

## *Postlog*

## CHAPTER XXVI

The college at Boise is on its way. Compared with most human institutions, this one is only beginning and will develop far beyond the dreams of those who contemplated it and those engaged in its early years of existence. The College originated through the need for higher educational possibilities for the young people in this area who were finishing up their secondary school work and needed additional education but lacked the finances.

If it was needed in 1932, it is needed even more in 1970. The city of Boise has tripled in population since the beginning of the College, and the number of students graduating from high schools in Ada County is five times as great as when Bishop Barnwell opened the school 38 years ago. Society has so changed in these years that a far greater number of young people require a college education than was true almost 40 years ago; hence a greater percentage are going on to college.

The economic and educational system is such that colleges are no longer located in rural areas and small towns, but must be connected with large urban areas and draw on them if they are to educate the young people who will, in the main, be working in such urban institutions immediately after graduation. Also,

the very nature of our changing institutions in this decade requires that most businesses must have higher educational institutions near them if they are to keep up with the changing times. The time has long since passed when a person may receive a college education outside the community in which he goes to work on commencement day.

Boise Junior College was founded on the base that it should be an institution working with the community and taking the product of the community school system as its student base. If this were not visible to many Boiseans when Dr. Leonard V. Koos began his study in 1930, it was certainly understood by people connected with the Boise Independent School District, Superintendent Dienst and the School Board.

Colleges have accepted the view that they must serve the community in which they exist as well as the students who attend. The separation of town and gown were things of the past in 1932 even if many Boiseans may not have recognized this fact. In earlier decades, it was thought desirable to have young people away from an urban area. This was regarded as providing an opportunity for them to think in what could possibly be termed a monastic society. The student was supposed to be away from all the evils of the city; hence in a State like Idaho, all the higher institutions, with the exception of Idaho Technical at Pocatello, were located in small towns of under two thousand population at the time of their foundings.

Of course, another reason that colleges were no longer located in rural sections was because of the tremendous growth of cities. For the new members of a population who would be going to these cities immediately after graduation from college education would be acquired in an urban atmosphere.

The junior college, then, was to become truly a community college with all the problems and satisfactions that went with the urban community.

The first Board of Trustees that headed the College after it left the Episcopal Church's sponsorship was composed entirely

of a group of men vitally connected with the life of the city. These people came from law, banking, insurance, and urban department stores. They worked together to provide education for the young people of the city.

Of course, the institution's being born during the low period of the Depression made everyone aware of the fact that an education must be acquired near the homes of the majority of the students if they were going to be able to attend such an institution in the 1930's.

The very fact that the Chamber of Commerce was willing to take on the sponsorship of such a college after the two-year trial period by the Episcopal Church had ended was, in a sense, the realization of the need for community education above the high school.

Today, the College exists because a growing number of citizens recognized that there must be higher education for the youth and adults of the Boise community. It is true that at first the number was very small, but by 1934 it was certainly evident to most of the 175 students who had attended the College and also to their parents that this type of a college must live. Still, in 1934 the community's understanding of higher education was not enough for them to develop a college that would be tax supported. It took five more years for this concept to permeate the minds of adults and young people before a serious attempt was made to found such a tax supported institution. The vote in 1939, both in the election to form the District and the one to bond it for new buildings, showed that the idea was a dominating one by the time the people of the Boise area ended the fourth decade of the 20th century.

As one looks back on this scene, he is reminded that it compares very closely to the growth of a river. Support comes from many tributaries, usually from far-seeing individuals e.g. Bishop Barnwell, Mr. Haga, Mr. Driscoll and others, and finally develops into a mighty river toward the end of the stream as

other citizens join in supporting it. This is then concentrated in one mighty channel.

When the author remembers the feeble support that the College had in the first years of its existence and then sees the tremendous support it has now almost 40 years later, he is truly convinced that a fine idea will, with supporting action, eventually grow into an outstanding fact.

People who opposed the College in 1932 became its greatest supporters by 1950. All of this support did not come at one time but the [necessary] support did come at each period of the College's development. Provincialism was swept aside due largely to three factors: the splendid and continuing work of the College's faculty and administration, the growing and necessary backing of the city's business and professional men, and finally, the realization within the State of Idaho that it is necessary for an outstanding college to be recognized and supported if the young people of the State are to be developed into their justified future capabilities.

In summarizing, let us trace the growth of the College as it exists today. First, the need for such an institution was recognized by a few educators in the period around 1910 to 1920; then there was a stagnant decade in the twenties when little was done until the end of this period. At that time, a Board of Trustees of the Independent School District recognized the need for at least a study in this field. Next came the true step into higher education by the Episcopal Church of Idaho under the leadership of Bishop Barnwell. This existed for only two years as far as control was concerned, but for an additional five as far as providing the plant and facilities was concerned. By that time, the people of the community had indicated their belief in the growth of such a college and were willing to reach into their pockets for tax dollars to found the Boise Junior College District.

This was to grow for the next decade, until 1950, into a district made larger by annexation and by public acceptance

which spread into the neighboring communities of Meridian and Nampa. In spite of another war and the threat of future wars, the decade of the 1950's proved that this college was essential not only to the people of the city but also to those of other towns and counties around Boise.

Boise had the vision to build dormitories for these people, to take on the extra expense of a science building and gymnasium, and to prepare for the addition of a library—all this before any real support came from the State itself.

By the mid-sixties, the State was willing to allow other counties to be taxed so that students from those counties could attend the Boise institution. In the same legislature, there was also the recognition that this area should be allowed to add two more years to the junior college and form a four-year institution granting baccalaureate degrees.

As we hail the end of the decade of the sixties, it is apparent that this institution will grow and become, in every sense, a State institution, in fact one of the larger ones. It will be the basis of education for young people and also for the continuing education of business and professional people—an education that will hopefully continue throughout their lives, at least until the days of their retirement.

Here, then, within the short space of 40 years, an institution has been born, gone through its adolescence and has moved into maturity. Its influence has become greater and greater with each year that passes and instead of being primarily local, it is now recognized as not only a State institution but as a contributing force to national education.