



Kim Carroll (right), business senior, is on the lookout for a job. R. I. Cox of Kaiser Aluminum interviews him in the Employment Service office.

# A Vehicle to Opportunity

A decade has passed since the Employment Service became an official, independent University organ. Today it has a large staff which helps get jobs for a thousand students each year.

**A** RECENT CARTOON in a national magazine depicts a wife shaking her sleeping husband and saying, "It's Monday. Do you feel up to starting another week?"

If he doesn't, then he and his family may be in trouble. For, as the Russians are fond of saying, he who will not work shall not eat.

In our time and country the Russian proverb doesn't always hold true. We have social security and relief and other anti-starvation set-ups. Even so, Americans have a strong determination to work, and work hard; they demand the Right to Work, to raise their standard of living, to succeed.

Where but at a university could the Right to Work be more in evidence? More

than 50,000 men and women have come from the University of Oklahoma, diplomas in hand, ready for employment.

And a much greater number with no degree after their names have converged on society with a "Where and when do I start?" look in the eyes.

About 11 years ago the University decided to give departing students a little more help in finding jobs. That was when the Employment Service was set up as an official, independent organ.

Located in the Administration Building, the Service is headed by George P. Haley and maintains a full-time staff of seven. Students and alumni who come to the Service for employment tips pay no fee. What

they find in the Service is two distinct divisions.

One is the Business and Industrial Placement division. Services in this area are available to anyone who has satisfactorily completed one semester of classwork and is in good standing with the University.

The other, the Teacher Placement division, helps those who have completed eight hours of course work at the University and are in good standing. Obviously, this second division exists to help prospective teachers locate desired positions after graduation.

The Service maintains an extensive limitation. It is arranged by field-of-work. As a library of periodicals and occupational infor-

new articles and bulletins concerning the various fields are published, they are quickly added to the library, constituting a constantly up-to-date, invaluable reference tool to any job seeker who wishes to drop by and put it to use.

One of the best parts of the library is the great number of publications issued by companies themselves. These publications usually include information about company operations, personnel practices, special opportunities for college graduates, and the like.

Maintenance of such a library is not all the Service does, however.

Some visitors feel they simply haven't the time to read through great amounts of material. For them, the Service has a special notebook. Here are kept one-page summary sheets, each of which represents a company interested in college graduates and each outlining in briefest form the firm's products, location of principal plants, employment positions, and other information.

Also in the Service's offices is another notebook, which lists immediate vacancies in firms across the country. On the walls of the main office are bulletin boards on which openings of general interest are posted.

Employees of the Service actually serve as counselors and provide personal assistance to job seekers, so that notebooks and bulletins aren't the only means to a job. However, counselors stress this point: the regis-

trant's qualifications and initiative determine his success in securing a position.

Step by step, here is how a student or alumnus goes about getting himself a job through the Service:

First he inspects the general library information. Then he talks to a counselor. When he has decided which field he should go into, he is given a registration folder which he fills in and returns to the Service.

The Service staff inspects the completed registration folder and then sends appraisal sheets to persons whom the student or alumnus has given as references. When these sheets return, all the information in the folder is used to make up a personal data sheet for the registrant.

Next, 50 of these personal data sheets are duplicated. The registrant receives 35 of the duplicates; these he may submit to prospective employers. The remaining 15 are kept by the Service, and they are made available to employers whom the registrant interviews in the Service office. (Employers often visit the campus seeking prospects for specific openings.)

Four sets of credentials are made up for each registrant, and a set may be mailed to any employer who wishes further information on the prospect. A set of credentials contains (1) a personal data sheet with photograph of the registrant attached to it, (2) copies of all confidential rating forms received from the registrant's references, and (3) a transcript of the registrant's school grades.

The Service impresses upon the registrant the necessity of advising a contacted employer of the existence of the confidential credentials.

The credentials file is permanent. Credentials remain in an "active" file as long as the Service knows the registrant is looking for work. But if the registrant fails to keep in touch with the Service, then his papers are put into an "inactive" section; this, in effect, means that the applicant will no longer be considered for available openings.

But the registrant can reactivate a file any time he wishes by paying a three dollars' fee and bringing his record up to date.

