ACT II

From College to University

1891-1945
The McClelland Decade: Emergence of a Modern College

With the ignorance which characterizes Americans as to other regions than their own, I very much underestimated both the field and the work. — Rev. Thomas McClelland, 1892

George Atkinson's death in 1889 marked the end of an era for Pacific University. After 40 years of bare existence, the long, upward climb toward true collegiate status had ended. The final decade of the nineteenth century witnessed changes that would shape the very nature and identity of the school. A number of traditions and practices woven into the fabric of the university, and some associated with college life in general, began during the 1890s. In essence, Pacific became what we think of as a modern college. One individual, the Rev. Thomas McClelland (1846–1926), played a key role during the time he served as Pacific's fourth president, 1891–1900. In almost every sense, the 1890s at Pacific University were the “McClelland Decade.”

Healing Old Wounds, Breaking New Ground

When, following the sinking of the Maine in 1898, the United States declared war on Spain, a Madrid newspaper reported that “The Commander-in-Chief of the American Army is one Ted Roosevelt, formerly a New York policeman” who had been “born near Haarlem” but had “emigrated to America when young,” who had been educated at “Harvard Academy, a commercial school,” and who now went about the country accompanied by a bodyguard of toughs fittingly known as “rough rioters.”

As amusing as these misconceptions are, the impressions that most Americans had of what was going on out in Oregon in the 1890s were hardly more accurate—a fact noted by President McClelland in his inaugural address, cited above. Thus in 1894 the president of the University of Rochester, in a similar address, took aim at “fresh water [sic] colleges away out in the far west”:

I can remember the day when ... it seemed to be the regular thing for the student to exercise his wits and to show his ability by playing practical jokes upon his professors and especially upon the other classes. This state of things is passing away and only is now present ... where the academy characteristics prevail, where they take the students while they are young before their eyes are opened to the world ... in some frontier place where they would give to the institutions a higher name than college if there were any.

The barb was both uninformed and gratuitous, and out in the far West the student ed-
tor of Pacific University's fledgling newspaper bristled that "this slur should be cast on western colleges":

To the schools of the west belongs the credit of bringing about this reformation in the college world. Founded by men who were teaching for the good they could do and not for the money they might receive, the early western institutions drew to themselves students who were in earnest, who were intent on an education and had neither time nor inclination for the age-dusted tricks with which eastern college boys kept green the memory of forerunners whose atoning studiousness they entirely disregarded ... the few fossils yet remaining are on the Atlantic coast.

As insignificant as this exchange of volleys might seem, it bears testimony to the fact that Pacific University, by the mid-1890s, had acquired not only a college newspaper but a great deal of college pride. Both of these acquisitions were due in great part to the work of Rev. Thomas McClelland.

Thomas McClelland was born in Ireland, in County Derry, and emigrated to Pennsylvania with his large family—he was the youngest of 13 children—at the age of three. Ten years later, in 1859, his family moved to Mendon, Illinois. When the Civil War started, he was too young to enlist, but saw his older brothers go off to serve in the Union Army.

Interestingly, his vita reads like a patchwork of his three most influential predecessors at Pacific University: like Harvey Clark, he studied at Ohio's liberal Oberlin College, receiving a degree of A.B. in 1875; like Marsh, he continued his formal education at Union Theological Seminary in New York; like George Atkinson, he ultimately graduated from Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts. Following 11 years as professor of philosophy at Tabor College in Iowa, he came to Forest Grove to take on the administrative responsibilities as Pacific's president.

McClelland's influence was immediate and pervasive. Besides resolving the conflict about Congregational control, he was responsible for bringing to Pacific at least two faculty members who would play significant roles long after his departure—Henry Liberty Bates and Mary Frances Farnham, of whom we shall see more later. In 1892, eight years after Ladies Hall had begun providing on-campus housing for female students, McClelland gave male students their first opportunity to live communally in one of the former Indian Training School buildings, renamed the "Boys Dormitory." In 1893, he further bolstered Pacific's reputation as an innovative school by introducing for the first time an elective system—this while other colleges in the region retained prescribed curricula. The morale of the school blossomed under his administration, as did community pride in the institution. In 1893, by city ordinance, the streets bordering the university were renamed—Pacific Avenue and College Way.

Several other factors contributed to the positive changes at the university during McClelland's tenure, the most important being Portland's economic and cultural flowering. Since the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1883, the population had more than doubled, bringing with it to the region contemporary ideas about education. Pacific University, although located on the Portland fringe, nevertheless benefited from this growth, not least of all because greatly improved roads had transformed Forest Grove.
from an outpost to something of a suburb. On almost every front—academics, athletics, social organizations, publications—student life began to take on the pace and appearance of the "modern" college.

**THE SEEDS OF TRADITION**

Two of the longest-standing traditions among student activities began during the McClelland decade: the student newspaper, called the Index, in January of 1893; and the yearbook, called The Heart of Oak, in the following year. Taken together, the Index and The Heart of Oak provide a long-running commentary on campus life at Pacific University from the students' vantage.

There is no record of who came up with the name "Index," though the first editor-in-chief, H. D. Stewart of the class of 1893, notes by way of explanation that the paper "should serve as an index to the plane of thought of the students which it represents." Two years later a sophomore editor-in-chief named P. E. Bauer apparently felt that the name was sufficiently unimaginative to warrant something of an apology:

INDEX means the "pointer" and that is what we intend to be. We will point out the advantage of PACIFIC UNIVERSITY wherever we see it, give points on athletics and pointers about students, also make the editorials as pointed as possible. Even the type used is on the point system.

Whatever the virtues of the newspaper's moniker, the editors of the Index clearly took their responsibilities as pioneer chroniclers seriously. The second issue—February 1893—includes an accounting of the newly formed "rugby football" team's record "so that it may be preserved as a matter of history in the development of our athletics." Noting that Pacific's first football game ever was "played after only three or four weeks of practice," and that only "three or four students had any knowledge of the game at that time," the article goes on to present the line-up for both teams and a summary of the action, which took place on the grounds on the north side of the college campus. The opposition was the Bishop Scott Academy team, which, it is noted, had been playing for two or three years:

The visitors having had considerable experience in the game, led off with strong and rapid playing and succeeded in scoring the first touch down. After this the home team began to realize what it meant to play football, and started in to win, with the result that the game ended with a score of 18 to 6 in favor of Pacific University.

The perils of rugby football, which included serious head injuries due to the lack of helmets of any kind, was apparently a hot issue nationally and becomes a recurrent theme in the Index throughout the 1890s. The March

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**Top: Boys' Dormitory and Club of 1897; the building was originally constructed for the Forest Grove Indian Training School.**

**Bottom: A room in Herrick Hall at the turn of the century illustrated the contemporary Victorian fashion in fabrics and furnishings. Ladies Hall was renamed Herrick Hall in 1897.**
The 1899 football team (showing some players wearing nose guards) poses in an “action” shot outside Marsh Hall.

Right: At the “Annual Banquet” at the turn of the century, Boxer (see p. 61) puts in an appearance. Far right: The Ivy Club of 1891

The actors in a play pose for the camera (ca. 1900). Far right: Various University pins showing an early version of the University Seal and also one with T.A. for Tualatin Academy.
Music at Pacific

Pacific’s first president, Sidney Harper Marsh, peppered his letters home with reminders to his children to keep up on their music lessons and to practice regularly. Marsh considered music an essential component of a truly liberal education, and the tradition he fostered has continued at Pacific to this day.

Pacific University offered its first music courses as early as 1870, nine years before Marsh’s death. The catalog for 1870–71 lists Miss Olivia Haskell as Teacher of Music in the Faculty roster. Miss Haskell came to Forest Grove armed with a degree from Oberlin College’s Conservatory of Music. Forty years later, this same Miss Haskell worked as the matron of Herrick Hall, keeping a close watch on the female residents of that beloved dormitory.

Gradually, the course offerings in music expanded until, in 1884, the Conservatory of Music was formally created, with Mary H. Edwards serving as director. Until 1902 a total of six women worked as conservatory directors. In that milestone year, Frank Thomas Chapman arrived at Pacific, with distinguished credentials from Europe, to take charge of the conservatory. His wife, Pauline Miller Chapman, was employed as the head of the vocal department. During the first decade of this century the Chapmans shaped and improved the Conservatory of Music on campus. The 1913 Heart of Oak noted that the Pacific University Conservatory of Music “is now acknowledged one of the best conservatories in the Northwest and the standards of requirement are on a par with those of the best, both in America and on the continent.” Chapman Hall, a small house formerly used for music classes, was named in honor of Frank and Pauline Chapman.

