 200 North Monroe.

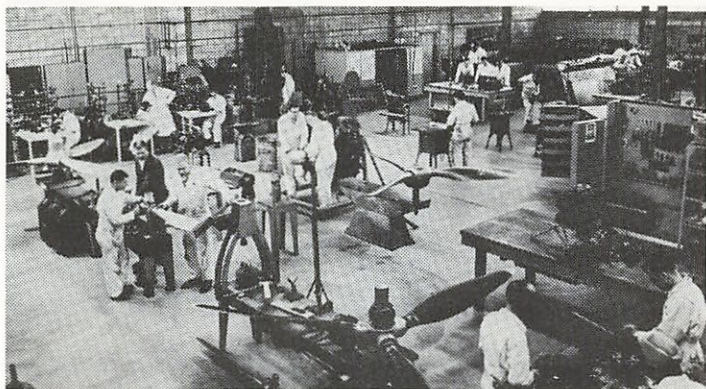
the demands of the "Plans for the Sixties" and decided instead to hire the University of Oregon's Bureau of Educational Research to answer the question "do we need a community college?".

The answer was yes.

In its conclusions the Bureau said, "After careful analysis of all the data presented in this study and a thorough review of community college programs existing within the state of Oregon, in Clark College, Vancouver, Washington, and in two large community colleges in central California, it is the considered judgement of the consultants that there is a clear need for the immediate establishment of a community college in Lane County, to provide for both manpower requirements needed for the maintenance of the economy of this area and also for the large numbers of youth graduating from high school who need a community college program to maximize their potential both for themselves and for the society of which they are a part.

"Considering the social return of a community college, the data clearly indicate that the costs are, indeed, minimum and a very insignificant part of the values that will be derived for the economy, the cultural and intellectual benefits, and the realization of personal potential for the citizens of the community.

"The community college provided in this area should develop an extensive program in cooperation with educational, agricultural, industrial, commercial and labor interests. This program should include a well-rounded technical-vocational program, a lower-division collegiate program, an adult education program, and a thorough



The new airframe and powerplant facility at 200 North Monroe. While it lacked some of the "charm" of the Eugene Airpark, at least its roof did not leak, the walls were solid, and it was centrally-heated.

program in counseling, guidance, and psychological services. It should be pointed out that although we separate phases of the community college program for discussion purposes, the program itself should be conceived as a whole. Each part reinforces the whole, and no part would be wholly adequate without the other. Many students in the collegiate program, for example, need the vocational program as part of their technical preparation and as an alternative in case their abilities do not warrant pursuit of an academic program. All the vocational programs will probably require some work in the academic areas, and guidance services help to place the student where he belongs.

"It is the considered judgement of these consultants that the site of the college should be located in an area between Eugene and Springfield and should contain not less than 40 acres of land. It is the further judgement of the consultants based upon the careful study that has been made, that this community can ill afford to wait, considering the social pressures that confront it and the needs and interests of its post-high school youth."

Or exactly what O. D. Adams had in mind all along. The study, similar to the one made in 1937 by the State Department for Vocational Education that resulted in the Eugene Vocational School, set the tone for the final few years of the school.

While it was more or less business as usual at Second and Monroe, former Springfield High School prin-

cial and superintendent of the Lane Intermediate Education District Dale Parnell attempted to drum up support for the community college idea among the county's superintendents. The superintendents were intrigued, and decided to form a committee to look into the matter.

It wasn't long, however, before the committee members discovered that the project was bigger than they felt they could handle in their spare time and they came to the consensus that it was a full-time job. So they looked to another Springfield educator, curriculum developer Bert Dotson.

Dotson was given a leave of absence from Springfield in 1964 at a salary of a nickle per student from each district. The nickle ante would buy them something less than a fully-operational community college, but it would, in the space of less than a year, put them awfully close.

Dotson did not waste any time. One of his first priorities was to develop what would serve as the new community college's "district", a geographic and economic area that would help support the new school through its property taxes and would be first in line to receive its benefits.

Lane County was automatically included in the district, which unlike ETVS, was not confined to the limits of 4-J. Harrisburg, at the southern tip of Linn County, wanted in, too, feeling that its primary trade area was Eugene rather than Albany. Ditto Monroe, in Benton County. Originally, however, Monroe was denied its request and it was not until mid-summer 1964 that it was admitted.

