

Dean James Felgar has just rounded out a quarter of a century of service to the state of Oklahoma. While the college of engineering is a tribute to his ability, yet as great a tribute is the devotion of the hundreds of engineering graduates, who always found in their dean a friend ready to attack any problem and help solve it

A quarter century of progress

BY F. G. TAPPAN

Mr J. H. Felgar, dean of the college of engineering, is just starting on his second quarter-century of engineering work in Oklahoma and at the University of Oklahoma. Though a native of Iowa, according to *Who's Who in America*, he started for Oklahoma at a very early age. He stopped however, for a while in Kansas where he received his early education and afterwards his A. B. degree from Kansas university. After this he went north for a new start, to Chicago where he attended the Armour Institute of Technology from which he holds the degree of mechanical engineer. After some engineering work in Chicago following his graduation, he again started for Soonerland but was delayed a short time at Stillwater, where he taught engineering classes at Oklahoma A. & M. college.

Realizing the need at the University of Oklahoma for someone to found an engineering college, he came to Norman early in the spring of 1906 as instructor in mechanical engineering.

The school of applied science had been organized here in 1904 with Mr Majors, instructor in mechanical engineering, in charge. Majors succeeded in 1903 by C. M. Jansky who taught electrical engineering and physics. Felgar became the head of the school of applied science in 1907 when Jansky accepted a position with the University of Wisconsin.

The following year the school of applied science was re-organized into the

college of engineering with schools of civil, electrical and mechanical engineering and mining geology. This last was subsequently changed to geological engineering. The school of chemical engineering was organized in 1912 with Dr Guy Y. Williams as director. The department of mechanics was organized in 1910 with Mr Dwight in charge; previously this subject was taught by the faculty of mathematics. Professor H. C. George came to the University of Oklahoma in the fall of 1924 to head the newly organized school of petroleum engineering. In 1927 the school of architectural engineering was organized with Harold Gimeno in charge; the school of engineering physics had already been organized under Dr Homer Dodge in 1923.

The first engineering degrees were granted in 1910 to one civil and one electrical engineer; in 1917 there were fifteen engineering graduates; in 1930 the number had been increased to sixty-one, and the present senior class numbers about one hundred and forty. The engineering enrollment increased from nothing in 1904 to nearly eleven hundred during the present semester.

The history of the college of engineering is very intimately tied up with the activities of Dean Felgar. With his broad general scholastic training his activities and interests could not be confined entirely to engineering however. He has for years been one of the most active members of the Lions club, the Norman chamber of commerce, community chest



drives, the Norman Country club and the Presbyterian church, in the building of which he took a very active part and where he has for many years been an elder. He has always been very much identified with any movement in Norman looking toward the betterment of social conditions for the under privileged.

In connection with his educational activities he has taken a very constructive part in the Society for Promotion of Engineering Education. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau, honorary societies, and the Beta Theta Pi fraternity.

In spite of his manifold duties in connection with the university, town and church he is never too busy to listen sympathetically to the hundreds of engineering students who seek his help and advice on all sorts of problems, religious, social, moral and financial as well as educational.

His greatest personal assets making for success in engineering education and as dean of the college of engineering have been his absolute fairness in adjusting controversies, his ability to appreciate both sides in an argument and his motto that "youth must be served;" must be led and encouraged in education and never forced or driven into a position.

Dean Felgar and the men who were your advisors while in college would be very glad to receive a letter or a card from you occasionally telling where you are, what you are and how you are, too.