One might call the Employment Service a vehicle of opportunity. It never looks the same from day to day. Registrants enrolled in school are expected to check prospective listings in the office from time to time, and those not on the campus are notified by the Service by postcard of vacancies for which they are qualified and in which they have indicated an interest.

There are other aspects to the Service. It distributes announcements to be placed on bulletin boards in other campus buildings. It publishes notifications in the *Oklahoma Daily* student newspaper, tipping off students as to forthcoming interviews.

It sends letters to graduating seniors, warning them of the coming of interviews:

"Your career can start now. Do you know that over 800 representatives from business, government and educational agencies will make a personal visit to the University to present to you the opportunity for a career with their agency? That (many other) agencies will write or telephone presenting similar opportunities?

"When will this begin? These representatives will begin to present these opportunities on October 1 and will continue daily until graduation next spring. Come to your Employment Service immediately and register."

Every fall the Service sends out a list of students who will receive degrees from the University, and the list makes its way to about 1,500 different firms. Type of degrees and date of graduation are included.

The letter accompanying the list reads, in part:

"We desire to give our prospective graduates seeking employment every opportunity to decide upon the best career for themselves. We also desire to give your representatives every opportunity to interview these prospective graduates under the best conditions that can be provided.

"To accomplish this, may we invite you to visit with us and discuss your college recruiting program. Mutual understanding



Two Employment Service workers check through the extensive files system for credentials of the "right" graduating student to fill a vacancy. At right is Gayle Grotts, assistant Service director.



Mrs. Augusta Meyer, personnel and placement assistant, shows a graduate business student, Frank Koers, how to fill in an Employment Service credentials folder.

of each other's problems may result in a better selection of potential candidates for employment . . .

"We are pleased to refer candidates for your positions, furnish confidential credentials, arrange interviews, or assist you in any other way in contacting our graduates and former students."

The University Employment Service came officially into existence in 1946. That's when it was separated from the Alumni Association offices. At that time the Service's staff boasted a grand total of two workers, a director and a secretary, and they were primarily concerned with graduate placement. At that time, too, the hiring of persons to work for the University itself was handled separately by each department.

As the Service gradually organized itself, it began to assume alumni placement, graduate placement, and even the University personnel services.

Speaking of the University personnel service, it procures jobs—either with the University or other concerns—for students who need extra money for living or tuition. About one-third of O. U. students work part-time for the University, or at jobs in Norman or neighboring communities. Many work full-time elsewhere during the summer, and the Service helps them find these jobs.

In 1956-57, a total of 721 firms sent representatives to the campus, searching for

employees. Another 141 firms sought the service without making personal visits to O. U. During that year, 1,079 registrants were listed by the Service; as things turned out, 919 of them were placed. (The remainder either entered military service or were women who married and preferred not to work.)

The year also found the Service swamped with offers for teachers. Elementary and secondary schools wanted more than 2,000 teachers, colleges almost 1,000.

The University's Employment Service isn't unique. Most universities and colleges maintain similar agencies which cooperate with deans and departmental chairmen in helping out students who need occupational information and employment guidance.

Most prepare permanent credential files and personal data sheets, provide job information and counsel to the registrant, and invite firms to the campus so that students may have the chance for an interview.

All have helped innumerable seniors choose objectives. But all emphasize, again and again, that placement services can't do it all; the job seeker has to help himself as well.

Many job seekers still trust to "luck." They choose the "pavement pounding" or "Have you any openings today?" approach rather than the prepared plan for securing the right job in the right field with the right employer.

Many who look for jobs in the "luck" manner have little idea as to how to make a good impression during an interview, or what to find out about the prospective job. The University Employment Service advises them to ask themselves many questions before going into an interview.

Do you have a definite appointment?

Do you know the interviewer's name and position?

Have you studied the company?

Are you qualified for the opening available?

Who do you know in the organization? (This often serves as an "ice breaker" in conversation with the interviewer.)

Why are you interested in joining this company?

Do you have only vague, preconceived notions about the company or the job? Avoid them.

Are you getting the facts?

And there are several important talents desired in most jobs; if the prospective worker possesses them, he may forget to capitalize on them, to point them out to the interviewer.

Most employers want persons who have ability to meet, talk to and work cooperatively with other persons. Few men can be successes by themselves.