To the west, Florence was in a bit of a spot. Although it was a Lane County city it had already been included in the new Southwestern Oregon Community College district in Coos Bay. Enough citizens in Florence felt the town's ties were closer to Eugene-Springfield than to Coos Bay to warrant an election over the matter. Eugene-Springfield won.

The new district's boundaries finally firmed up when the northern edge of Douglas County also threw in with the proposed new college.

But beyond the primarily administrative task of setting up a district for the new school, Dotson's major role—and the one the districts were counting on for getting their nickel's worth—was to lobby for the college, to get the community behind it.

During the spring and early summer of 1964, at about the same time Roger Hoglum was writing an

educational television guide for the U.S. government, Dotson stumped the county. A petition had already been accepted on June 2 by the State Board of Education to establish a Community College, and a public hearing was held on the matter at ETVS June 30. The ball, as they say, was rolling.

On July 16, the State Board set a date and "made an order" stipulating that 60 days must go by to allow time for appeals objecting to boundaries or zoning of Board (of Education) members. If no one objected by Sept. 14, said the Board, the order would automatically be final.

Meanwhile Dotson whistlestopped around the county, hitting many of the groups and organizations that the original EVS survey team had met with in 1937. Tirelessly he spoke about and fielded questions concerning the proposed college.

There was more curiosity than opposition. No one seemed to know exactly what a community college was. Fewer yet knew what it wasn't. It wasn't, for instance, a "junior college", which, in the classic sense, offers only lower division college transfer courses. Nor was it a vocational school.

What it was, Dotson told them, was a combination of the two—plus some. The "plus some" was the unknown that even Dotson and other long-time educators couldn't completely pinpoint. It was the "community" in community college: adult education, which has few if any limits, support for community organizations, services and facilities for anyone in the district, inexpensive programs for senior citizens...and room. Room for the man who could not write his own name and the man who could write it in six different languages.

There was, of course, some opposition. Though not much. Some people were worried that a community college might cut into attendance at private schools, although no one from a private school in the area said as much. Others—particularly at the University of Oregon—fretted about competition in the area of lower division college transfer between the U of O and the community college. Robert Clark, then Dean of the School of Liberal Arts at the University helped calm those fears. Others were worried that ETVS's success in the fields of vocational education would be forgotten, but a lay committee recognized the worry and urged that vocational education be given a high priority in the establishment of the college.

Strangely enough, no one mentioned the fact that property taxes would go up.

On September 16, two days after the State Board of Education's "bans" ran out, the Metropolitan Civic Club released a study that, according to Parnell, locked the new community college in and swung the tide irrevocably toward it. The report, written by eight civic leaders, said that a community college should be established in the area, that it should be "based upon the needs of the people of the community", and that it should "give first priority and constant emphasis to maintaining the technical-vocational aspects of the community college as the primary purpose and philosophy governing the future choice of curriculum and educational policy."

The study also said that "the Board (of Education) should coordinate the college's technical-vocational and academic courses and policy with the University of Oregon and other institutions of higher learning, the Eugene Technical-Vocational School, area high schools, and privately operated specialty schools."

At the time there were seven other community colleges in Oregon and "education centers" (read: vocational schools) in Eugene, Oregon City, and Salem.

After the Metro-Civic study was released, it was all downhill for the new community college. In short order, the boundaries of the district had been set, Board seats had been zoned, and an election was held to technically form the college and choose a Board of Education, headed eventually by Eugene jeweler William Bristow.

Shortly after the Board was elected on October 19, 1964, Parnell was invited to address it on its, and the college's role in the community. Bluntly, he told it that many people in the community were betting that the college would flop. Furthermore, he said, it *would* flop "if you don't meet the needs of the people who founded you. If you ignore those people you will fail. You must always drive yourself back to your roots if you are to move ahead."

Though it was prohibited by law from operating, and therefore from receiving money, until the beginning of the fiscal year in July, the new community college somehow staggered along through the rest of 1964 and into the winter and early spring of 1965.