The Conservatory of Music continued to grow in prestige and stature throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In the World War II period, however, the music program at Pacific experienced a change, and the conservatory—a vestige of nineteenth-century academic structure—was discontinued and replaced by the Department of Music. After five years, in 1950, the official School of Music appeared in the university catalog. Under the new administrative arrangement, it operated on a parallel level with the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Optometry, using the title of “dean” for the school’s director. The School of Music, based in Knight Hall, maintained this separate identity until 1983, when the music program, once again, was absorbed into the College of Arts and Sciences.

Limited facilities hampered the growth of the music program at Pacific University for most of its life. For many years two historic structures—both houses constructed in the nineteenth century by President Sidney Harper Marsh—provided inadequate space for the School of Music during its prime. This situation came close to changing for the better in 1970, when Pacific acquired the old Lincoln Junior High School building adjacent to campus (where the Holte Tennis Courts are now located). Plans to move the School of Music into this structure were foiled, however, when the building caught fire and burned.

Music students and faculty rejoiced in 1993 when the new Taylor-Mead Performing Arts Center opened. This long-awaited addition has filled a void not only on campus but within the Forest Grove community as a whole. Within the center, the 400-seat McCready Auditorium is the venue for the annual Stars in the Grove event and for other locally popular musical performances.

Ken Combs, the last dean of the School of Music (1978–1983) and director of planning when the Taylor-Mead Performing Arts Center was being envisioned, attributed the continuing interest in music at Pacific to the excellence of the music faculty. “Some musicians can perform,” Combs noted, “but can’t teach. Pacific’s faculty are good performers and good teachers.”
"Mr. Wilderness"

THE NAME OLAUS J. MURIE is well known to anyone with an interest in natural history or wildlife conservation. Murie's book, *A Field Guide to Animal Tracks*, published in 1954 for the famous Peterson Field Guide Series, graces many bookshelves. Less well known is that this internationally recognized wilderness advocate and conservation leader graduated from Pacific University in 1912. While at Pacific, Murie served as class president during both his junior and senior years and was active in several campus clubs. He also played on the football team, ran track as a member of the eight-mile relay team, and contributed many humorous illustrations to the 1913 *Heart of Oak* (published in 1912).

In April 1953, Murie returned to Pacific to deliver three lectures for the Isaac Hillman Lectureships in the Social Sciences under the general topic of "Wild Country as a National Asset." One lecture title in particular reflects his views on wilderness in America: "God Bless America—And Let's Save Some of It!"

The following passage from one of Murie's lectures presents a good student assessment of life at Pacific, one that transcends the period to which it refers.

I should like to talk for a moment about Pacific University and my experience with it. For me it has seemed a happy coincidence that I should have the opportunity to visit this university and talk about wilderness and what it means for us. In the first place, we can be proud of the origin of this college, over a century ago, in the pioneering period of this land. This institution was really the beginning of education in Oregon. It speaks for the vision of early pioneers in thought, who foresaw what would be the ultimate need.

I like to recall my own introduction to this historic place, though some of my first experiences on this campus are ludicrous to me now. I came to Pacific as a sophomore in 1909. I had grown up in flat Minnesota country and had worked mostly as a farm hand. Then for three days and nights I had sat in a day coach of the Northern Pacific, with a basket of food beside me, for I could not afford to buy meals enroute. I had never seen a mountain, hardly a sizeable hill. Consider then what it meant to be crossing the Rocky Mountains! Then came the lush valley and the great forests of this very place.

As time went on I came to appreciate more fully the particular quality of life at Pacific University. I know that I cannot properly analyze this. I found here a charming countryside, and back there on the ridges was the deep forest in the condition that Lewis and Clark might have found it. As I look back, it seems to me we had a little community culture that was precious in a special way. It was close to the land. It had tranquility, so priceless in the world today. Perhaps our facilities were not what they should be; perhaps even some of our courses were not as "strong" as we have them now. Yet here in the edge of wilderness, born of the wilderness, was an institution where, from the vantage point of an atmosphere of simplicity and serenity, we could form our opinions of the strivings of mankind.

When Olaus Murie died in 1963, an editorial in the *Washington Post* summed up the common opinion that "to thousands of people who had hiked or camped with Olaus J. Murie or had talked with him on a mountain trail, he was Mr. Wilderness."
1893 issue cites the opinion of "the venerable Ex-President of Princeton College," who had called for a national conference of college presidents, professors, and parents of students "to consider how benefits may be secured from manly exercises without the accompanying evils."

As for womanly exercises, an editorial in the April 1893 issue observes:

We are glad to notice the enthusiasm with which lawn tennis is being taken up this season by the students. It is the only outdoor game which we have that can be entered into by women with the same degree of propriety as by men, and for this reason, if no other, it should always retain a prominent position among college games.

Other sports on campus that began during the McClelland decade included baseball, basketball, and track (women's basketball and track teams started competing at the close of the decade, in 1899). It was during this period as well that the school colors—crimson and black—were chosen, a fact duly commemorated in the October 1894 issue of the Index in this anonymous bit of acrostic verse:

ROUGE ET NOIR
The colors of our college
Are black
& crimson-red
Pilfered from my maiden's cheek and the hair
Upon her head.

The same issue contains a spirited defense of the school's initials, P.U., which had of late been pirated by the upstart student body of Portland University. Under the headline "What's in A Name?" the article proclaims that "The best colleges in the country recognize P. U. degrees and the desire of our founders has been attained—they have built[d] sic] on this North Pacific coast an institution of higher learning whose standing is equal to the New England colleges from which they came." The writer concludes in a burst of gratuitous Latin and questionable grammar: "To borrow our time-honored nomina duogrammata and apply it to a school of later origin is to obtain for that school's students a consideration to which they are not entitled, have not yet earned, to obtain it under false pretenses." Apparently, the high seriousness of the editorial achieved its end; the following issue of the Index notes that "The students of the Portland University have very generously, in deference to Pacific's prior claims to the initials P. U., decided hereafter to use only the letter 'P' to represent their college."

Student life at Pacific in the 1890s was varied and lively, and most of it finds its way into the Index in one way or another. Debating, even more than athletics, was the main arena for competition with other schools. Christian activities of various kinds were conducted under the aegis of the YMCA and YWCA. There were clubs for everything from archery to bicycling to drama. And music, in the form of orchestra, band, glee clubs, chamber groups, and even "Mongolian mandolin accompaniments," played a central role in public events from the smallest tea party to the grandest ceremony. Dancing would not be permitted on campus until the 1920s, though female students were known to dance with one another at socials held in Ladies Hall.

In May of 1894 the Index announced the imminent publication of the "Annual," which it describes as "a veritable Pacific picture book—college life in all its forms." The premier issue of the Heart of Oak—a name suggested for the yearbook by Henry Liberty Bates in recognition of the many majestic oaks on the campus—appeared the following June and opens with a proud volley, announcing itself as "the
Top: The football team of 1894 included a skeleton in their team photos. When a photo later appeared in the Heart of Oak yearbook the skeleton had been removed by a retoucher—a shadow of the skeleton’s left shoulder is still visible.

We have no tenets to set forth, no dogmas to maintain. We do not wish to offer any new policy for school management, or to attack any existing one. If such were needed it is not our mission. It is our purpose to give a simple view of Pacific University as it is. If in doing so we touch someone’s pet notion or mention a peculiar trait, let him remember that he is only mortal and possibly may have inherited something of the human from his barbarian ancestors.

Despite this auspicious beginning, however, would-be editors of the annual proved to be “only mortal” as well. The Heart of Oak did not come out again until 1901, after which it appeared only sporadically until the 1920s, when it could truly be called a “yearbook.” By contrast, the Index—first a monthly, then a weekly, currently a biweekly—has continued uninterrupted from its first issue to the present day.

Two other traditional figures familiar to Pacific alumni also date their origins to the McClelland decade: the petrified stump, which still marks the location of Tualatin Academy’s log building, and Pacific’s most enduring mascot, the bronze statue known as “Boxer.” The stump, an unusual landmark by any standard, was erected in 1897 by the three alumni from the class of 1867. One of those graduates, Rev. Joseph Elkanah Walker, was also responsible for bringing “Boxer” to campus in 1898.
(Originally, the Chinese incense burner was known as "College Spirit"; the name "Boxer," a reference to the Boxer Rebellion, was coined by the Index staff in 1908.) While serving as a missionary to China, Rev. Walker bought the statue and sent it to his mother, who in turn donated it to Pacific. Boxer managed to stay on display for only a year before the first student "theft" literally launched it into its more active role in campus life, one that it would maintain for many years to come.

