

# *The Aftermath*

## CHAPTER XII

The war ended at an opportune time as far as colleges were concerned—on August 15, 1945—just one month prior to the beginning of the fall term. Lieutenant Commander Chaffee returned from his three and a half years of military service to his duties as president of the College on Monday morning, September 15, 1945. He had been separated from the navy at the Great Lakes Naval Station in Chicago just nine days before. Immediately upon his return to the office of president, he recommended that Dean Mathews continue as head of the Art Department and be selected as Academic Dean and that his salary which had been doubled while he held the position of Executive Dean be used as the base figure for the 1945-46 year.

The two men worked together in an easy and comfortable fashion. Mathews was glad to step down from the administrative position and Chaffee was delighted to drop his military duties and return to his civilian position as college president. He was readily received by the community, the faculty, and the students, since in a sense, he was just another returning G.I. and there were to be hundreds of those returning or coming to the College in the next few years.

Public Law No. 346, better known as the G.I. Bill, was signed into law in June of 1944 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and was an incentive to veterans to either return to college or begin college work. It not only paid for their tuition, books, and room, but also gave them basic spending money.

It was due to this bill that the veterans began to pour into the College during the winter and spring terms of the 1945-46 year. There were 401 freshmen (mostly veterans) this particular year, compared to 126 in the previous year—87 of whom were young women. This was to be the beginning of many changes on not only the B.J.C. campus, but on campuses all over the United States.

The makeup of the student body was so unique . . . that we used to claim there were three sexes on campus—men, women, and veterans. Every form we filled out, every line that was formed at registration, every grouping on campus, was listed this way.<sup>1</sup>

The G.I. as a student and a citizen naturally had problems adjusting himself to the limitations of a classroom. He had had months of outdoor living among other men with few limitations as to conduct; now he was in a classroom with young ladies and at intervals, might lapse back into conduct more in tune with his past military years. On the other hand,

The girls on campus that fall were the typical 17 and 18 year old freshmen with starry visions of what college would be . . . visions of proms, green beanies, bonfires, boys, etc. . . we found ourselves among MEN, not boys our age or slightly older. Our classes were so overloaded with men (my American Government class had two girls and 100 men in it) and these men were so serious . . . scholastically . . . The percentage of women to men meant nothing . . . so many of them were married that statistics did not reveal the real boy-girl situation . . . On the whole, these were "older" men—at least four or five years older than college freshmen are generally. They were at college with a NO NONSENSE attitude. They were there to learn, to get college finished, and to get out and get a job.<sup>2</sup>

In the spring of 1947, the president of the College made a random study of the scholastic records of 100 G.I.'s who had been at the College prior to the war and had returned to the College at the end of the war. By pulling their records on a hit-and-miss basis, he found that with very few exceptions,

their grades were two grade points higher than they had been previously. In other words, if their grades were D's before the war, they were B's after the war. These were men with a purpose.

This was also to be the beginning of married men on campus—a whole new phenomenon in American education. Before the war it was very rare for any of the students to have families and those that did were looked upon as "old" men although they might only be in their early 20's. The G.I. returning to civilian life wanted to capture a normal, family life and this of course meant a wife and children in many cases.

By the spring of 1946 the housing need for the returning veteran and his family was of primary concern. The Federal Government was beginning to see this need through the constant pressure from their home states and congressional districts and as a result, set up a division of the Federal Housing Administration to provide housing for the families of the G.I. student. By February of 1946, Dr. Chaffee was meeting with the representative from the F.H.A. from Seattle and had a conference in Pendleton, Oregon to discuss the need of veteran housing on the Boise campus. This led to an application for 48 housing units from surplus war housing used by workers in wartime construction in the State of Washington.

These temporary buildings had been constructed to house the mounting need for facilities to accommodate the young men in military training and defense building work. All over the nation, military installations were built to take care of young men who were being sent to Europe and the Pacific to assist our allies in their battle to stop Hitler in Europe and Japan in the Pacific Ocean area. Millions of young men were taken from civilian pursuits—many in education—and transferred to these camps within the United States so that they might be trained as fighting men against our enemies.

With the close of the war, these military and defense installations became surplus property and would have deteriorated year by year had the American people not met the need of

furnishing higher education to its veterans when the enemy was defeated. Boise Junior College applied for and received 48 housing units so that the returning veterans with their families would have a place to live when they returned to the College.

