



Elizabeth Hughes Class of 2018

Elizabeth Hughes taught United States History, English, public speaking and civics at Oroville High School (OHS) 1931-1940. Her methods of teaching were considered advanced for her time.

Her teaching career began at Durham High School in 1923, where she taught for 7 years and also served as vice-principal. In 1924, she completed her credential requirements for secondary education and school administration and earned her Master's Degree from University of Southern California (USC).

Mamoru Sakuma, OUHSD Hall of Fame Class of 2013 and a student of Mrs. Hughes at OHS wrote, *"I remember Mrs. Hughes very well. I was in one of her United States history and civics classes and she influenced my life in many ways. She was very persistent. I must have made 100 trips to the large dictionary in her class room."* Mrs. Hughes said of Sukuma, *"That boy will go far."* He became a Superior Court Judge.

Norma McKillop, widow of OUHSD Hall of Famer Jack McKillop and sister-in-law of Hall of Famer Bob McKillop and student of Mrs. Hughes at OHS, states in her letter of support, *"I liked her very much and was lucky to have had her as my instructor. She made history interesting. She was what some people called "tough". But I felt she expected the best from her students. She was strict, especially to those who didn't behave, but she also had a good sense of humor"*.

Mrs. Hughes was well known in the education profession both locally and outside the area. In 1914, she was appointed by University of California President as a Lecturer in Art in the University Extension Division. In 1914 and 1915 she gave a series of art lectures to students at the State Library School in Sacramento as well as to community members in Oroville at the Monday Club. She was a dedicated student of art for most of her life, a member of the Monday Club and served as trustee of the Oroville Library for 26 years.

Upon her retirement in 1940, the editorial in the Oroville Mercury-Register stated, *"For nine years, Mrs. Elizabeth Hughes has taught United States history in a manner that has compelled interested attention and has instilled into the minds and hearts of students, and ideal of good citizenship of great value to them and to their country. About 2,000 students have benefited from Mrs. Hughes' teachings, but thousands more have been aided by her ministrations outside school."*

Before beginning her career in education, Mrs. Hughes made history in the world of government. In 1918, she was elected to the California State Legislature and became for first and only woman in Butte County to serve there. She is most remembered as being one of four women elected to the California State Legislature serving in the 1919 session of the Assembly. She was also the first woman to head a major chairmanship in the State Legislature. She was re-elected once more in 1920.

From the Oroville Daily Register in 1919... *"Assemblywoman Hughes won the honor on Monday of being the first of California's first four Assemblywomen, to have a bill of which she was the author, passed by the Senate. The bill empowers the trustees to sell the Oroville High School."*

Another bill introduced by Mrs. Hughes during her first year in the legislature, carried appropriation of \$32,000 for a trade school building for Chico Normal School. It was approved by the governor on May 27, 1919.

From the Sacramento Bee, March 18, 2018, "Meet the Women who began California's first #MeToo movement – 100 years ago:

"Hughes, an Oroville teacher, faced a male primary opponent who made a crass appeal to gender stereotypes. *"It takes a virile man" he insisted, "to do the tough work required of lawmakers." It's no "pink tea" job.*" Hughes fired back: *"Are the brace of Red Cross nurses working night and day at the front [during World War I], caring for the wounded, serving in "pink tea" jobs?"* Hughes cruised to victory and became a leading advocate for rural schools. She also helped secure funding for what later became California State University, Chico.

Mrs. Hughes' husband was principal of OHS 1898-1903 and her son a graduate in 1923. She passed away in San Francisco in 1941 in her hotel room at age 66. She was on a trip and accompanied by Judy McInturf's grandmother, who when going to her room to call her for breakfast, found Mrs. Hughes lifeless.