The seven-member Board haggled constantly over budgets; and early meetings were often heated and stormy. At one in particular, Parnell, as the college's first president, was on the receiving end of a lot of heat from a

Board member. Just as tempers were at their warmest, Parnell felt someone tapping on his knee. Without losing concentration he looked down and saw that someone was passing him a jar of horseradish, and that on the lid had been scrawled "This is a better brand than you're getting now". The horseradish, and the message, had come from Chairman Bristow.

While local businessmen were digging into their pockets to support the college until it had a budget of its own, Parnell was meeting with student leaders from the vocational school to set student policy for the new community college. They had already been told that they could switch to the new school by getting a certificate of completion or declaring for an associate degree of science or arts (just as the faculty had been told it would be assimilated into the new college), and now they were down to serious business—selecting a name for the college and a nickname for its athletic teams.

Eventually, six names were submitted by the Student Council: Emerald Community College, Lane, Timberland, White Water, Emerald Empire, and Whiteaker.

Lane—after Gen. Joseph Lane—was finally selected.

As the new community college picked up steam, the Eugene Technical Vocational school chugged along on its own into its last year.

Most of ETVS's students were sticking it out, and some, like secretarial student Laura Gauderman, would end up in a year or so on the Lane Community College staff. Nearly everyone was ready to make the switch.

But one old friend would not be going along. Roger Houglum's brainchild and the first of what Bill Cox called ETVS's three major educational undertakings—KRVM—was staying. As it was licensed by school district 4J, the educational radio station would stay with the Eugene district and LCC would get its own station, KPNW.

KPNW, while it was educationally satisfactory in operation, was not particularly satisfactory in name. Parnell and others thought something like KLCC would be more appropriate and, as it turned out, so did the owners of a commercial broadcasting station called KPIR.

KPIR's increase in power to a whopping 50,000 watts prompted the station's owners to seek call letters they felt were more becoming to its position as a regional radio station. KPNW—for Pacific NorthWest was a natural.

It was not long before the community college and the commercial station struck a deal: KPIR could have KPNW if its owners would search for and secure the call letters KLCC, pay the necessary fees, and get the approval of the Federal Communication Commission for a switch.

After a search that went around the world, KPIR finally found KLCC registered to an inactive ship moored on the east coast, and the FCC okayed the transfer.

KRVM had come most of the way with the Eugene Technical School. Nearly 20 years earlier it had evolved from hand-me-down tubes and tools and the irrepressible ambition of Roger Houglum to become the first of its kind west of the Mississippi. It trained veterans of two wars and, had it stuck around, would have had a crack at those of a third. It was KRVM as much as any other facet of ETVS (except maybe Art Clough, who was in a class all by himself) that displayed the vocational school's spirit and worth. Like all of ETVS's educational enterprises, KRVM paid its way in human as well as economic terms.

Hundreds of KRVM-trained announcers, salesmen and technicians found jobs in an industry that really only started to take off after World War II, and thousands upon thousands of Eugene and Springfield public school students learned through KRVM the lives of American presidents, a little appreciation of classical music, and fire safety at home and at play. KRVM, like ETVS, had something for everyone.

That was the whole idea behind the Eugene Technical Vocational School. For nearly 30 years it provided what it felt its community needed—mechanics, window dressers, sales clerks, photographers, welders, nurses, cabinet makers, draftsmen, wood carvers, cooks, radio announcers, and carpenters.

At times it poured it on, and at times it laid back waiting to see which turn it should take next. Always flexible, the vocational school stuck closely to the idea that it was the property of those who used it and of those who gained from it.

The idea worked, worked because of the unique foresight of O.D. Adams, Lillian Van Loan, the various Eugene school boards which at first accepted then continued to support the school, Bill Cox, and the dozens of others who had a hand in shaping and directing the school.

It also worked because of the unique quality of the community the school was in, a community old-fashioned enough to know the value of skilled labor to an economy

and farsighted enough to know it had a responsibility to teach those skills. And it worked because of the unique tempo of the times. The vocational school was born during a time of economic disaster, a time when an entire generation of the world's population was on the verge of collapse. Then, before it could think of growing up, it already had—rolling through the furious pace of a world war and then sailing in to an economy gone crazy, indiscriminately gobbling up anyone who could feed it with a skill it needed.