Employers want to hire adaptability. The

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## THE YOUNG WRITER

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Studio One (the producer wanted to do it, but the advertising agency turned thumbs down).

Three of Cagle's TV plays are on option now, a recall basis, with NBC and CBS, but he has learned that television is not the end, the whole picture. He had switched to writing plays for the legitimate theater when it occurred to him that he still had plenty to learn about any kind of writing. He remembered that there were 20 months of schooling due him under the G. I. Bill, and he came back to the University to pick up more pointers in professional writing.

Today he's studying under Walter Campbell, Foster Harris and Dwight Swain. Engrossed in fundamentals and techniques of the novel, he feels he's picking up a certain amount of discipline and good professional advice.

Was New York a mistake? No: "I made contacts, I did write four plays there, and I acclimated myself to the City, which took some doing for an Oklahoman."

At the moment he's working on the most important effort of his life, a new novel entitled *The Humanist*. It's a novel of "his age." It points out that a man of this age isn't a product of a lost generation, but a bored one, and is searching for a spiritual place in the sun, not a material one.

Cagle's style is like no one's else. He's deliberately trying to write a "new" kind of novel. "But," he warned, "I still have my feet on the ground. I'm not abstruse. I get mad, but there's a great deal of humor and satire in *The Humanist*."

Most first novels, unless strictly commercial, are a matter of getting things off one's chest. "In my case," said Cagle, "that means 27 years. My novel is a confession, and the world is my couch. Maybe I'll come out cleansed whether anyone else does or not. Writing is largely therapeutic."

He hopes the first 100 pages of *The Humanist* may win for him the Putnam Publishing Company's \$3,000 Fellowship, now being offered to persons enrolled in creative writing at accredited colleges. But the fellowship is not the most important thing; the writing is.

If Cagle is the average young writer, then this is what the average young writer thinks:

"I'd see no point to living if I couldn't write. It's a drive.

"There are all kinds of writing. The

main problem that a writer has is to decide who his audience is.

"My whole ambition is to do serious stuff, but to make money on it at the same time. It can be done. I'm not going to be content to become strictly a writer of slick fiction or confessions.

"A book is an organic thing. It grows. It's a Remembrance of Things Past and can't help growing.

"I can write best in a public place where there are many people, music and confusion. I wrote all of a three-act play in a cafe. I'm a little like the writer who, if he prepares to work by locking the door, drawing the blinds and stacking paper in a neat pile, finally sits down for two hours and draws isosceles triangles."

The next time you visit the Union cafeteria and see a young man sitting against a wall jotting frantically at a pad, don't be surprised. He is the young writer, a part of the potential crop of "new" Hemingways and Faulkners.

In the midst of coffee cup clatter, piped-in music and buzzing voices, he floats alone, spinning out a web which may be *The Great American Novel*.

## VEHICLE TO OPPORTUNITY

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man who is unwilling to consider a better way of doing the work that must be done may retard the progress of the entire organization.

Employers like to hire those who have versatility. A leader always commands more than a single ability.

Students and alumni alike have reason to be thankful for the Employment Service. Unlike commercial employment bureaus, it doesn't attach a percentage of the first several paychecks.

A few months ago, in *Fortune* magazine, Dr. Richard W. Husband of Florida State University published an article of vast interest to students. Entitled "What Do College Grades Predict?," the article took a look at the jobs of those who had graduated from Dartmouth in 1926.

High grades, found Husband, do make a difference. Men who made a "D" average in college are now, on the whole, making thousands less per year than those who scored a "B" or an "A." There were 22 Phi Beta Kappas in the '26 group; 13 of them today earn more than \$20,000 per year.

Business majors earn the most, cultural majors the least.

Those who took on the most extra-cur-

ricular activities in college make a higher income today than those who had few or none of those activities.

Fraternity men make an average of \$4,000 more per year than non-fraternity men.

Athletes do very well, the best of them averaging about \$17,000. So do former class officers and editors of college newspapers or magazines.

Whatever a student is destined to earn, a good job seldom is obtained by accident. In a competitive job market, even the top men in a class must take some initiative to secure the position for which they are best suited. That initiative includes talking to the people who can help them get a job—people like the staff of the Employment Service.

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