FITTING TRIBUTE

Perhaps the crowning achievement of McClelland's administration was the construction of Marsh Memorial Hall, named in honor of Pacific's first president. When McClelland arrived at Pacific, the campus consisted of only three structures—College Hall, Academy Hall, and Ladies Hall. What it lacked was a visual anchor in the form of a central, solid building. Marsh Memorial Hall, designed by the noted Portland firm of Whidden and Lewis, would provide just such a landmark and put Forest Grove on the architectural map.

With plans in hand and a generous donation of $15,000 from Dr. D. K. Pearsons of Chicago in the bank, President McClelland and the trustees had every reason to hope for a speedy completion of the building. The groundbreaking ceremony, accompanied by appropriate fanfare, occurred during commencement of 1893, with Joseph and Eliza Marsh, the former president's brother and widow, throwing out the first two shovelfuls of dirt. But a less propitious event of national import was in the offing. A week after the groundbreaking, on June 27, the New York stock market crashed, setting off the second-greatest depression in United States history. The timing seemed ominous and, as it turned out, the laying of the cornerstone for Marsh...
D. K. Pearsons of Chicago (a classmate of George Atkinson’s at Dartmouth) donated $15,000 toward the construction of Marsh Hall and later offered to increase his gift to $50,000 if the University could raise $100,000 within a year.

Above, right: Members of the first class to enter Marsh Hall in the fall of 1895.

Memorial Hall was delayed until the commencement of the following year.

In the meantime, in March of 1894, D. K. Pearsons offered to increase his gift of $15,000 for the building to $50,000 if the university could come up with $100,000 in pledges within a year. This would have been a Herculean task in the best of times; in the trough of a financial crash, it seemed impossible. Still, everyone pitched in to meet the unlikely deadline. President McClelland canvassed Oregon and traveled to the East Coast to solicit funds; the faculty, whose own salaries had not been paid in full, pledged $1,200; the alumni promised $7,000; and the trustees held themselves responsible for another $30,000.

Bolstered by this initial response and sheer faith, McClelland, still in the East drumming up support, gave the go-ahead for the laying of the cornerstone, which took place in June of 1894.

In McClelland’s absence, Joseph Marsh conducted the ceremony, which was marked by appropriate speeches and, of course, music. Before Eliza Marsh set the stone in place, a potpourri of articles was deposited in a metal cornerstone box, including a copy of Sidney Harper Marsh’s inaugural address, copies of the *Index* and the *Heart of Oak*, a list of donors, a statement of Forest Grove’s position on temperance, a cone of “Douglas spruce” (presumably Douglas fir), three U.S. coins, and a copy of the *Oregonian* (Harvey Scott, Pacific’s first graduate, was editor of the *Oregonian* at the time). The cache also included two photographs, one of Tabitha Brown and— an interesting touch—one of Mrs. Whidden, wife of the architect.

In spite of the fanfare and the heroic efforts to meet Dr. Pearsons’ challenge, however, New Year’s Day of 1895 found the total pledges considerably below the amount that was due in March. Then, on the morning of February 15, 1895, a group of students were seen putting up signs that read: “All students are requested to come to the mass meeting this evening in the college chapel.” Beneath this, in large letters, was the addendum: “FACULTY ARE POSITIVELY NOT ALLOWED.” The following morning a similar meeting was called, which lasted from nine until noon. The outcome of these two meetings was a pledge from the Pacific University student body of $4,065—an impressive figure indeed when we consider that total enrollment in the collegiate department at the time was 22.

An editorial in the February 1895 issue of the *Index* proudly hailed this achievement as one that would “prove more far-reaching ... than anything which has ever before happened in the history of Pacific University”:

The fact that the students voluntarily, and without the solicitation or even the knowledge of the faculty, have pledged themselves to pay upwards of four thousand dollars to the Pearsons fund ... tells in unmistakable language how highly the students appreciate the advantages which they enjoy. It means that the men and women who have devoted their lives to laying the foundation and rearing the superstructure of this institution have not lived in vain. More than this, it means that the present administration of the university meets with the hearty approval of all the students, and what higher recommendation can any institution have than that the students like it?
Failing and Corbett: Mainstays of Pacific’s Early Years

Henry Failing (1834–1898) served as treasurer for Pacific’s Board of Trustees for 28 years, from 1870 until his death in 1898. He came to Portland with his parents in 1851 and soon afterward opened a store with his father. Failing became a prominent business and civic leader, serving as Portland’s mayor and president of the First National Bank.

In 1871 he joined his brother-in-law, Henry Corbett (1827–1903), who at the time was a U.S. Senator from Oregon, in a mercantile business that added to their collective wealth. Corbett also served on the Board of Trustees for Pacific University, from 1858 to 1903, and, in fact, preceded Failing as treasurer for a short time during the Civil War period. Few names could rival theirs in Portland’s elite upper class during the nineteenth century.

Pacific’s survival during the early years was in large part due to the business acumen of Henry Failing and Henry Corbett. In spite of their years of dedication and service to Pacific University, it is curious that neither man left a sizable bequest to increase the endowment or construct additional buildings.

Life in Forest Grove

1902

The first opening was as professor of biology in Pacific University, at Forest Grove, Oregon, a small college with an honorable record as one of the pioneers of education in the far Northwest. The salary was $1,000 per year, payable as and when money was available; the duties were onerous and the equipment insignificant. Here the family was so poor that in the first season there was not enough money to buy postage stamps for Christmas cards. Mrs. Coghill gives some glimpses into the hardships of this pioneer life:

George borrowed money to go to Europe. When he returned we were broke. We borrowed $300.00 more to get us to our first job in Oregon with our ten-months-old baby. We moved into an empty seven-room house, after buying a cooking stove, kitchen table, dining table, four chairs, and iron bed and a canvas cot. Our dresser was two packing cases curtained under a mirror. George’s ‘study’ had a pint-size airtight wood stove, a kitchen table, one wooden chair and again packing cases for books. George and I were almost down and out when we landed in Forest Grove. The sky was orange with smoke from forest fires, dust and ashes were everywhere, and our throats and eyes parched and sore. The quarterly salary payments were always spent before received. The village merchant, Mr. Adams, carried the whole faculty on his books six months of every year. In his store was a soft outing flannel that I wanted so much for night clothes for all of us—but no money. Mr. Adams asked, ‘How much do you want?’ I said, ‘Oh, not any now.’ He understood and replied, ‘The whole faculty live on credit in this town. You’d better join up. They’ll pay by Christmas.’ But they didn’t. By Christmas we did have sleeping garments, but no money for a postage stamp.
In further acknowledgment of the students' generosity, it was decreed that the date of February 15 should be celebrated in perpetuity as "Students' Day." History, sadly, has not done well by Students' Day. The first anniversary was celebrated with appropriate games and activities, but in the following year the catalog calendar would change the date to October 17 and would rename the holiday "Founders' Day." The reason given for the changed date was that February 15 was too close both to the end of winter term and to Washington's birthday. The name was changed because the faculty had always wanted to have a Founders' Day and did not feel that they could institute two new holidays. Consequently, the two holidays were collapsed into one, with the assurance, however, that "the day should still belong to the students for promoting their interests." Predictably, the origin of "Founders' Day," along with the assurance, was gradually forgotten.

Perhaps inspired by the students' gesture, Dr. Pearsons kindly extended the deadline to July 1898, which coincided with the 50th anniversary celebration of the school's founding. With generous local contributions adding to the sum, the university was able to raise $111,000 by the deadline—$11,000 over the required amount.

By this time, however, Marsh Hall was already three years old. It had been completed within two years of the groundbreaking and proudly dedicated on September 27, 1895. The original building held 13 classrooms, a library, administrative offices, and a chapel. Though gutted by a fire in 1975, it was completely restored within two years and stands today as a fitting tribute both to its namesake and to the spirit that permeated Pacific University during the McClelland decade.

END OF DECADE AND A CENTURY

The culminating event of President McClelland's administration was Pacific's 50th anniversary celebration in July 1898. Using 1848 as the founding date—the year that the Board of Trustees initially met—the semi-centennial highlighted the growth and development of Pacific University and Tualatin Academy. The event was attended by about 600 guests from Portland and beyond, including representatives from Whitman College, the University of Vermont, Carlton College, and Iowa College. Also present were numerous prominent members of the Council of Congregational Churches, which happened to be holding its national convention in Portland that year. Pacific University was on the map, and President McClelland's untiring efforts on its behalf had helped put it there.

At the close of both the decade and the century, however, Thomas McClelland bid farewell to Forest Grove. He stated his reasons in a letter written shortly after his departure:

I had begun to feel the strain of the constant canvass for money at such a great distance from home and I was keenly sensible to the fact that under the circumstances I could not do for the institution all that, in my judgment, a president should do for a college.

