PRIMARY SOURCE MATERIAL

FOR A UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND HISTORY

BY

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CHANCELLOR
PREFACE

In writing the primary source material for the University of Puget Sound, there is no thought at the moment of carefully organizing it. It is more a process of researching out the facts and getting them on paper so they can be correlated, evaluated and organized at a later date.

Much of the material will come from the oral histories which have been recorded from key people who have been very much a part of the University of Puget Sound. This, too, will be evaluated and reorganized as adequate time allows.

R. Franklin Thompson
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Upon my retirement in 1973, several of the outstanding alumni asked me if I would seriously consider the possibility of making a record of the thirty one years that Lucille and I had as leaders of the University of Puget Sound. There was a genuine feeling on the part of the interested people that the events should be recorded and that we were the only ones that could really make an accurate record of the thirty one years.

Shortly after I was appointed as president on August 1, 1942, I had a long interview with Dr. Todd and asked him if he would write a history of the College of Puget Sound since he had been its president for twenty nine years and had been on its Board of Trustees much longer than that. He had also been the field man for the college in his very early days. I shall never forget the twinkle in his eye and the glow in his face when he said, "Do you really mean it, Mr. President?" I said that I certainly did because I had great regard and affection for him and also great respect for his scholarship, his learning, and his writing ability.

We provided an office for him in the lower floor of Jones Hall and he secured as his secretary a lady of approximately his own age. He was about 80 years old at that time. She had been a research librarian as well as a secretary. They made an excellent team.

I strongly suggested that it not be a burden to him and if he felt he wanted to work on a certain day, he should and if he
did not want to work anytime during the week, he should adjust it to his own schedule. I shall never forget when he brought the volume up three or four years later and said, "Well, Mr. President, it is finished." He presented to me the volume which is Dr. Todd's History of the College of Puget Sound.

Earlier I had had a conversation with him in which I said I hoped that he would write his own memoirs. He had had an interesting career as president of the College of Puget Sound, as a Methodist minister, and as a National Methodist leader. He did write a very sizable volume called, "A Practical Mystic." It was interesting that his secretary, Mrs. Olive Seward, told me that when he asked her to suggest a title she looked at him and said, "You know you are a very practical mystic," and that is how the title to his memoirs came about.

After leading alumni suggested that I write a record of my years, it was discussed informally by some of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Phibbs said he did not think it should be a history because he did not think any president could be objective enough to write a meaningful history. However, he did say that he thought we should have a record of the historical resources, that it should be in narrative form. This was concurred in by Judge James Dolliver. I asked that a separate committee be set up with whom I could confer concerning the progress of the record of historical resources. Mr. Norton Clapp set up a committee with Howarth Meadowcroft as its chairman. He together with James Paulson and Llewollen Pritchard formed a very informal committee. I was surprised that the Committee of the Board of Trustees really had never known what had happened,
the progress being made, or the type and style of reporting which we have done. On a number of occasions I have invited Mr. Clapp to come and go over the material with me and also Mr. Dolliver and Mr. Pritchard. I suppose in the four years in which I have been writing the resources, Mr. Dolliver has probably been in my office for ten minutes, Mr. Pritchard probably fifteen minutes, and on several occasions Mr. Meadowcroft has been in, largely interested in the archival part of the work.

Soon after I started I was asked to identify some three thousand pictures and classify them into various classes. Most of this work has been done although the pictures seem to be coming in at a very rapid rate constantly. It is most interesting because I have known most of the people in the pictures and if not, I have known people who could identify them. Mrs. Lester Wehrhoff, who was an early graduate and is very alert and keen, has helped immeasurably.

I have great regard and respect for the history written by Dr. Todd. This is particularly true as it gives a living story of the many sacrifices he made and the heritage which he gave us. For instance, it shows that for 18 years he was in a constant financial campaign to raise money for buildings, for endowment, and for the general welfare of the College of Puget Sound. I know of no man who had greater dedication and made greater sacrifice. I discovered that on many occasions he left Tacoma on December 23rd or 24th, missing Christmas with his wife and four children, in order that he might attend the National Meeting of the Methodist Association.
of Schools and Colleges and to meet his appointments with the various foundations in the east. He was truly a dedicated man and his history attests this, although it was from his family that I learned most of the details.

Inasmuch as my successor did not want a history written, these resources are in story form. They are the various accounts of how we received the thirty seven buildings which were built under my aegis, how we received major gifts for the Endowment Fund, and also how we structured some twenty five major gifts which would come to the University of Puget Sound after my retirement.

Also the association with key individuals in the state, in the city, in the Methodist tradition and the association which I had with the Pacific Northwest Methodist Conference, the National Association of Methodist Schools and Colleges, and the General Conference in the Methodist Church as well as being Chairman of the Finance Committee of the World Method Council for 17 years. These associations were rich and productive for the University.

Inasmuch as the Committee for the Association of the Chancellor and the University has strongly suggested that I cease using my office on the 1st of June, 1982. I regret exceedingly that many of the pictures have not been identified and that the Historical Resources are far from complete. There are at least three score of people with whom I would like to have an interview and put them or oral tapes such as I have done for well over one hundred others. These people are important alumni, people who have contributed to the University, parents of distinguished students,
and others. It will not be possible to complete these oral history tapes in the time allotted.

Likewise, I should like to think in terms of doing what I started and what I have called the Chronicles of the Trustee Minutes. For instance there is a notation in the Trustee Minutes that we hired Edna Ellen Bell on the faculty. It does not say that with the hiring of Edna Ellen Bell came the whole School of Occupational Therapy which is now one of the best in the nation; and following that the School of Physical Therapy. The bare bone skeleton in the Board of Trustee minutes needs to be interpreted and have additional facts in order to give real meaning to the resources.

There are many other aspects of the University life such as this that could be done if there were time and we were allowed to continue with the office and have proper secretarial help.

It has been a great joy for me to write the Historical Resources. They are not in any organized order. They are not done with the idea that they are a finished product but merely are stories of how the buildings came into being, how people came on the staff, how the gifts were given, and how the spirit of the school into the great University of Puget Sound family was developed.