

# Obscure Organization Important in UO History

By Bill Frye

Ever hear of an organization called the Union University association? Or a building known as the McFarland house? Neither rings a bell with most Eugene citizens, much less with University students, but both played important roles in the founding of Oregon's first state university.

It was nearly 80 years ago, in July 1872, that five serious-faced men, wearing old-fashioned whiskers and high starched collars, met at the kerosene-lighted McFarland house to discuss the need for more adequate schooling and of a state institution.

From their meeting evolved the Union University association which four years later was responsible for getting the University located in Eugene.

### Association Died

After 75 years the University is still around and looks destined to continue for at least another 75. The Union University association became defunct within a decade after it was organized. The famous, but little known, McFarland house, in use until last fall, is now destined for the wreckers.

That the name McFarland should not be included among the prominent names connected with the early days of the University is not surprising. Men like Matthew Deady, S. H. Friendly and T. G. Hendricks gave personal time and effort to its establishment. Van Dorn McFarland merely lent the use of his house to men like those who drafted first plans for the proposed institution.

### A Carpenter

McFarland was a carpenter, but his house was not his own handiwork. He bought it when the old Central schoolhouse, located where the Silva Chevrolet Co. is now, was torn down. His house was one of the old classrooms.

The exact history of the McFarland house is not known, even by its present owner, Will H. Hodes. He bought the place in 1909 and converted it into an office building. The significance of the one-story frame building, located at 839 W. Charnelton St., was accorded brief mention in only one place—"The History of Eugene," written by three Eugene women.

In the book is told the background of the University and how the earliest attempts at forming it in 1851 "promptly became a political football with pressure groups working in all directions."

### Eugenians Aided

Following a period of inactivity, revival of the university endowment flamed up in 1872 with Eugene citizens providing the spark. A meeting at the McFarland house with B. F. Dorris, S. H. Spencer, John M. Thompson, Judge J. J. Walton and John C. Arnold resulted in the formation of the UUA with seven others and some far-reaching effects on Eugene and on the state.

The association elected John Thompson president, got \$50,000 in capital stock and formed a board of directors which prepared a bill for the September session of the legislature.

### Bill's Provisions

The bill was to permit the purchase of a site in the Eugene township and the erection of a building worth \$50,000 to be ready to turn over to the state Jan. 7, 1874. It further provided for a board of regents of nine, six appointed by the governor and three by the association itself; specifically that state scholarships should be awarded by counties; and forbade any sectarian religious tests for either students or teachers.

The first building, which became Deady hall, is still intact. The original site has been expanded. But only one of the other three provisions of the bill are still in effect today.

Religious tests are still forbidden. The board of regents was abolished in 1932 when the state board of higher education was set up. As for county-awarded scholarships, they were supplanted by state scholarships when the board of higher education was established.

### Being Wrecked Now

The building where plans for the first state university were conceived has been turned over to the

# Co-op Living Helps Students Get Through School Cheaply

Aside from the fact that cooperative living on UO campus offers worthy students a refuge from sororities, fraternities, and dormitories, it enables them to obtain an education at minimum cost. Many promising students would be unable to attend university at all if it weren't for the four cooperative living organizations.

The three women's houses, Rebec, Highland, and University contain an average of thirty students apiece and Campbell Club, the men's house, approximately forty. Room and board amounts to an average of \$40 per month. Since expenses are so low, cooperative students are required to contribute from 3-5 hours per week for house duties. The honor system is prevalent in governing the houses.

Scholastic achievements of the cooperative members are above average and a majority of the students are provided with scholarships to aid financial difficulties. Highland has permanent possession of Burt Brown Barker cup, awarded to the house with the highest scholastic average for three years in succession. A member of Campbell Club won the William Frager Scull and Dagger scholarship last year.

Social events and activities at the co-op houses are not lacking although the members who do not wish to participate in them are certainly not obliged to do so against their will. Among the outstanding yearly activities are the individual annual house dances. More recently established is the annual all-co-op dance which proved to be a great success. Firesides, exchange dinners and desserts are arranged with other organizations. Campbell Club got first prize last year for their junior week-end float.

The co-op organizations have

proved outstanding in athletic competitions. For the past two years Rebec House has held the Woman's Recreation Association cup for participation in intramural sports. Before Rebec House, Highland held the cup for one

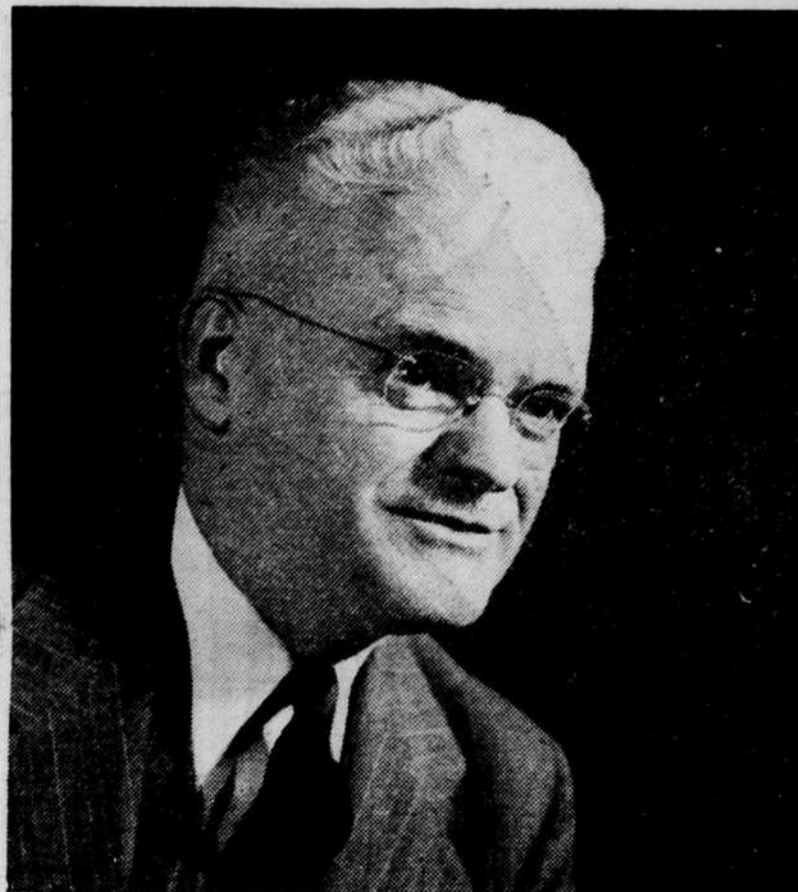
year. Highland and University have won individual championships in sports also.

In accomplishments, these houses rate high and serve adequately in providing low-cost housing for students.

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