On leaving Pacific, he took on the presidency of Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois. He
would hold that position for 17 years, concluding a long and distinguished career in education. He died in Galesburg on January 26, 1926.

When McClelland left in 1900, there were six buildings on campus. Student enrollment was 50 in the university, more than double that of his inaugural year, and about 175 in the academy. There were 13 faculty members, a small number of instructors, and a curriculum that included a four-year classical program, a three-year scientific program, a three-year set of literary courses, and electives in music and art. Overall, though several Pacific University presidents served longer terms than Thomas McClelland, few did more to shape the essential character of the institution.

McClelland’s influence on the development of Pacific University did not end with his departure in 1900. When steel millionaire Andrew Carnegie formed the Carnegie Foundation in 1905, he named Thomas McClelland to the Board of Directors. When, a year later, the first Herrick Hall (Ladies Hall) caught fire and burned to the ground, the Carnegie Foundation provided $10,000 for the new women’s dormitory, constructed in 1907—this in addition to the $20,000 it had already promised in 1905 for the construction of a new library. McClelland surely had a hand in this.

On the less positive side, McClelland also had a hand in choosing his successor. When the trustees haggled for almost two years over who should succeed him as president, McClelland wrote back in no uncertain terms recommending William Ferrin for the job: “You speak of the difficulties of finding a president. I have been very firm in the conviction that Prof. Ferrin is the man for the place … Dr. Pearsons [of Pearsons’ Fund fame] has two or three different times expressed very decidedly his conviction that Prof. Ferrin ought to be elected president.” The trustees, reluctantly, took the advice and hired Ferrin, a decision that they would live to regret. In the next 13 years, over 30 of the faculty—including most of those carefully and judiciously recruited by McClelland—would resign in protest over the administrative style of William Ferrin.

This 1901 photo shows Academy Hall in the foreground and Marsh Hall. The classical entrance was added in 1900-1901. Academy Hall burned to the ground in 1910.
The year 1893, which saw so many other milestones in Pacific's history, also marks the end of a long-running administrative feud between Tualatin Academy and Pacific University. The central reason for this improvement was President McClelland's recruitment of Henry Liberty Bates in 1893 as principal of the academy and, four years later, of Mary Frances Farnham as principal of the Ladies Department. Both of these administrator-teachers served the academy well until it closed in 1915, after which they went on to become two of the most influential faculty members in Pacific University's history. Together, they contributed a combined total of 60 years of service; both died at the advanced age of 96.

A “Defect in the Organization”

As noted in the last chapter, Thomas McClelland arrived to a campus in the throes of ideological and administrative turmoil, and on more than one front. The clash between sectarian and non-sectarian factions of Pacific University certainly dominated the scene on his arrival, but there was yet another cause of friction and confusion that we have yet to discuss—namely, the administrative tension between Tualatin Academy and Pacific University.

In his inaugural address, Sidney Marsh had proudly proclaimed: “The Academy has become the college.” This, in fact, was not the case, though it remains a common misconception. Tualatin Academy did not turn into Pacific University, nor did they have any legal existence as separate institutions. In 1854, the Board of Trustees amended the charter of Tualatin Academy to include a “collegiate department” called “Pacific University,” of which Marsh became the first president. Strictly speaking, then, the academy was divided into two departments, the “collegiate” and what was sometimes referred to as the “preparatory,” the latter having by far the lion's share of the students even up to 1915, when it closed. During the McClelland decade, for example, enrollment in the collegiate department ranged from a low of 18 (1890-91) to a high of 52.
(1899–1900), while enrollment in the preparatory department during the same period ranged from 92 (1890–91) to 176 (1899–1900).

The matter was further complicated by the fact that the preparatory department also included the "Ladies Department," which had its own principal. To sum up, the academy as a whole had a principal, while one of the departments within the academy had its own principal, and another department, which was called a "university," had a president. This organizational structure, it is worth noting, was concocted by the same Board of Trustees that came up with the name "Forest Grove," an oxymoron at best. (Marsh, perhaps recognizing this, always referred to Forest Grove as simply "The Grove.")

Such an arrangement was almost bound to generate a good deal of administrative tension. Sidney Harper Marsh had referred to this conflict in his already-cited speech to the trustees in 1878:

"The evil, generally pretty well understood by the Academy Principal and myself, grew more incorrigible just in proportion as the College work expanded and tended to draw the Academy into a subordinate relation. I have not space to show the complications caused by such defect in the organization. Men of affairs, and especially College men, may imagine the probable consequence. The public did not understand it, while it was the subtle [sic] and occult cause of outward difficulties."

While the "defect in the organization" was never resolved, the "outward difficulties" virtually dissolved with the arrival on campus of Henry Liberty Bates. Hand-picked by Thomas McClelland in 1893, Bates had been a longtime friend and classmate of the president. They had attended Oberlin College together, they had been ordained Congregational pastors together, and, sharing the Progressive Era philosophy of education, they would work together as a dynamic team, initiating more fundamental changes in the overall institution than had ever been witnessed before and, probably, since. At no other time in Tualatin Academy's history, certainly, would there be a more congenial relationship between the leaders of the respective "departments."

Henry Liberty Bates—or "Prin Bates" as he was affectionately known by the students—had been born January 7, 1853 near Akron, Ohio. He obtained his A.B. degree from Oberlin in 1876 and, for the next two years, taught school in Kelleys Island, Ohio and Keokuk, Iowa. Bates returned to the Oberlin Theological Seminary to prepare himself for the ministry, finishing the course of study in 1881. His first pastorate led him to Dover, Ohio, but his next callings took him further afield—first to Seattle, Washington, then to Petaluma, California, and fi-
nally to Eugene, Oregon. It was from Eugene, at President McClelland's request, that Henry Bates came to Forest Grove.

As principal of Tualatin Academy, Bates worked closely with President McClelland on all fronts. He also assisted with coaching athletics; photos of the Maurice Thompson Archery Club show Henry Liberty Bates proudly standing among the other members, bow in hand. Few areas of endeavor escaped his influence or his attention; the Pacific University Archives contains scrapbooks kept by Bates, covering every detail of campus life from 1893 through 1926. Not included is any reference to a personal tragedy in 1895, when Bates' wife of only 10 years, Cora Nichols Bates, died. They had two daughters and a son. Bates never remarried.

Bates was the nineteenth person to serve as principal of Tualatin Academy and, as it turned out, would be the last. Most of his predecessors had held the position for only one or two years, the exceptions being J. D. Robb and D. L. Edwards, each of whom lasted for seven.

"Prin Bates" stayed at his post for 22 years, working through the final period and last graduating class in 1915.

The closure of Tualatin Academy, mainly because of competition from the rising number of public high schools in the region, was a blow to the university in that it eliminated Pacific's primary "feeder" school. It also created a situation in which more and more students arrived as freshmen without any previous exposure to Congregational values. From Bates' perspective, this only increased the need to demonstrate those values by example as well as precept, a stance that contributed much to his immense popular-
May Day Celebrations

Pacific University staged its first May Day celebration just one month before the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, which catapulted Europe into World War I. The idyllic all-day event, held May 16, 1914, included folk dances, singing, athletic competitions, plays, and a luncheon in Herrick Hall. Lura Tamiesie, a junior, was crowned “Queen of the May” and led a royal procession from Carnegie Library to the west side of Marsh Hall, amid students, faculty, and townspeople. The double-line procession included an assortment of colorful characters in Swedish, Japanese, Gypsy, and Native American costumes. Adding an odd touch of academia, Clinton Ostrander, the student body president, marched in his cap and gown. Flowers were everywhere and, according to the Index, “The may-pole which stood in the middle of the green was wound by girls in white with graceful steps and figures which made the winding beautiful and left the pole a slender column of pink and white.” According to some estimates, the crowd that attended the evening pageant around the two bonfires on the campus was the largest ever to gather in Forest Grove.

The 1922 May Day followed an historical theme, depicting the “advance of religious education.” The pageant included eighteenth-century colonials in silks and laces, pilgrims, knights wearing chain mail and helmets, Oregon Trail pioneers, American Indians, and fur trappers. In 1936, the event took a decidedly western turn when the men’s ensemble sang “Home on the Range” and a group of 12 girls, dressed in cowboy suits, tap danced. By the 1950s, the event was indoors and called the May Day Coronation Ball. By this time, it resembled a typical formal dance.

From that successful beginning in 1914, May Day continued as one of Pacific’s traditional “Festival Days” for over 50 years. Issues of the Heart of Oak yearbook contain stories and photos of May Day celebrations through the decades, highlighting the May Queen and the popular social pageantry of the day. This spring ritual slowed down and ended in the late 1960s, probably as a result of that decade’s changing social attitudes. Karen Sato ’66 was crowned May Queen in 1967, the last to be so honored.
ity among the students. As with McClelland and others, Bates' "liberal" views on education underscored and modernized the Congregational approach to ethics and civic responsibility, including a renewed emphasis on service to those less fortunate in other countries. Near the end of his career, Bates wrote: "The graduates of Pacific University number less than 400—its student body has never been large—but among that small number have been ... the contributions of Pacific to the finest citizenship of the world at home and abroad."

