

The Building Needs of the University

By William Bennett Bizzell

THE needs of the University have become increasingly acute in recent years. The drastic cut in appropriations for salaries and maintenance that came with the depression has never been restored. While the Sixteenth Legislature slightly increased funds for this purpose, they remained much below that on which the University was operating in 1929-30. In the meantime, the enrolment in the University has increased by approximately fifteen hundred students. This has created indescribable problems and resulted in the loss of a number of the most scholarly men and women connected with the institution.

In discussing the building needs of the University, I cannot forget the inadequate salary and maintenance appropriation on which the University has been compelled to operate. The University needs more adequate salaries as well as buildings for instruction and laboratory purposes.

I want to call attention to the fact, in the first place, that a number of buildings on the campus of the University are incomplete. The appropriations that were provided for these buildings were only sufficient to build one unit, and they were erected with the expectation that within a reasonable time additional funds would be made available for their completion. These buildings include the Fine Arts Building, the Geology Building, the main Engineering Building, the Physical Education Building, the Women's Physical Education Building, and the Pharmacy Building. These buildings should be completed.

But the immediate and pressing needs of the University are the following buildings:

- Petroleum Engineering
- Graduate Education
- Geology
- Home Economics
- Physics
- Drama and Speech
- Museum Buildings to house the natural history collection and the University's wonderful art objects.

If these buildings were all available at the present time, they could reasonably be occupied to capacity without a square foot of unoccupied space.

The School of Medicine in Oklahoma City needs a Nurses' Home, a new wing on the University Hospital, an Isolation Ward, an addition to the Crippled Children's Hospital, and a Utility Building.

I am not so optimistic as to believe that the State will meet all these building needs during the next biennium, but the fact that the University has been neglected through recent years causes me to feel that serious consideration should be given to these cumulative needs and every possible effort should be made by the State to relieve the existing situation. It is to be greatly regretted that the State has not taken advantage of the Federal grants-in-aid for permanent improvements at the University. The last Congress appropriated \$1,425,000,000 to be administered by the Works Progress Administration for building and other purposes throughout the nation; but the law provided that the requests for funds must be approved before October 1, last, and that building construction must start before January 1, 1939. This appropriation was made on condition that the State and local communities must provide 55 per cent of the funds. It is nothing short of a tragedy that the University and other state-supported educational institutions could not take advantage of these grants. Some of the states thought it sufficiently important to call special sessions of the legislature for the purpose of providing funds to meet the requirements of the Federal law. It has not been deemed advisable to proceed on this plan in Oklahoma and as a result, the University has not been able to participate in the Federal program.

THE University authorities have prepared plans and made application for grants-in-aid with the hope that the Seventeenth Legislature would provide funds to apply on Federal grants, provided Congress extends the time limit on Federal funds or makes another appropriation to be administered under the Public Works Administration. Whether or not this will be done, no one knows at the present time; but I am hopeful that this policy may be adopted and the University may share in the benefits of the Federal building appropriations.

The Fifteenth Legislature appropriated funds for the College of Business Administration Building, and through a grant from the Federal Government one unit of a Biology Building was constructed. For ten years previous to that time, the University had no funds for building purposes.

The Board of Regents has decided to renew its request to the legislature for a Petroleum Engineering Building, a Graduate Education Building, and a Geology

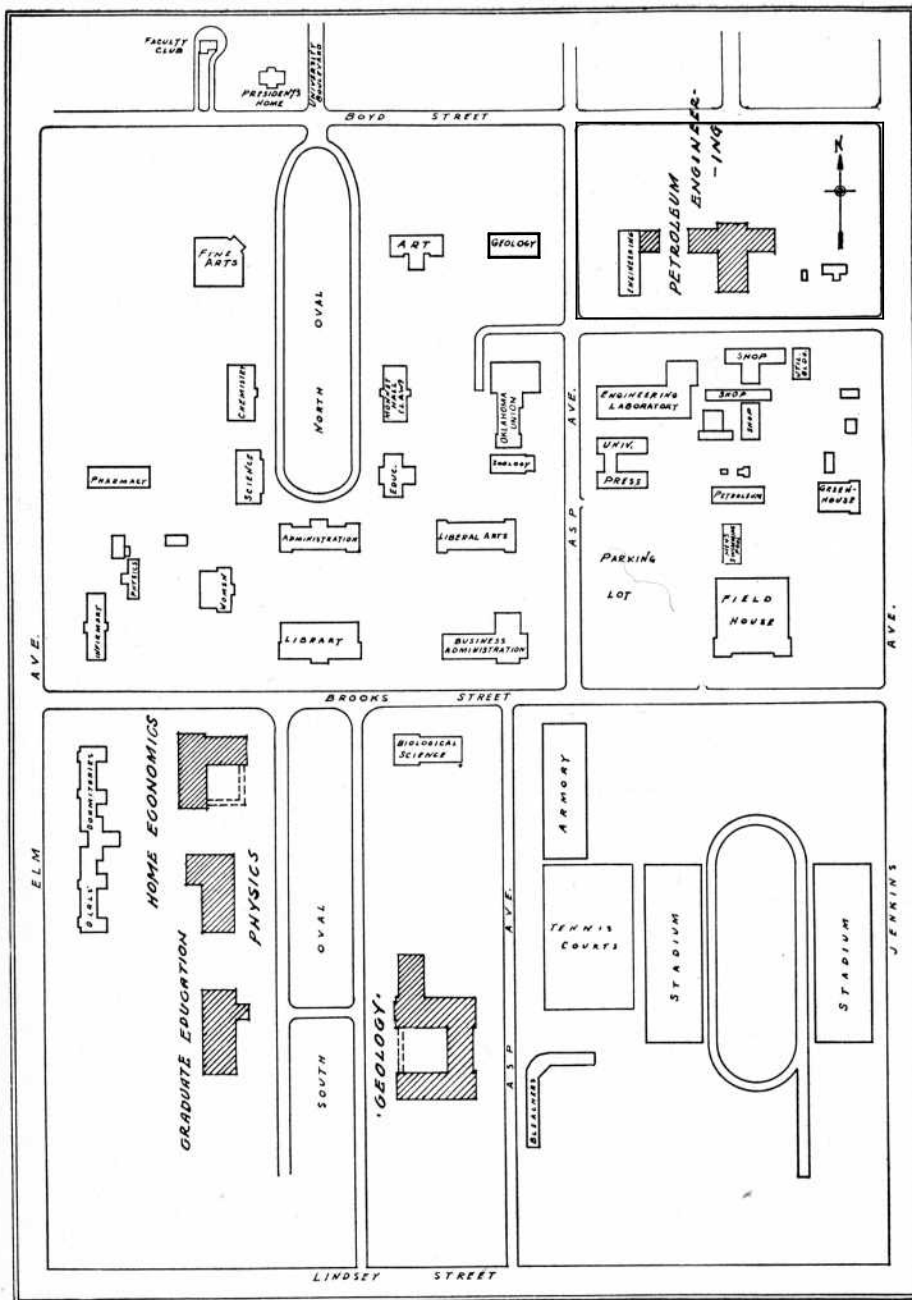
Building with the hope that the funds appropriated for this purpose may be sufficient to secure funds from the Federal Government with which to erect a Home Economics Building, a Physics Building, and to complete some of the other buildings on the campus.