These units, subsequently named Campus Apartments, were completed and occupied by November 1946. As stated above, they were primarily for veterans, but were rented to other married students and new faculty members when not filled by the veterans. It is interesting to note that during the first year these apartments were occupied, 15 babies were born to the residents.<sup>3</sup>

Toward the late 1950's, the veterans' need for housing was less demanding and the Campus Apartments, which were non-permanent in nature when originally brought to the campus, were beginning to "fall apart." Between 1958 and 1965 they were gradually disassembled in sections and the four units in the one section that remained after 1960 when the College purchased College Courts, were used for storage purposes only.

From 1946 to 1948, coaches Lyle Smith and Bill Richter were the managers of the veterans housing for one year each. Coach George Blankley took over this position until 1955 when Louis A. Peck, a former graduate of the College, joined the faculty holding the combined positions of manager of the veterans housing and assistant art instructor to Dean Conan E. Mathews. When Dean Mathews accepted a position as head of the Art Department at Brigham Young University in 1956, Mr. Peck became the full-time head of the Art Department at Boise Junior College. He continued to manage Campus Apartments for three more years and when the College discontinued using them and rented College Courts, he managed the latter from 1959 to 1960 during the transition period from a rental property to an ownership property by the Boise Junior College Dormitory Housing Commission. Mr. Peck has served as head of the Art Department for the past 13 years and has built up that department to some 1600 students plus additional students in evening and summer classes.

Of course, in the immediate decade after World War II, the tremendous growth in enrollment of students coming from a military source also necessitated more classrooms. In the case of Boise, there were former hospital units at the nearby Gowen Field which made excellent emergency classrooms. Two of these hospital units, each more than 125 feet in length, were moved from the Gowen Field site and placed on parking areas adjacent to the heating lines—one line north to the Auditorium and the other west to the Administration Building. Each lay some 200 feet away from the heating plant where the boilers were located; the one building north and the other one west. Only a 10-foot connection was required between the main heating lines and the temporary buildings.

These buildings have been used from 1947 to the present with one of them being moved from its original location and converted into more storage area and the other still in its same location and housing the College's Printing and Publicity Departments. They proved a real boon to a college that was growing so rapidly that it had to have facilities to accommodate the burgeoning youth who were coming to this institution. They have served the College well during the past 20 years, helping to meet the increase from 600 students to well over 4,000. Financing such a student increase during this period was very difficult and these two buildings eased the burden.

Other buildings that proved to be of great value to the College and much more permanent in nature than the ones referred to above, are the buildings known as College Courts. They were originally built for the general public and were financed by public loans to private businesses to meet the great housing shortage that was brought about by a combination of curtailed civilian building during the war and the great growth of population due largely to an explosive birthrate. These buildings were located on the south side of College Boulevard, some one thousand feet west of the Administration Building; in fact, they fronted on the alley which parallels College Boulevard some 125 feet to the south.

Sixty-four of these apartments were returned to the federal government via the Federal Housing Administration in the mid-fifties when the private business that had built them failed to meet the payments. The College, assisted by the Idaho delegation in Congress, was able to make a short-time rental of these units from the Housing and Home Finance Agency. In September of 1960, through that same agency, a bond issue for \$390,000 with an interest rate of 3 and 1/8 percent per annum, was arranged, making it possible to purchase and rehabilitate these 64 units and convert 16 garages and storage areas into a like number of apartments, making a total of 80 units available for married students. "The College Courts were purchased for a consideration of \$231,000. This included furniture and equipment in the amount of \$6,428.50."<sup>3</sup> The following January, bids were received for the rehabilitation work of the 64 units and conversion of the 16 garages and storage units, the lowest bid being \$109,931 from the Purvis Construction Company. Final construction costs amounted to \$134,000 including additions discovered during construction that had not been included in the original contract. The \$25,000 that remained after the purchase price and rehabilitation and conversion costs had been deducted from the \$390,000 was used for (1) interest on the government bond issue, (2) legal and administrative fees, (3) architectural fees, and (4) government field expenses for an inspection of the completed buildings.<sup>5</sup>

The man who carried this project through in a splendid way was Mr. Dwane R. Kern who had succeeded Mr. Clyde F. Potter as Business Manager in 1960. He did this during the early months of his new position with efficiency and without "ruffling the feathers" of either business men, faculty, or students. He has carried on in this same manner up to and including the present time.

None of the financing for College Courts involved the local taxpayer. The bonding plan set up by the Federal Government was self-liquidating over a period of 40 years so that the

student and faculty occupants are paying the complete principal and interest for that period of years.

These proved to be a real boon to married students and young faculty members coming to Boise at a time when housing was almost impossible to find and the rental rates too high for the financially struggling student and the young faculty member and his family. Today, as a result of the purchase, Boise State College has outstanding housing for its married students within a stone's throw of the center of the campus.

