

Unit 2

2/16/70

Unit 2

As an example of the way in which our original Tech buildings were obtained, it may be of interest to tell the somewhat unusual story of the construction of Unit 2, the second building along Susquehanna Street, counting from the canal branch. This was the first of our depression buildings, in ~~1929 and 30~~ 1931 and 32.

The pre depression auto shop had been completed in 1931, and we we suddenly found ourselves very poor indeed. People could not pay taxes, teachers had been suspended and ~~required~~ required to make "voluntary ~~contributions~~" salary cuts, and we were feeling sorry for ourselves.. But we were determined to go on with our much needed plant. Fortunately we had much built in assistance in our student body and our variety of skilled tradesmen among the faculty. Perhaps we could build ~~the building~~ a building ourselves. We had long since designed a comprehensive building layout , we had the land, and unlimited support from our industries and businessmen. It was at the start useless to approach the School District for money. There was deep financial trouble there. The director knew an elderly architect whom he paid \$ 25.00 to lay out a simple but sturdy building. Just enough to determine the dimensions of the foundations and the column spacing. This was enough to discuss a project to place the foundations with ~~our friends~~ the ten newly formed local emergency relief groups who were then giving families a basket of food a week, hopefully with the idea of getting some work in return. Our good friend F Ralph Lehman helped us, although there were no New Deal Agencies and the depression would soon be over, according to President Hoover.

The relief people offered to give it support, and then the School District decided to buy some materials. We went to our industries and building

2 supply dealers, the junk yards and looked for donations. Mr Abe Fisher, a scrap yard operator friend of ours was very helpful. He had a lot of miscellaneous material and he might as well give it, or loan it to us since there was no market for it. We were demolishing the last of the Lundy Lumber Company sheds on the plot. ~~xxxxxx~~ which had been the original home of the lumber company. The plot cost us \$40,000 a few years before.

The director could spare time from his regular duties, and he became the building superintendent. The School District could lend us two school janitors who had once been good carpenters for the form building. From the junk yard we could get a very much used steam driven concrete mixer, and we had a good steam power plant, built for the heating of the new auto shop. The director and the instructors did the surveying and laid out the trenches of what was to be a slab-on-ground unit built on "spread" footings, since the area had been a former log pond.

The labor supply was a riot? recipients of the food baskets, willing to work, but not at all used to that kind of work for the most part, arrived, varying in number from 20 to 30, for a day at a time, and it might be a month before a worker returned for his second day. Many of them were white collar workers. Some were men of some standing in the community, caught up in the catastrophe. They dug the trenches. The two carpenters helped at times by our students, built the forms and we began our concrete work. It was slow and tedious, and we got a late start. We did not finish before winter struck us, but we had to keep on going. Our good boiler had high pressure steam, and we tented and covered our work to prevent ~~fraxx~~ frozen concrete. What a man could not learn to do in a day, he could not do. We poured our last concrete in days when the temperature got down to ten above. The high school principal arranged to send large kettles of soup over to us ~~xxx~~ from the school cafeteria. The faculty

who assisted worked in the ditches and shared the soup with the rest. It was a desperate time, but we were getting a building built. Perhaps the opportunity to get into those ditches with the relief workers, to communicate with them was a lifetime memory. To see people, who had been self supporting and reliant citizens a few months were reduced to the point where a constant topic of conversation was how to manipulate things so as to get some small advantage in the weekly food, clothing and shelter hand out was a sharp lesson to those of us who were more fortunate. I could recall my father, who was an Englishman say that there were nine meals between the Prince of Wales and a bum. We closed the foundation project and ~~xxxxxx~~, the foundations completed, the piers and foundation bolts in place just before Christmas, not knowing when we might be able to take another step.

However, in the meantime a graduate of our architectural drawing course, Clarence Wagner, now a registered architect designed the remainder of the building for us at his office cost, and we were at work getting out material lists to submit to the School District for the super structure. By this time, our old friend Mr Lehman had his Work Relief Agency started, and he offered labor and a good deal of simple materials. The Board of school directors agreed to provide the remainder of the materials. ~~xxxxxxx~~ I think the Board cost was to be 12,000. We were ready to go in the spring of 1932.

The same arrangement for labor, except that the men now received wages instead of food. ~~xxxxxxx~~ A retired building contractor, William Springman was brought in as superintendent and paid by the federal agency. Things went very much better, and we had our building up within the year. It has worn well, all through the depression years, the war years, and the G.I. years. At this writing ~~ixxx~~ plans are ready to ~~xxxxxxx~~ remodel it, without material change, as

*over*

a part of the Wrap Around unit for the Community College

The original... was a... building... into... with the... with this... To... who had... and... a... to... where a... of... to... as to... advan-... and... out... a... to... of... I... by... that... there were... bet-... the... and... the... and... the... in... we... to... take...

However, in the... of... drawing... now... designed... of... and... work... to... for... the... must... By... Mr... had... his... and... a... deal... agreed... provide... The... cost... in... of...

The... for... now... wages... by... money... and... the... this... the... the... are...

*[Handwritten signature]*