When Tualatin Academy closed, Bates became professor of philosophy at the university and dean of the faculty. In 1918, in recognition of his tireless work on behalf of Christian education, Bates received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Pacific University. Upon retiring from his post at the university in 1926, he traveled to Greece and taught for a year in the American School of Religion in Athens. For the remainder of his life, Bates made his home in Forest Grove—for many years in an apartment over Paterson Furniture on Main Street—and maintained close ties with the university community. He died, at age 96, on October 23, 1949, Pacific's centennial year. In 1960 the former president's residence on campus, located on College Way, was officially named "Bates House" to acknowledge his steadfast and selfless contribution to the college.

**"THE HANDIWORK OF A LOVELY SPIRIT"**

Henry Bates' female counterpart as a principal and later as a dean was Mary Frances Farnham. As with the heads of the academy before Bates, most of the principals of the Ladies Department before Farnham had served only one to two years, the exceptions being the six-year terms of Luella Carson (1878–84) and Julia Adams (1885–91). Mary Farnham became principal in 1897 and remained in that position for 18 years, after which she became dean of women at the university for another nine years. During her combined tenure in these positions, she saw five of Pacific University's 15 presidents come and go.

Mary Frances Farnham was born in 1847 in Bridgton, Maine, a small town that even today retains much of its rustic charm. After graduating from Mount Holyoke College in 1868, she returned to Bridgton to serve as superintendent of schools for three years. The next we hear of her she is in Capetown, South Africa, as vice principal of the Bloenhof School, a position she held for eight years until recurrent bouts of sun-stroke got the better of her. She traveled extensively in Europe before returning to the States and taking on the position of preceptress at various schools, including Burr and Burton Seminary in Manchester, Vermont, Forest Park University in St. Louis, and again in Maine at Fryeburg Academy. Research work at Radcliffe in 1895–96 led to the publication of a documentary history of Maine by the Maine Historical Society. By the time she arrived at Pacific a year later she was a world traveler, experienced teacher, and published writer, by far the most prestigious faculty member ever to grace the "Ladies Department."

Farnham's tall, slim stature, stately mien, and trademark high-collared blue gown made her immediately recognizable even from a distance, and she seems to have been equally popular as an administrator and an instructor in English literature. Polly Hazzard Budrow, one of her former students, recalls that Miss Farnham made all of her classes, "even Shakespeare," lively and interesting through the use of an extensive collection of art reproductions on postcards, which are preserved in the Pacific University Museum. Mrs. Budrow, who was two days short of her 101st birthday when she spoke to the author, also recalls of Miss Farnham that "nothing could get her flustered," not even the ongoing attempts of the female...
students to romantically link her and "Prin Bates," a widower of two years when Farnham arrived at Pacific, on the grounds that they invariably sat at the same table in the dining hall.

Over the years, the Heart of Oak reads like a scrapbook of Mary Farnham's career at Pacific. The 1909 yearbook describes her as "a woman of the highest culture and refinement," adding that "the high social standard of our institution is due at least in a large measure to her influence." The 1913 annual notes that Miss Farnham was "especially famous as a 'Spring Lecturer' and ten o'clock extinguisher of Herrick Hall lights," adding as afterthought that "The Juniors can recommend Miss Farnham as a jolly chaperone." Her portraits convey, if not a jolly, at least a pleasant aspect, mingled with just enough hint of austerity to assure the errant student that she means business. The 1922 Heart of Oak is dedicated to Mary Farnham, who retired two years later.

Pacific University remained close to Mary Farnham's heart even after her retirement. She continued to take an active part in the Christmas Wassail, a long-standing tradition that she

A Trustee Goes Down with the Titanic

Among the Long Odds in Pacific University's long history are the chances of one of its trustees being on board R.M.S. Titanic during its maiden voyage in April 1912. But Frank Manley Warren, who had served on the Board of Trustees for nearly 17 years, was indeed a passenger on the famous steamer and, along with 1,500 others, died in the frigid waters of the north Atlantic. He and his wife, Anna—the daughter of founder Rev. George Atkinson—had been vacationing in Europe since the previous January, spending most of their time cruising the Mediterranean. Mrs. Warren survived the disaster.

A second-hand account of the Warrens' experience reads: "Among members of the Warren family, stories are still told of the chaos existing when the woefully inadequate lifeboats were launched, how Frank Warren embraced Mrs. Warren, bidding her a last farewell, and then calmly stepped back on the listing deck as the women and children were lowered to the sea. In the darkness of the cold night, Mrs. Warren could not see her husband as she looked back, and he was not among the survivors brought to New York by the Carpathia."

Frank Warren, president of Warren Packing Company, had been a pioneer in the salmon canning industry on the Columbia River. In the early 1880s he began using giant fishwheels to efficiently catch thousands of salmon moving upriver. A cannery (in what is now Warrendale, which was named after him) was constructed to process the catch for market. The cannery ceased operation about 1930 and the federal government purchased the property to build Bonneville Dam.
Andrew Carnegie's Gift

PACIFIC UNIVERSITY operated for over half a century—one-third of its existence—without a dedicated library structure on campus. Steel magnate Andrew Carnegie changed that when he provided a $20,000 gift to construct a building to house Pacific's collection of books, serials, and government documents. Carnegie's offer, made in April 1905, challenged the university to raise a matching amount for the continued maintenance of the library. Under those terms, it took another seven years before Carnegie Library opened its doors to grateful students and faculty.

Andrew Carnegie is well known for his philanthropy, especially his program of building over 1,600 public libraries in cities across the nation. The state of Oregon alone added 31 public libraries before World War I, using grants from Carnegie. Since the overall program had strict architectural guidelines, these distinctive buildings can be readily identified, regardless of their materials. Today many of these libraries, abandoned because of expanded collections and changing use patterns, have been converted into art centers and historical museums.

Pacific's new library, however, was part of a separate program established for "academic" libraries on college campuses. A total of 108 academic libraries were added nationwide. Surprisingly, Pacific University acquired the only one in the entire Pacific Northwest (the other two on the West Coast were constructed in California). Although speculative, it's probable that former president Thomas McClelland influenced the grant to Pacific. As a founding member of the Carnegie Foundation Board—and a personal friend of Andrew Carnegie—it seems likely that his continued interest in Pacific's welfare was a factor in the choice. Also noteworthy is the fact that Carnegie provided $10,000 toward the construction of the new Herrick Hall in 1907, only two years after his promise to fund the library project.

When the new Carnegie Library opened in the fall of 1912, the white brick structure—designed by the noted Portland architectural firm of Whidden and Lewis—was hailed as a symbolic milestone for the university. Unfortunately, it also initiated an era of hard times. President William Ferrin, strongly opposed to using inferior local building materials, resigned over the project. Ferrin, who followed Thomas McClelland as president, had joined the faculty in 1877. He was a native New Englander and served as a vital philosophical link to the Sidney Marsh era.
had begun while at Pacific, and she compiled an extensive profile of Pacific alumni.

In what may have been her last letter to President Walter Giersbach, in October of 1941, she apologizes that glaucoma and increasing infirmity prevent her from doing as much for the university as she would like to do: "I am simply expressing a wish that is uppermost—that I would gladly do more." She died a year later at the age of 96. At a memorial service in her honor, President Giersbach said of her: "There was hardly a matter touched by Mary Frances Farnham that did not show the handiwork of a lovely spirit, a mind as sharp as a copper etching."

FROM PROMISE TO PRESENTIMENT

With Henry Liberty Bates heading the Academy, Mary Farnham in charge of the Ladies Department, and President Ferrin carrying on the innovative work that Thomas McClelland had started at the college, the years 1900 to 1913 were marked by great progress and great promise. Campus expansion hit a temporary setback when Herrick Hall burned in 1906, but a new dormitory was in place by 1907, and in 1910 a new gymnasium was finished.

Even more impressive was the completion, in 1912, of the only academic library in the Northwest to be funded by Carnegie. By this time Pacific had shifted from a three-term schedule to a semester system; in 1913 it adopted majors and minors and even offered a nominal master’s degree. In that same year it had started at the college, the years that followed, were a turning point in the college. It would prove to have looked brightest, William Ferrin (ca. 1880) ultimately resigned under pressure from the faculty.