The military experience of both the G.I.'s and the returning faculty who had also been in the service during World War II, proved to be a strong bond. Those of the faculty who had taken a military leave to serve during the war slowly returned one by one to the campus. Vernon Beckwith returned in October of 1945, Clisby Edlefsen in January of 1946, Robert deNeufville in March, Bruce Budge in the summer, and Harry Jacoby and J. Roy Schwartz in September. Norman Adkison, Douglas Cruickshank, C. Barton McMath and Stanley Mittelstaedt did not return to their old positions at the College. Dale Arvey had entered the service late and at the war's end decided to continue graduate study. He did not return to the College. All of these faculty members had served with the army except for Arvey, Edlefsen and Mittelstaedt who had been in the navy.

Of course, with the return of the veterans during the second semester of 1945-46 and the 1946-47 year, many additional faculty members were required. Those who came soon after 1945 and remained with the College contributed much to the development of this institution as they were the counselors of a day-time student body that increased from around 1,000 when the veterans returned, to 2,886 daytime students during the initial year of the four-year school—1965-66.

A. H. Chatburn joined the faculty in January of 1945 to head the Education Department; a position left vacant by an earlier resignation. During the next decade he took graduate work and received his doctorate from Washington State Univer-

sity in 1956. He made his doctoral thesis a study of Boise Junior College in its relation to its students. In that same year, on the resignation of Conan Mathews, Dr. Chatburn was appointed Dean of Faculty and remained in that position until 1968 when he became Director of Educational Services.

Dr. Chatburn is a native of Idaho; his boyhood home was in Albion. He taught and served as principal of elementary schools in Boise and as State Superintendent of Public Instruction before coming to Boise Junior College. He has vitally affected Boise College during the years he has served it.

Another member of the faculty who came during the war years was Harold Wennstrom in the field of dramatics. He remained for 12 years and was then granted a leave of absence to do graduate work at the University of Southern California, but never returned to Idaho.

Boise Junior College's faculty was affected by the same desire to move as were faculty members of other colleges. During the war period they were in short supply and hence in great demand. The average tenure of a faculty member throughout the United States, except for those who spent many previous years at an institution, rarely exceeded a period of three years.

A real loss developed in 1946 when James L. Strachan resigned to accept a position as organist at Trinity Cathedral in Portland, Oregon. His position as head of the Music Department was amply filled by a young man from the East Coast—Mr. C. Griffith Bratt.

In addition to Mr. Bratt, two men who joined the faculty in 1946 and were to make their presence felt were Dr. Donald Obee, later to become head of the Life Science Department, and Mr. Willis L. Gottenberg, Student Advisor and Vice President of Boise Junior College and Boise College.

The following year, Dr. Paul E. Baker came to the College as Dean of Men and Professor of Sociology and Anthropology. He remained for a little over a decade and had much to contri-

bute to his student advisees as a result of his cosmopolitan life and work in the United States and Hawaii. He was succeeded by Edwin E. Wilkinson who excelled as Dean of Men from 1958 to the present.

Miss Helen Moore also came to Boise Junior College in 1947 as an instructor of English. In 1963 she took on the additional responsibilities of Dean of Women and carried out her duties in this position in an effective and sympathetic way. She retired in 1968 and was awarded an Emeritus designation that year.

Others who came to add their contribution in these first years after the war were Vina Bushby and Hazel Mary Roe in secretarial science, outstanding teachers in that discipline; Jeanne G. Stearns who was truly a student's teacher and gave many hours of extra instruction to those students who felt the need of personal assistance in the fields of physics and mathematics; and Thelma Allison who has been the source of progressive ideas in home economics for both day and evening students.

In the immediate post-war years there had been an accumulation of problems which needed attention and action. This was due largely to (1) the changing of personnel caused by the development of a public junior college in 1939 and World War II, (2) accreditation, (3) building the new campus, and (4) the great growth in the student body in the two years immediately preceding the war, followed by a period of declining numbers from 1942 to 1945 inclusive and then the great bulge of students following the war.

The need for systematizing the academic growth was apparent to the administration in 1940-41, but the tremendous changes within the College and without, made this a difficult accomplishment. The selective service and volunteer enlistments which took not only male students but many faculty members, and the planning for new buildings and their later use, created so much change that more change at this time seemed too disruptive.

The need for a more extensive and intensive faculty organization had been discussed in faculty sessions as the College was preparing for its accreditation by the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools, but because of the chaotic conditions of the world and the receding student body during the fall of 1941, actual accomplishments were in the thinking stage only.

