



# The Hollomon Inauguration

Friday, October 18, 1968, was a splendid day for an inauguration. The 50-degree early morning chill was dispelled by a brilliant autumn sun which shone in a blue, cloudless sky. A steady breeze, so no one would forget this was Oklahoma, stirred the red and white medieval banners ringing the South Oval and the state and national flags flanking the temporary platform erected for the occasion. An audience of 4,000 spectators and participants watched the pageantry and solemnity of a ceremony rich in tradition and pomp. □ To "Music for a Ceremony" by John L. Morissey, played by the 100-piece Symphony Band, the program began with the processional of 700 academic-gowned dignitaries, faculty members, and delegates from other colleges, universities, and learned societies. After the national anthem, the invocation, and introductions of honored guests by master of ceremonies John M. Houchin, vice president of the OU Regents, John W. Gardner delivered the inaugural address (pages 6-8). Upon its conclusion Houchin, assisted by academic marshal Raymond R. White, who presented the collar and mace of the institution (below), symbols of the authority and responsibility of the office, invested John Herbert Hollomon with the duties of the presidency of the University of Oklahoma. (President Hollomon's response is on pages 9-11.) □ It was the first inauguration at OU in forty-two years, when William Bennett Bizzell was installed as the fifth chief executive. Joseph A. Brandt and George L. Cross, the sixth and seventh Presidents, took office without an inaugural ceremony because their terms began during World War Two. □ Some words written by students about the Bizzell inauguration address the ambivalence felt about such observances by students today. Wrote one, "The best thing about an inaugural is that it teaches a lot of people how to spell a word they otherwise wouldn't know." Said another, "Inaugurals. . . offer an interesting psychological study. I believe that such ceremonies are survivals of the primitive, the barbarous. It's a strange thing that in no country in the world can a man who takes an important post, at least one which interests the public, take it without being exposed to ceremony. Why can't we let them take their places, just as would carpenters and shoe clerks, doing their work, drawing their salaries, without great hubbub? Human nature just isn't that way. If some man attains a position of unusual importance, we want to pay him some sort of homage and disturb his daily routine for a couple of days. . . Perhaps one of the best things about the ceremony is that it brings the new President . . . into the conversation of the average Oklahoman. While the President is gaining the greater part of the attention, the University must inevitably secure a position also. The people of the state must be made to realize that at the head of this University is a man who does things; they must be willing to listen when he has something to say." □