The Petroleum Engineering Building is placed first among the needs of the University. The School of Petroleum Engineering is one of the largest technical schools in the University and because of its reputation, students are coming to the University to take petroleum engineering from many states and several foreign countries. The importance of petroleum as an industry in this state seems to justify fully this request.

GEOLGY is so vitally related to the oil development of this state that a building for the purpose is imperatively needed. At the present time, classes in geology are scattered over the campus and many of the classrooms and laboratories that are being used by this school are very inadequate for the purpose.

The Graduate School of Education presents one of the pressing needs of the institution. Graduate instruction is essential to every university worthy of the name. This school has grown enormously in recent years. Hundreds of the ablest school men and women in the State are coming to the University year after year for graduate instruction. They are taking advanced degrees and returning to their home communities better equipped to serve the cause of education. This school is homeless at the present time, for no building is available for the Graduate School. The College of Education is housed in a modest building on the campus that is hardly large enough to provide space for the administrative organization of the college. Superintendents and principals who have been pursuing graduate instruction here in recent years are demanding better facilities and have pledged their co-operation in an effort to secure a building for their needs.

Home Economics education has increased in recent years. I believe that every girl should have some training for home making. The University has a competent staff on its Faculty of Home Economics, but the department is housed on one floor of what is known as the Old Science Hall, which is poorly constructed of combustible material and it has been necessary to support it with iron rods to hold it together. This build-



For the last ten years, while the enrollment in the University was growing steadily, no building appropriations have been granted by the Legislature except \$250,000 for a Business Administration Building which was supplemented by WPA assistance to make possible the erection of the Biological Sciences Building. The shaded portions of the campus map show the locations of buildings that are at the top of the University's list of imperative building needs. (Map by courtesy of Joe E. Smay.)

will ever need, but there has not been a building erected on that campus since the Medical Building was erected in 1927. The time has come when additional facilities must be provided if the University is to maintain its place of leadership in the field of medical education.

What has been said above merely indicates some of the more pressing needs of the University for additional facilities. Effective arguments could be made for other building needs, but these appear to me to be the most pressing ones at the present time. The future of the University will largely be determined by the attitude of the incoming legislature and administration toward the University. I have every reason to believe that the institution will have the sympathetic consideration of those responsible for providing funds for the State Government. Much thought and serious consideration is being given these days to presenting the needs of the institution as effectively as possible.

A great University of Oklahoma is essential to the public welfare. Those states that have made the greatest material, cultural, and spiritual progress are those in which great universities are located. Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana and Texas have all built great universities in our time; and the progress of these states has been measured by what their universities have been able to do for them. The University of Oklahoma has been serving our people in many effective ways, but there are many things the institution has not been able to do because of limited resources and inadequate facilities. The accomplishments of other states may help us realize our obligations to the University in the future.

ing should be torn down and replaced by a fire proof structure suitable for educational purposes, but the overcrowded conditions in the University make this impossible.

The Department of Physics has a faculty that ranks among the best in this field. The classwork of the department is conducted in three buildings on the campus, none of which are satisfactory for this purpose. I know of no other university that is so poorly equipped to give instruction in this important field of learning.

The University has assembled through the years from various sources a vast amount of natural history material and art objects. Adequate museum facilities are essential to instruction, but the University is unable to make the wisest possible use of this material because much of it

cannot be displayed. I have hoped that some benefactor would provide funds for a Natural History Museum and an Art Building where our art objects could be adequately displayed; but up to the present time, that hope has not been realized. There are people in this state who are interested in our cultural resources and who are anxious to see the State acquire a reputation for interest in the arts. There is no better way by which this can be accomplished than through a benefactor for the purpose.

The University is building a great medical center at Oklahoma City. The School of Medicine has a fine reputation and many of our medical graduates are among the most successful practitioners in the State. The campus of the Medical School is advantageously located with adequate space for all the buildings the institution