This was brought to the attention of the school in a forceful way by the visiting committee from the Northwest Association and the report made by the chairman of the Higher Commission in his letter of April 17 which arrived one week after the accreditation of Boise Junior College on April 9, 1941. This letter urged:

2a. Adequate provision for supervision of instruction and the organization of the faculty into a limited number of divisions according to curricular offerings with each presided over by a head, these heads to form the Committee on Instruction which will be responsible for the supervision of instruction, the development and approval of course syllabi, the organization and reorganization of curricula, the approval of new course offerings, and similar matters . . .

The president of the College was to report on the progress made in this regard prior to the next annual meeting of the Northwest Association. This he did on November 24, 1941, just two weeks before Pearl Harbor. In his letter of that date to the Higher Commission he stated:

In accord with the recommendation under (2)a., I immediately started out such a program for the current academic year. Last May, I appointed heads of such divisions and as a result, today we have functioning heads of instruction and curriculum organized as follows:

DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES—Dr. Francis B. Haines  
History, political science, sociology, philosophy, psychology, education, physical education.

DIVISION OF ENGLISH AND LANGUAGES — Mrs. Ada Y. Hatch—English, journalism, modern languages.

DIVISION OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE — Dr. Elsie J. McFarland—Chemistry, zoology, botany, physics, geology, engineering, mathematics.

DIVISION OF FINE ARTS — Mr. James L. Strachan  
Music, art.

DIVISION OF BUSINESS AND HOME ECONOMICS —  
Mr. C. T. Edlefsen—Business administration, economics,  
home economics.

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS — Mr. Conan E.  
Mathews—Vocational forestry, ceramics, woodworking,  
radio, pilot training.

These major divisions include every subject taught in Boise Junior College. In a few instances there are border-line cases, as far as subjects are concerned, that do not logically fall into any division. The determining factors in placing such subjects were primarily the proximity of the quarters occupied to those of the head of the division and the load being carried in that division. The most notable instance of this was the placing of home economics with business. This committee of six is now working harmoniously and enthusiastically on the task of organizing each division.

Within the next three months, the College was heavily involved in Civil Defense activities and adapting itself to the demands of the national government in such things as Civil Defense courses, assisting young men who were volunteering and being drafted into the army, navy, and marine corps, and setting up educational defense courses such as radio and welding.

Within this same three-month period, faculty members, including the president, had taken physical examinations for entrance into the military establishment of the nation and within six months after Pearl Harbor, most of these men had reported for duty in one of the military organizations. All of this, of course, had a disquieting effect on those who remained in the faculty and administration. As a result, little reorganization was done in the three years that followed from mid-1942 to mid-1945.

When President Chaffee returned to the College on September 15, 1945, the reorganization began in earnest, impeded greatly by the gradual but irregular return of the faculty members from the service and the final commitment of many who had been in the military to remain in that profession. This took from six to eighteen months as the claims of former faculty members to return to the College had to be satisfied prior to the hiring of additional faculty members.

An example of what happened to the faculty itself is indicated when noses are counted. In the academic year of 1946-47, nineteen faculty members who had been with the College prior to the war continued in its service after the war and thirty-three new instructors were hired from all over the United States, but principally from the Mid-West area. Of course, what made the College's reorganization doubly difficult was the fact that all other colleges and universities were having the same problem—a tremendous increase of students because of the G.I. Bill and a dearth of faculty members since many who had been in the military service for the months preceding and during the war did not return to their former positions.

By February 1947, however, the reorganization as far as division heads was concerned had been modified and existed in the following manner:

Division of Business and Economics—Clisby T. Edlefsen

Division of Humanities—Mrs. Ada Y. Hatch

Division of Life Sciences—Dr. Donald J. Obee

Division of Mathematics and Physical Sciences—Dr. Joseph  
B. Spulnik

Division of Social Sciences (including history)—Dr. George  
R. Bartlett

Division of Vocational Education—Vacancy (Robert Hunter  
was appointed in September 1947)

With the exception of Social Sciences and Vocational Education, the division heads remained entirely stable until the mid-1960's.

In the Division of Business and Economics, Clisby T. Edlefsen was the natural choice. He had had much experience in business and the secretarial field, having taken an active part in the establishing of criteria for state civil service and heading the business department in Boise High School and Link's Business School. He did not stop here, but continued his study of business education in West Coast colleges, receiving his Doctor

of Education from Stanford University in 1955. He headed the professional organizations for colleges within Idaho and the Northwest, implemented testing within Boise College's Business Division, and encouraged such departments to professionalize within the secondary schools of this state and neighboring states. He was Chairman of the Division of Business, Economics and Secretarial Studies from the spring of 1946 to the summer of 1966 when he retired from the chairmanship, but remained as a professor in this division for another three years until his retirement from the College in 1969.