After itemizing the damage done on several fronts by Ferrin’s “lack of tact” and “arbitrary manner,” the faculty petition added, in a lighter vein: “It has been said by some that the fire of his tongue and the color of his hair caused the burning of the Congregational Church some years ago.”

An able professor but a beleaguered president, William Ferrin (ca. 1880) ultimately resigned under pressure from the faculty. After itemizing the damage done on several fronts by Ferrin’s “lack of tact” and “arbitrary manner,” the faculty petition added, in a lighter vein: “It has been said by some that the fire of his tongue and the color of his hair caused the burning of the Congregational Church some years ago.”

Pacific University band (ca. 1910)
“Trying Times”: The Lean Years and John Dobbs

During these trying times … the college has gone quietly on its way holding up the most excellent in all things.

—JOHN FRANCIS DOBBS,
in a letter to Mary Frances Farnham, April 1, 1937

WERE THE 150-YEAR HISTORY of Pacific University represented by a vital signs monitor, the years 1914–1924 would show up on the screen as an alarmingly flat line accompanied by a prolonged warning beep. This is not to suggest that the campus was unlively during the “Roaring Twenties.” Dancing at last became permissible during this period and vigorous “Boxer tosses” would become the stuff of legend for future alumni. Also, the name “Badgers” was adopted by Pacific’s athletic teams in 1921 after someone at a football game shouted that the Crimson and Black were “fighting like Badgers!” But from an institutional point of view, the college was on hold during this decade and, despite an administrative upturn in 1925 in the person of President John Dobbs, would remain in survival mode through World War II.

THE DEPRESSION
BEFORE THE DEPRESSION

As early as 1915 a note of suppressed alarm appears in the pages of Pacific University’s school newspaper, the Index. Under the enthusiastic headline “The Phenomenal Growth of the College,” an editorial notes that the enrollment at the college has grown to 215, adding, “If this increase is maintained, we shall have at least 300 or 400 students … within the next four or five years.”

This optimistic prediction, however, is immediately qualified: “The large problem of the immediate future is the expansion of the endowment to meet the inevitable growth of the College.” Most telling, perhaps, is the sentence that immediately follows: “Pacific University is certainly not a decadent institution, but one of large vitality, vigor and service for this part of the country.” That the Index feels compelled to deny that the college is “decadent,” and to insert the qualifier “for this part of the country,” is a far cry from the confident exuberance Five victorious sophomores (ca. 1927) pose with a Boxer that is showing the ravages of being “tossed.”
that prevailed in its pages during and immediately following the McClelland decade.

The sense of foreboding was not unjustified. In the next 10 years, the enrollment of the college would see a net gain of three students—hardly “phenomenal growth.” (By way of comparison, Whitman College, which had been founded later than Pacific and by one of Pacific’s former faculty, grew from 176 students in 1906 to an enrollment of 608 in 1926.) Enlistment for service in World War I accounted for the lack of students during part of this period; the school opened in 1918 with only two male students—one who had been rejected by the draft board and one who was Japanese. But there were other reasons as well. Ironically, the same improved roads that had brought metropolitan culture to Forest Grove were now taking prospective local students to Portland and elsewhere, reflecting a national trend that saw 1920 as the first year when the U.S. population was more urban than rural.

By 1916, the trustees could see the writing on the wall and were beginning to panic. In a creative—some would say “desperate”—attempt to turn things around, President Ferrin’s successor, Charles Bushnell, pushed for a merger with the smaller Albany College, a Presbyterian institution some 50 miles to the south. The proposed merger captured the interest and energies of many, but old rivalries between the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians surfaced, and neither school had the leadership to get beyond the discussion stage.

In 1918 President Bushnell resigned, largely out of frustration over the stalled merger. He was succeeded by Robert Fry Clark, who, with degrees from Oberlin and Chicago, seemed like

Mrs. McCormick: A Tale of Two Buildings

Although President Weir’s administration lasted only two years, he should be credited with raising funds for two new buildings on campus—McCormick Hall and the President’s House (now Bates House). Prior to leaving Bellingham, Washington, Weir cemented a strong relationship with Anna McCormick of Tacoma. Anna’s deceased husband, Robert L. McCormick, relocated at the turn-of-the-century and guided the lucrative timber harvests in the Puget Sound region for Frederick Weyerhaeuser. Mrs. McCormick, a wealthy widow, donated the money for the new men’s dormitory bearing the family name, as well as funds for a residence to house the university’s president. An endowed faculty position—the Robert L. McCormick Chair of History and Patriotism—was included in the gift package. The McCormick legacy continued when Anna’s son, William L. McCormick, a vice-president of Weyerhaeuser, joined the Board of Trustees and later provided funds for the expansion of McCormick Hall in the late 1940s. Current Trustee, Steve Rogel (photo) has carried on the link with the Weyerhaeuser Company, of which he is currently CEO.
both an educational leader and a builder. When the war ended, the return of ex-servicemen bolstered enrollment, but, since the college granted them free tuition, it did little to help the financial crisis. In 1920 Clark, noting that “Unless aid comes speedily and in considerable amount the institution will be compelled to close,” announced a $2 million fund drive for an endowment and six new buildings. Within two years, however, the fund drive had lapsed and Clark announced the need to find $25,000 just to keep the school afloat. In the face of imminent closure and a vote of no-confidence from trustees and alumni alike, Clark too was forced to resign.

The trustees then appointed William Weir, a geologist and veteran fund-raiser from Bellingham Normal School, who resurrected the negotiations for a merger with Albany College. When it became clear, however, that joining forces with Albany entailed the prospect of a Presbyterian take-over of Pacific, Weir abandoned the idea. Six years of on-again off-again negotiations had come to nothing. President Weir resigned after only two years at the helm, and morale at Pacific was at an all-time low. Albany College, incidentally, would later move to Portland and, in 1942, would become Lewis and Clark College.

THE LAST CONGREGATIONALIST: JOHN DOBBS

When Rev. John Francis Dobbs entered the scene as Pacific’s president in 1925, he found a university with shrinking prospects and escalating financial worries. Undaunted, President
Mr. Gilbert’s Toys

Perhaps the most nationally famous individual to come out of Tualatin Academy and Pacific University was Alfred Carlton Gilbert (1884–1961). Driven by an intensely competitive nature, A. C. Gilbert actively pursued a multitude of passions throughout his life—magic, athletics, big game hunting, and especially educational toys for children. He is best known for his innovative construction toy—Erector—started in 1913 and manufactured by the Gilbert Toy Company for the next 50 years. Countless children used Erector sets to assemble realistic aircraft, ferris wheels, carousels, lift cranes, vehicles, and other toys. Nationwide, the Erector set—sold in its trademark red-metal box—is embedded in our popular culture.

A. C. Gilbert was born in Salem, Oregon, and raised in a Congregationalist atmosphere. His paternal uncle, Andrew T. Gilbert, joined Pacific University’s Board of Trustees in 1896, so it was no surprise when Alfred, along with his older brother Harold, later enrolled in Tualatin Academy. Always a sports enthusiast, A. C. gained statewide fame for his feats of strength and leadership in track-and-field, wrestling, and football. He held the official world’s record for pull-ups while a student in Tualatin Academy and was later called by the Oregonian newspaper “the best quarterback to be found in Oregon.” He graduated from Tualatin Academy in 1902, then matriculated into Pacific University. In 1904 he led the P.U. track team to a state championship, putting the crimson and black into the limelight. After two years at Pacific, Gilbert transferred to Yale University to pursue a medical degree (he thought it would make him a better coach). The highlight of his athletic career came in 1908 when he won a gold medal in the pole vault at the Olympic Games in London.

Erector was not Gilbert’s only product. He is credited with developing the S-gauge model train after purchasing the American Flyer company in the 1930s, turning that brand into the most realistic on the market. Gilbert’s engineers also solved the problem of designing small electric motors by inventing enameled wire, making it possible to power not only the toys he sold but his company’s household appliances as well (Gilbert is...
responsible for one of the first portable fans). Many people today clearly recall their Gilbert Chemistry Sets, common in the 1950s, and other educational sets. The Gilbert Toy Company even marketed an Atomic Energy Set, but this was quickly pulled from the market because of the radioactive material in the kit. The toy empire he started in 1913 eventually made him a millionaire, and he spent the remaining years of his life in Connecticut on a large estate he called "Paradise."

Gilbert’s 1954 autobiography, *The Man Who Lives in Paradise*, makes it clear that his energy while in Forest Grove was not focused exclusively on academic pursuits. His forte, when not on the athletic field, was engaging in campus pranks: putting chickens in upright pianos, removing the bell from Science Hall (now Old College Hall), and attempting to hoist a donkey into Marsh Hall’s Brighton Chapel—through the second-floor window. These and other high-jinks endeared him to many of his classmates, one of whom—Mary Thompson—became his future bride. They were married in September, 1908.
William G. Hale, '03, went on to earn a Harvard law degree, and to distinguish himself as dean of the law schools at the Universities of Oregon, Southern California, and Illinois.