Later, in the fifties, the economy slacked off, the demand for skilled trades did likewise, and the vocational school regrouped with community-oriented adult education classes and a smaller curriculum to match a shrinking student body.

But before it could grow old, the vocational school found itself in the middle of a cold war when the nation was again clamoring for technicians and skilled workers, and ETVS entered middle age healthy once more.

Through all of that, the vocational school stuck closely to the idea—an idea that never changed in nearly 30 years—that anyone who needed its help would get it. To accurately assess how well the vocational school pulled off its promise to the community you only have to look at its former students, at a community college which grew from it, and at something the Eugene Register-Guard said about it 27 years ago:

"Although the school was a Eugene undertaking, it soon became apparent that it should serve the region. People, young and old began to flock to it with problems—not only 'working people' seeking to adjust to changing industry, but business and professional people seeking to 'pick up some little manual skill.' We heard this one time:

"VISITOR: Mrs. Van Loan, can you define the educational philosophy of this school?

"MRS. VAN LOAN: It's to try to find an answer for anybody who comes through that door, rich or poor, from 17 to 70.

"Shortly after Pearl Harbor, when the great rush of war training was on we saw this philosophy exemplified in one of Art Clough's 'mock-up' classes where he first tries to find out if the pupil has any 'feeling in the fingers'. Two elderly women were there. One was a grim, iron-gray person, intent upon blue print training:

"'What's that woman doing?'

"'She lost somebody at Pearl Harbor and she

aims to get even. She's good. We're sending her to Boeing' (where she became a department supervisor).

"The other was a sweet-faced silvery grandmother who was twisting something like a table leg out of a wood lathe.

"What can you make out of that sweet old person?"

"Well, doggonit, we haven't figured that out yet. She came in here the other day and told Lillian: 'Let me do something. I get so darned sick of sitting around the hotel and playing bridge with other idle old women'. If she just finds some happiness in it, why isn't that enough?"

"You could fill a book with Vocational School tales—the eminent child psychologist who gave up writing a book to get a little first hand experience in the school's day nursery, a dairy helper who moved to town with wife and kids and proved that he could be a top-flight mechanic 'with just a little learnin'.

"On its tenth anniversary this school is still only at the beginnings. Director L.L. Erdmann and his staff face even greater challenges than those which faced the first instructors. This school is one of the nation's most interesting experiments in the 'dark continent' of 'adult education'.

"Some day maybe it should have a fine modern, fireproof plant, but that can wait. The vital force in this school—and in all education—is THE IDEA."

Appendix

Art Clough: ETVS Resident Genius

Close to 80 years have passed since Art Clough drifted across the continent from the Missouri prairie to deep water at Bellingham where he watched schooners under sail, rolling heavily in the harbor, their holds filled with lumber for Austrailia.

Green then, he is an old man now, living in a trailer too small to be called a mobile home, close to his family on a farm west of Eugene. Around him he has his clutter, his work, and next door, his shop. His dog yaps at strangers driving up the gravel road. Proverbially, he is the dog with a bark much worse than his bite.

Art, himself, is stooped with the years. Hair graying, slightly receding, it slops over his ears and pushes up against his collar. He chain smokes Kool cigarettes—the ones without the filters. And his pants are a little bit baggy and his shoes are the kind of brown that can only be described as brown.

Above the stubble on his face are the liveliest eyes you ever saw. Classroom keen, they are still quick, penetrating, and, like the kindly cobbler in second-grade readers, twinkling.

The eyes carry the message. The raspy voice tells the story:

From where he lived and went to school the Missouri prairie butted up against the timber which broke thick and green toward the Mississippi. Art went to one of those little country schools that don't exist much anymore. Some of them are better gone—their students could recite "Crossing the Bar" but they could not think for themselves. But others were special. Art's was special.

It had one teacher, a man named Julius. Julius liked Art and thought he was bright, bright enough to grasp not only the Three R's, but also bright enough to see how they fit in with the remainder of the scheme of things. Like good old hard work.

Like the good teacher he was, Julius drew Art closer and closer to the brink of discovery. Then, like the good teacher he was, he turned him loose.