A number of faculty members who joined the Business Division in the 1950's have remained with the College since that time. Mr. G. W. Underkofler joined the faculty in 1952. He had been graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan University and had had further education at universities in the West. He came directly from a position in the San Francisco Bay area where he had headed the accounting division of a large private company for a number of years.

In 1953 Mrs. Dorothy Lee and Mr. Robert Rose came to the College. Mrs. Lee had received her degrees from the University of Nebraska and the College of Idaho and had additional study in the secretarial science and office administration fields. Mr. Rose had received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Colorado State University and after a year's sabbatical in 1963 his Ph.D from the State University of Iowa. He became Chairman of the Business Division in 1966 when Dr. Edlefsen retired from this position and when the College became Boise State College, he was made Dean of the School of Business.

Helen R. Johnson joined the secretarial science faculty in 1955 and took on many responsibilities for the faculty association. She gave generously to the students in her classes and in their organizations, particularly in the chapel services that occurred every Wednesday for many years.

The Humanities Division was headed by Mrs. Ada Y. Hatch. She was among the first teachers employed at Boise

Junior College in the fall of 1932 and remained with the College until ill health forced her resignation in 1967. Mrs. Hatch was aggressive in tackling the problems of forceful teaching in humanities and was the first teacher to take advantage of a sabbatical leave, spending it in Oxford, London and on the Continent. Her excellent judgment made her invaluable as Chairman of the President's Advisory Board during some 15 years that she held that position.

The Division of Life Sciences, (now entitled the Division of Science and Health), has had Dr. Donald J. Obee as its chairman since 1947. A graduate of Kansas University and a teacher at Cheyenne Mountain School, he came to Boise Junior College in 1946 with a fine background of interest in life science. His department has grown rapidly with the national emphasis on health education. One of those who has contributed much to that growth is Dr. Harry K. Fritchman, a former graduate of Boise Junior College. Today Dr. Fritchman is not only Chairman of the Department of Biology and Home Economics, but also a professor of zoology in that department. His exacting techniques have been of immeasurable value in sorting out those students with pre-med and pre-dental ambitions.

Dr. Joseph B. Spulnik was Chairman of the Physical Sciences and Mathematics Division from 1947 to 1968. He came to Boise Junior College as a teacher of chemistry in the fall of 1941 direct from his graduate study at Oregon State University. With the division reorganization in the 1967-68 year, Dr. Spulnik became Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

A long-time member of this division is Norman F. Dahm in the field of engineering. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Colorado and came to the Northwest where he taught in the high school at Ontario, Oregon. During his 17 years with the College he has taken a very active part in many faculty affairs and has assisted freely in extra-curricular activities with students.

The chairmanship of the Division of Social Sciences was a difficult position to fill and the appointees to this position served from one to three years only. Dr. John L. Phillips, who joined the faculty in 1954, headed the Psychology Department for a number of years and was Dean of Student Services from 1958 to 1960. He was appointed Chairman of the Social Science Division in the latter year and held that position until 1968.

Another outstanding faculty member in this division is Dr. William S. Bronson who joined the faculty in 1954. He has taught psychology and done much counseling and testing. At the present time, he is Director of the Reading and Diagnostic Center. He has been instrumental in initiating education for the mentally retarded in Boise as well as for the exceptionally gifted child who is not doing well in school.

William E. Shankweiler joined the faculty in 1956, heading dramatics in the College until the past 4 years when he successively moved to Acting Chairman of the Humanities Division, Chairman, and in 1967 Chairman, Division of Arts and Letters. He received his Doctorate in 1961 from Denver University. He has taken an active place in Little Theatre, now President, and has directed Music Week.

The task of selecting a chairman for the Vocational Education Division offered a real obstacle in selecting the right man. Robert S. Hunter, with a bachelor's degree from Carnegie Institute of Technology and a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh, was appointed in the fall of 1947 and remained with the College in that position until 1953. He was succeeded by Vernon J. Beckwith from 1953 to 1957 and by Claude Waln from the latter date until 1966. At the present time, Charles B. Rostron holds the position with the title of Director of the Area Vocational-Technical School.

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of September 15, 1969 from Mrs. Herbert Everitt to Eugene B. Chaffee.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>*Idaho Evening Statesman*, May 31, 1947.

<sup>4</sup>Graff Accounting Service. *Audit Report for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1961.*

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.