Dobbs assessed the problems and set about to find creative solutions. Then, four years after he started, the Great Depression hit and brought the university once again to the brink of closure. That Pacific University survived the Depression era at all, given its weakened state at the outset, is amazing; that it emerged from the end of that dark tunnel with a $300,000 endowment and the elimination of a $40,000 debt is a lasting credit to the work of John Francis Dobbs.

Like many of his predecessors, Rev. John Dobbs was a New Englander—a “rock-ribbed, starched-collared New Englander,” as one alumnus remembers him. He came to Forest Grove from Malden, Massachusetts, where he had filled the pulpit of the Congregational church. He had studied at Lafayette and Union Theological Seminaries but, unlike most of his predecessors, had virtually no background in education. His inexperience in academic politics would prove a weakness in the long run, but it allowed him initially to apply an outsider’s fresh outlook to the university’s woes.

Dobbs had his work cut out for him. He began by instituting a three-year plan that called for a 50 percent raise in tuition to $150 per year, an increase in the student body to 250, and a new science building. At the end of 1926, he launched a $350,000 endowment campaign in Portland, aimed at Congregational constituents. Although Dobbs never saw a new science building, he did stem the damaging attrition at Pacific, which regularly saw a student body with nearly half freshmen and only a handful of seniors.

Unfortunately, the financial doldrums that came on the heels of the 1929 Crash made it impossible for Dobbs and the Board of Trustees to do anything beyond scrambling to survive. But school spirits had been raised, at least temporarily, and President Dobbs continued to earn the respect, if not always the affection, of faculty and students through his example and his talks, which often dealt with issues of service to humankind and the search for truth.

Carolyn Dobbs, the president’s wife, was also active on campus, developing a keen interest in Oregon history. She researched the famous 1843 vote to form a civil government in Oregon, and in 1932 authored a popular book, *Men of Champoeg*, based on her investigations. Reversing the trend of spending protracted time away from the institution, John and Carolyn Dobbs lived on campus with their two children, in the president’s residence, and interacted daily with the learning community. Every morning, rain or shine, President Dobbs could be seen going down the sidewalk and turning the corner to the long walkway leading to the main entrance of Marsh Hall.

Dobbs’ effectiveness began to wane, however, in the pre-war years. His repeated references to Pacific as the “little old New England College of the West” began to grate on students’ ears, and what some considered his puritanical ethos ran counter to the emancipating influence of the Silver Screen and the Big Band Era in the years immediately preceding World War II. By 1939, many students considered Dobbs an anachronism—this in a year when two of the films nominated for best picture were “Gone with the Wind” and “Goodbye Mr. Chips.” Like Scarlett O’Hara and Mr. Chips, President Dobbs’ greatest strength and greatest weakness may well have been that he did not bend with the times.

**QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY**

Whatever his faults, John Dobbs was nothing if not consistent. Throughout his tenure at Pacific, he stressed the importance of Christian values and a liberal arts education as the foundation for a broader understanding of the world. Historian James Hitchman, writing in 1981, notes:

“Scores of other small college presidents were saying the same thing at the time and had been saying it for a century and more, but the point is that Dobbs is an example of inculcating a moral dimension into student outlook characteristic of the church-related liberal arts college.
The Hawaiian Connection

ON HIS VOYAGE TO OREGON in 1848, Rev. George Atkinson spent several weeks in the Sandwich Islands, as Hawaii was known at the time. His journal describes the beauty of the tropical vegetation and the volcanic formations. When he later worked to establish Pacific University, the thought of Hawaiians attending the school probably never crossed his mind.

When Hawaii became the 50th state on August 21, 1959, however, Pacific University immediately started cultivating a close relationship with its residents. President Miller Ritchie’s arrival on campus at the same time served as the catalyst for increased recruitment of Hawaiian students. His inauguration on March 6, 1960 included a powerful symbol of this new connection: Hawaii’s first governor, William F. Quinn received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. Oregon’s own governor, Mark O. Hatfield, also attended the ceremony, held in the high school gymnasium because Pacific had no indoor facility large enough for the crowd. (This too would change during the Miller Ritchie administration.)

During the 1959-60 academic year, students formed the Hawaiian Club (Nā Haumāna O Hawai‘i) on campus “to display the Hawaiian spirit in their service to the school and community.” Dr. Fred Scheller ’61 served as the faculty advisor, and Tagay Kang was elected president of the club. The Hawaiian Club started the annual luau during this time, a much-loved tradition that has grown into a major extravaganza every spring. Pacific still recruits heavily in the Hawaiian Islands, and the Hawaiian Club remains one of the most active on campus.

Top and middle: The popular “Fire Dance” is a staple of today’s Luau celebrations, here performed by Brock Whittington ’95.

Right: An early Luau held on the lawns behind Bates House on College Way (ca. 1960)
Top: archery in the 1940s
Right: Pacific marked its centennial year in 1949 — Herrick Hall is in the background.
that put a different stamp upon its undergraduates than those of state or larger institutions."

As Hitchman's summation suggests, the secret to Dobbs' relative success during his 16-year term as president of Pacific was his clear sense of the school's identity as a "small ... church-related liberal arts college." How accurate this was in fact is a different question.

That Pacific was small was incontestable. That it was "church-related" would take on a different meaning with Dobbs' departure in 1940, for he was the last of Pacific's presidents who was also a Congregationalist minister. And while Dobbs consistently stressed traditional "liberal arts" values, the truth is that Pacific was more of a "normal school," preparing most of its graduates for careers as teachers. Finally, as to whether Pacific was a "college" or, as Sidney Harper Marsh had insisted, a "university," the nominal issue remained a source of embarrassment to some. As Henry Liberty Bates had once asserted, "The name 'University' has always been somewhat of a misnomer. It reflects the high aims and worthy aspirations of its early founders rather than actual achievements in the shape of graduate courses and professional schools."

But in Dobbs' mind at least, the university—or whatever one chose to call it—was doing what it was meant to do, turning disadvantaged, rural youth into solid citizens with sound moral values. As he put it in a letter preserved in the University Archives: "Out of 'the sticks' ... come many of the finest young people at Pacific. They are clean, strong, and industrious, and deserve their chance at higher education."

In fact, despite Pacific's lagging enrollment during the first four decades of the twentieth century, many of its alumni went on to prominent careers. In 1919 five members of the Oregon State Legislature were Pacific alumni. A notable graduate of 1912 was Olaus J. Murie, who went on to an illustrious career as a biologist, nature artist, and conservationist. A 1915 graduate, Harvey Inlow, became president of what is now Eastern Oregon State University. Another graduate, William G. Hale, went on to earn a Harvard law degree and to distinguish himself as dean of the law schools at the Universities of Oregon, Southern California, and Illinois. Thomas S. Thompson and Leland Johnson, both graduates of 1938, went on to become the presidents of, respectively, Morningside College and the First National Bank of Oregon.

On the literary home front, the work of Verne Bright, '25, appeared in well over 100 different publications, earning him a national, if ephemeral, reputation as a poet. And, of course, former track star A. C. Gilbert brought joy to several generations of American children with his invention of the Erector set.

But numbers did matter, even to Dobbs, who proudly pointed out to former Dean of Women Mary Farnham in 1937 that "Our freshman class was 147 this year, much the largest in the history of the college." And while enrollment at Pacific reached an all-time high of 348 in Dobbs' last year as president, it would, within three years of his departure, drop to around 150, well below what it had been in 1915 when the Index had predicted "phenomenal growth."

The major reason for this decline, of course, was loss of male students to World War II. Whatever the reasons, however, the bottom line was that the Pacific University of 1945 bore an embarrassing resemblance to the Pacific University of 1915. With a shoestring enrollment and the university faculty earning salaries well below those of Portland high school teachers, Pacific limped through the war years, waiting for the return of students and of that less tangible commodity, hope.
An Eye to the Future: 
The College of Optometry
This was the beginning of the end of this young profession’s inferiority feelings about itself and its professional education. —HAROLD M. HAYNES, O.D.

It would be easy to attribute Pacific’s recurrent woes during the years 1914–1944 to inadequate endowment and lack of financial support. But while problems of funding were real and relentless enough, the institutional lethargy during this period had deeper roots. The truth is that Pacific University was the victim of a prolonged identity crisis. Was it a university in fact or only in name? In either case, to what degree was it Congregationalist? Was it small by default or, as Henry Liberty Bates had declared, by design? Should it adapt to “modern” values and ideas or resist them as secular and decadent? Sidney Harper Marsh had early pointed out the “defect in organization” in the school; by 1944 there seemed to be not so much a defect in organization as a defect in vision. The unforeseen solution that presented itself, therefore, was both symbolic and fitting: a college of optometry.