Once loose, Art fell into it. Using mathematics as a point of departure, Art whiled his afternoons in Julius's private woodworking shop, eventually tying the two together. In time he and a friend fashioned woodcarvings using what they had learned in Julius' math sessions. Later they turned out teaching aids, utilizing wood cuts and puzzles to explain the likes of square and cube roots.

More than 70 years later, Art remembers the discoveries in Julius's woodshop and in his classroom as the ultimate secret to education: it all relates, it all works, and it's all necessary.

But at the turn of the century, even that marvelous discovery did not prevent young Art Clough from being nervous about the world in which he was growing up.

His father, a nomadic man descended from ship-builders and loggers, recounted the horror of the passenger pigeon to his young son, and how, as a young man in Wisconsin, he had seen the slaughter of millions of the birds until there were no more. His father also told him of the hundreds of miles of Wisconsin timber which had been systematically stripped from the land until there was little of that left, either.

In his own memory, Art remembers rolling across the fresh-cut prairie with his mother, bouncing along dumbfounded as the buggy passed mile after mile of buffalo wallows, evidence that the nearly-extinct animal had once made the land black with monstrous herds stretching to the horizon.

Neither Art nor his family could take it any longer. Together, they moved west to Bellingham, Washington.

Art enrolled in another country school in the backwoods near Bellingham just as the big timber companies from the East were slashing their way through the virgin Douglas Fir. His father found a job at a one-horse sawmill nearby, then helped build another.

If the world around Art persisted in being imperfect, at least his educational world was sound. The backwoods school he found himself in was even better than the one in Iowa, and his teacher even more committed to combining manual and academic training than

was Julius. To top it off, Art became friends with another bright youngster who was to become his life-long buddy and confidant—O.D. Adams

Together Adams and Clough and their teacher invented shop courses that complemented the traditional Three R's, took advantage of what they learned, and sailed through Bellingham High School with honors.

O.D. was editor of the school newspaper and Art was his star reporter. One winter's night Art covered a rally of the local socialist party and, instead of writing about it for the high school paper, submitted his article to the Bellingham paper. Its editor, who was Bellingham's most vocal anti-socialist, paid Art \$20 for his story which was more satire than story—and Art dreamed for a while of being a newspaperman.

But the dream he stuck with was not one of printing presses and city desks. It was education. More than anything in the world Art wanted to teach. He wanted to teach the value of manual training, how it could coexist with traditional education, and how it fit in with what he came to call the "Golden Age" of America. He and O.D. made a pact: someday, together or separately, they would find a Golden Place for their Golden Age, and, together or separately, they would teach.

On the way to his Golden Place, Art stopped off at New York Mountain.

New York Mountain was a curious example of the reason why Art started looking for the Golden Age in the first place. It is even more curious in that, without New York Mountain, part of his dream might never have been realized.

New York Mountain was actually several heavily-timbered peaks surrounding a valley in central Washington. The timber there had been overlooked by the major lumber companies on their rush westward to the coast, its rainforests and deep water harbors. But as Art moved to the valley on his second teaching assignment (the first at a country school near Bellingham), the big companies followed him. They had virtually stripped the forests bordering Puget Sound.

By that time, though, the Washington legislature had started protecting its forests from indiscriminate harvesting and had simultaneously started encouraging local ownership of farm and forest land. The result was a law giving preference to homesteads and private ownership of timber claims in Washington's interior.

The legislature, however, had not plugged all the loopholes. One of the leakiest dealt with occupation of the

land claimed. There was, after all, a precedent. Andrew Jackson had settled that a century before with something called Manifest Destiny.

In Washington the final effects of Manifest Destiny came from the unlikely place of The Bowery in New York City.

While Art Clough set up shop in his two-room school, "homesteaders" from New York started arriving and staking claims on the hillsides above the valley. For each of them, it was the same story. They would remain on their claim a short time then disappear, only to be followed by others staking claims next door, above, below, and on the ridges to the other side. They too tarried awhile, then left.

It was not very long before the citizens of the valley caught on. The "homesteaders" were denizens of The Bowery, ferried to Washington by an enterprising lumber company for the single purpose of making what amounted to a giant land grab.

