

# **Eva and the Registrar of U. B. C.**

by Gordon Laird  
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In the last month of the five month trip of the Kitsilano Boys Band to Europe, we were "Dead On Arrival" in Dublin. At least that was the heading at the theatre where we were billed: "Dead On Arrival - The Vancouver Boys Band". "Dead on Arrival" was the name of the movie, but it very well described us as we clambered off the tiny ferry boat which had carried us over the Irish Sea, in a storm so bad that the crew refused to take the ship back.

I avoided throwing up by lying on my back on deck, and then in a lifeboat. My victory in not vomiting was paid for dearly, because I had contracted a deep cold and needed a lot of sleep on the way home on the train. It was a sick son my parents greeted at the C. P. R. Station. They thought I had been sick most of the trip!

Cousin Elmer, our Doctor, diagnosed pneumonia, and prescribed a lot of bed rest, and no late nights. He did not forbid resuming my studies at U. B. C. I had finished first year Arts before we left on our almost five month tour of Britain and Holland. Now I wanted to be entered into first year Commerce, and some negotiation had been undertaken on our behalf.

But that was before I got sick!

Here's an ironic twist. This is how life should work, according to my parents: After graduation from Highschool I should take one year at U. B. C. and then go to work, preferably in "The Bank" (the Bank of Commerce, where my Dad had worked). The year would be to sample what university had to offer, to always be able to say that I had been to university, but not long enough to interfere with getting real work.

The same was expected of Daphne, but she stepped out of the expected path and carried on until she graduated with a B. A., specializing in sociology after four years of University.

Doug had chosen the expected and approved route: he had taken one year at

U. B. C. and then entered the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

But I, for reasons I don't remember, wanted to go on further at University. The fact that I was in the Faculty of "Commerce" was strangely reminiscent of the name of "The Bank" - the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

But the U. B. C. Registrar would not let me register for Commerce. I was too late and too sick. So my Mother, who really didn't want me to go anyway, took up the challenge of getting me into U. B. C. It became a matter of pride for her and some of the things the Registrar said had got her dander up. I was there, pale and pellucid, a shadow of my normal self, having to have my Mother as my advocate, talking with the Registrar of U. B. C. I don't remember his face, but the position he represented was very imposing. I had never had to visit his office before.

"He is a month late in starting his studies. He is sick and he will not be able to perform well. He will fail and he will bring dishonour to the whole of the University."

If I didn't hear those words of the Registrar with my own ears, I wouldn't have believed them!

My Mother was the wrong person to say them to. To say that any of her children would bring dishonour anywhere was something she would not abide hearing, and would never leave unchallenged.

"NO SON OF MINE WILL EVER BRING DISHONOUR TO THIS UNIVERSITY!!" When Eva got excited she got very loud and very determined!

The Registrar was outmatched, and found some way of simply approving my entry into my second year of University.

The sequel to this story is somewhat predictable: I went to university in the daytime and in the evening, did my homework and went to bed very early. Having nothing to do but homework, I learned it quickly and well. Within a month I was feeling better, was right up to date with my classes, and got the best marks I was to get for the next four years.

And so the irony, Eva, who did not want me to go through University, was instrumental in getting me into second year at U. B. C., which led on then to a

total of five years at U. B. C., three years articling in a C. A. office, three years at Union College and two and one-half years at the University of Tubingen. A total of thirteen and one-half years since high school, so far!