“A SAFE HAVEN”
Mary Frances Farnham (see p. 72) spent the last 13 years of her life in the Mann Home, located on 31st and NE Sandy Boulevard in Portland. It was from this location, now an Eastern meditation center and ashram, that at age 95 she wrote to Pacific president Walter Giersbach apologizing that glaucoma prevented her from doing more than she would like to have done for the university.

Just blocks away, on 41st and NE Sandy, was the North Pacific College of Optometry, which housed a small clinic. Given the proximity, it is altogether possible that Pacific’s former dean of women visited that neighborhood optometry clinic to have her vision tested. In any case, the conjecture is a pleasing one, since it was to the North Pacific College of Optometry that, three years after Farnham’s death, her beloved university would also turn to get its future more clearly in focus.

Like Forest Grove in the 1840s, Portland’s Sandy Boulevard in the 1940s was not a likely place for a college of any kind, and the North Pacific College of Optometry hardly looked the part. The spot was, and is, dominated by the old Hollywood Theater, one of the last vaudeville-house movie palaces built in Portland, which had opened in 1926 to the accompaniment of a $40,000 Wurlitzer organ and an eight-piece orchestra. A magnet for development in what is now the “Hollywood District,” the only area in Portland named after a local building, the theater attracted a motley assortment of small
businesses, a boon for the optometry college and clinic.

Dr. Clarence “Clary” Carkner, who has been called “the Father of the College of Optometry at Pacific University,” recalls that when he came from Saskatchewan, Canada to study at North Pacific College of Optometry he was shocked to find that the “campus” consisted of about 400 square feet in the second story of an old brick building attached by a walkway to a movie theater. Dr. Newton Wesley, who had become an optometrist because his mother wanted him to be a doctor and he “didn’t like blood,” recalls that to get to the second floor you had to go through the Hollywood Arcade, with its magazine and tobacco shops (the arcade, along with the original site of the optometry college, burned to the ground in 1997). Both agree, however, that the training in optometry was excellent at North Pacific, which had been founded in 1919 when the DeKeyser Institute of Optometry merged with the Oregon College of Ocular Sciences.

Optometry in the 1940s was not the respected profession it is today. Many optometrists operated out of jewelry stores. The “real” schools of medicine, conveniently forgetting that surgery had its origins in barber shops, sought to distance themselves from colleges of optometry, all of which were independent and proprietary in any case. Columbia University had established the first university-sponsored course in optometry in 1910, but this was in the Department of Extension Education, and without the approval of the medical school. By 1930 Columbia was giving a four-year course in optometry for a B.Sc. degree, but no university gave a doctoral degree in optometrics. In 1934 the American Medical Association (AMA) resolved to stop optometrists from prescribing glasses in hospitals, and in 1935 declared it unethical for any AMA member to teach or consult with an optometrist.

Shortly later, Columbia University dropped its courses in optometry, setting a precedent that threatened to make it even more difficult for independent colleges of optometry—even the good ones—to receive academic accreditation of any kind. Dr. Wesley recalls a visitor to North Pacific College of Optometry who came offering accreditation in exchange for $3,000 under the table. According to Wesley, two students—there were only about 50 students at the college at the time—threw the intruder down the stairs.

It was in such a climate that, in 1945, the principals of the North Pacific College of Optometry, which had suspended operation in 1943 because of the war, decided they would have to align their fortunes with an academic institution if their degree of doctor of optometry was going to have any meaning. They had earlier gone through preliminary negotiations with Lewis and Clark College, but these had come to naught—an interesting gloss on Pacific University’s history of failed mergers with that institution when it was still Albany College. Now, given the open hostility of the AMA, they were wary of schools with a strong premed component and were looking instead for a liberal arts college to lend academic standing to their course of training. As Dr. Wesley put it, they wanted a “safe haven” from what amounted to outright persecution by the medical profession.

**JOINING FORCES**

Meanwhile, back at Pacific University, President Walter Giersbach and the trustees were
beginning to realize that adopting some special professional program beyond the liberal arts offerings would go far toward providing extra funds and attracting a cadre of new undergraduates. Such a move would also lend credibility to the name “university” and, in the bargain, would offer a needed professional service to the region. This was not an uncommon strategy for small colleges in the Northwest at the time, and would eventually become standard practice: the University of Puget Sound would become known for occupational therapy, Linfield College for its research institute, Pacific Lutheran for business, Willamette and Whitman Colleges for pre-med, Lewis and Clark for law, and Whitworth for nursing.

None of the parties involved seems to recall who approached whom first, but once broached, the idea of establishing a college of optometry at Pacific University met little resistance. Several meetings of both parties were held in downtown Portland, and hard questions about academic and professional standards were asked and resolved. Dr. Wesley, who, along with Dr. Roy Clunes, was co-owner of the North Pacific College of Optometry, was involved in these negotiations only in absentia; being of Japanese ancestry, he and his family spent the war years in an internment camp in Oregon. He later went on to do pioneering work in the development of contact lenses.

In August of 1945, the Oregonian announced the outcome of the several meetings:
Jefferson Hall, which underwent a $3.5 million renovation in 1998-99, was rededicated in October, 1999.

North Pacific College of Optometry, the only school of optometry in the Northwest, became a part of Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon, Tuesday with a transfer of the college's corporate charter at a luncheon at the Benson Hotel ... Official presentation of the charter to Dr. W. C. Giersbach, President of Pacific, was made by Dr. Frank Bemis, president of the Oregon Optometric Association.

The new college of optometry operated at first in the basement of Marsh Hall, which had only recently been emptied of its cords of slab wood when the college switched to oil heating. As Dr. Richard Feinberg, appointed dean of the college in 1948, recalled in 1970, "Every foot of space had to be fought for." Nor was space the only source of friction. Dr. Carol Pratt, one of Feinberg's predecessors, noted:

The earlier deans of the College of Optometry of Pacific University had rough experiences. The first dean lasted twenty-five hours, unable to contribute much to the operation. The second dean lasted about a year before an approach to a nervous breakdown, exacerbated by difficulties with the administration, terminated his services. I served next in this tenuous position and lasted for a year also.

Despite the cramped quarters and the near nervous breakdowns, the new optometry school flourished, and in the spring of 1952 would move to a new home in Jefferson Hall.

In a joint effort with the Oregon Optometric Association, Pacific University developed a program leading to an academic doctor of optometry degree, the first ever recognized by the National Association for Accreditation of Colleges. Dr. Harold Haynes, who would serve as professor of optometry at Pacific for nearly 50 years, recalled the reaction that he and his classmates at Northern Illinois College had on hearing the news:

I can remember the excitement that was ours when we read in the Optometric Weekly that Pacific University was found-
ing a college which would grant the O.D. degree and set a precedent that all other university schools were to follow years later.

Apparently, three O.D. degrees were conferred in 1947 and six in 1948, though as late as 1970, in a retrospective issue of *The Oregon Optometrist*, the alumni of these respective classes were still engaged in some good-natured wrangling over who received their degrees first. Clarence Bondelid, then at the University of Washington, noted:

While some of the records show that the first graduating class received the O.D. degree in 1948, I have a diploma which reads August 13, 1947, and which grants me the O.D. degree. ... Fall[ing] back on a surname which starts with B ... I lay claim to being the first graduate in that first class of three, the other two being Cliff Haser and Don Gottlieb.

Whoever was first, the North Pacific College of Optometry had found its safe haven, and Pacific University, having established the first of its health profession programs, would never again have to apologize for calling itself a "university."

With veterans returning in large numbers and a bona fide professional college in place, Pacific University began to thrive—at least in terms of enrollment. Within three years of the war's end, the student body soared to an unprecedented high of 925 undergraduate students, more than half of its present size. To accommodate the influx of students, President Giersbach secured two wooden structures from Camp Adair—an infantry training camp near Corvallis, Oregon—and bricked them over to serve as a science building (named "Warner Hall" after former trustee and benefactor Franklin Warner) and a campus bookstore and student union facility (named "Tabitha Brown Hall"). He also brought 10 barracks from Vancouver, Washington, to serve as housing for veterans and their families. One of these temporary buildings, incidentally, was christened "Farnham Hall," the university's first and last gesture toward preserving the memory of its longest-serving dean of women.

There would be further "trying times" for Pacific University, including President Giersbach's forced resignation in 1953. But beginning in 1945 the vital signs monitor began to show a strong and steady heartbeat. The patient was going to live.

*Act II — From College to University*