Here's how it worked: as each New Yorker staked his claim and spent the required amount of time on the land, he was whisked off to Seattle, put up in a dormitory, given an ample supply of food and drink, and counseled on the legal obligations he had to his claim—namely when he could unload it.

The moment he could sell it, he did. Guess who bought it.

The valley's inhabitants were furious at first, and frustrated about what was happening on the slopes of New York Mountain. As the trees fell they took the only recourse they had—they taxed the living daylight out of it; and before long the valley below New York Mountain was the richest in the state, and Art Clough's school the fattest in the land.

With money behind him, Art bulled along. He built a shop. He bought movie projectors and started using motion picture films in the classroom long before most the west had ever heard of them. He had lathes and drills and other equipment schools in Seattle dreamed of. And in the end he turned it all over to his Bellingham elementary school teacher.

At the expense of a Golden Place, he was closing in on his Golden Age.

Happy with what he had done at the foot of New York Mountain, but unhappy with what the mountain represented, Art left Washington and drove south. Toward Eugene.

Eugene was sweating under one of those heavy summer afternoons the day Art motored into the city, pulling up at the public market on Eighth Avenue. Wagons loaded with produce sat unattended, covered with mosquito netting to keep the bugs off. Art walked to Willamette Street, turned left and walked south past empty shops and saloons, past flags drooping on their standards, and finally to the fire station.

There he found two firemen lolling in the shade, talking. Where was everybody, he asked. At the fair, they said. It was Eugene Day at the county fair. Nobody in their right mind would be anywhere but the fair on a day like this, they said. We'd be there too, 'cept we got to be here.

Art walked back on Willamette, turned on Eighth, cranked up his car, and drove to the fairgrounds. He was excited. A town that would shut down for a county fair might just be his Golden Place. At the fair he jawed with everyone he saw, found out that Eugene had a junior high school, found out that Eugene also shut down for the opening of deer season and hop picking season, and found that the countryside nearby had never been raped by the likes of Big Eastern Lumber Companies. In an afternoon he knew it: he had found his Golden Place and very likely had found his Golden Age.

Eugene fed Art's dreams. He started up a wood carving business and made somewhat of a name for himself carving Paul Bunyans for the lumber companies in and around the Willamette Valley. It seemed, in fact, that his fortune was to be in wood carving rather than in teaching.

One of his carvings was sold to the powerful Lumberman's Club in Minneapolis, Minn. at a time when the lumber interests were desperately in need of favorable publicity. A revival of wood carving, the club felt, was just the ticket.

Clough was picked to lead the revival. He was commissioned to create some gigantic pieces for display in Chicago and was given \$8,000 to travel around the world in search of exotic woods and equally-exotic carvings by other artists. Art was on his way to fame. Fortune would surely follow.

It was all very heady stuff for a country boy of Iowa, and that's exactly where it went—to his head. With the check uncashed in his pocket, Art agreed to throw in with a Salem banker in developing a huge resort hotel on some hot springs in the mountains east of Eugene. It does not matter much now that the hot springs are under Cougar Reservoir, because before the deal could be pulled

off, the banker's brother-in-law skipped the country with \$100,000 that would have built the hotel.

If that was not enough, lightning struck again. As Art was preparing to take off on his world cruise, a fleet of Russian cargo ships pulled up off the Maine shoreline and threatened to unload tons of unfinished lumber that, if allowed to flood the American market, would finish the U.S. timber industry in the East. With little fanfare, the Lumberman's Club stopped payment on the check and used it to lobby against the Russians.

With that, Art Clough returned to earth and decided to try to find a teaching job in Eugene, possibly in the junior high school. He had great regard for junior high schools, feeling that in most public schools systems, that was where students made the irrevocable break toward or away from education.

But Art never got the chance. Christmas was closing in on a dreary 1937, and despite the gloom, something was afoot in Eugene. What was afoot was the survey team sent to Eugene by his old friend O.D. Adams, then director of the state department for vocational education.

In three months the pact they had made as scruffy school boys in the Bellingham woods would be fulfilled. In three months Art and O.D. would bring everything they believed in to one place, the Golden Place, and embark on their very own Golden Age.

Eugene would never be the same again.