

# Old Trusty Boomed At Midnight

This year as March 17 rolled around nearly 2,000 Sooner engineers made ready their "magic" for the Engineering open house, prepared for guarding of their queen, and performed the other duties that go to make up the celebration on St. Pat's Day. This army, or brigade at least, of engineers was a far cry from the little band that initiated March 17 festivities on the University campus 34 years ago.

Eight men were granted degrees from the College of Engineering that year of 1915 while approximately 450 are counted among the class of 1949.

But the College's history goes back further than the first celebration of St. Patrick's Day. It was founded in 1909 with the late J. H. Felgar as dean. Dr. Felgar came to the University in 1906 as an instructor in mechanical engineering from Oklahoma A&M where he taught for six months. He was dean of the College until 1937 when he resigned to become dean emeritus, being succeeded by W. H. Carson, the present dean.

Even before the engineering department was organized as a college it had existed as the School of Applied Science, which was set up in 1905 with curricula in civil engineering, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering. In 1906 when Dr. Felgar joined the staff, the school had 37 students, four of whom were classified as juniors. There were no seniors. At that time the total enrolment for the University was 623.

The engineering classes and laboratories then occupied temporary frame buildings which stood near where the Women's Building is now. Formation of the College of Engineering was followed by the completion of the new Engineering Building in 1909. Since the present Engineering building was occupied in 1925 the original structure has been known as the Engineering Laboratory. It was originally 160 by 38 feet but has been enlarged several times.

The first degree was granted by the new college in 1909 to Charles Lewis Kaupke, '09bs in c.e., Fresno, California. By the following spring the graduating class had doubled in numbers as degrees went to Lloyd Burgess Curtis, '08bs, '10bs in e.e., Lander, Wyoming; and Harry Garfield Powell, '10bs in c.e., Tulsa. The College then included the Schools of Civil Engineering, G. A. Hool, director; Electrical Engineering, H. V. Bozell, director; Mechanical



Here is the expanded Engineering Building as it appears today. The original structure was completed in 1925 while the addition which houses the Petroleum Engineering School and the Engineering Labs was constructed last year. It is shown at the left above.

Engineering, J. H. Felgar, director; and the School of Mines, headed by Dr. D. W. Ohern.

As noted above, the local St. Pat's celebration started in 1915. The first celebration of this holiday by engineering students was in 1903 at the University of Missouri where students "discovered," apparently in a dream, that Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, was an engineer. St. Patrick was born in 378 A. D. in Dumbarton, Scotland. He was carried to Ireland by pirates and he rid that island of its snakes, engineers alege, by a mechanical or electrical device. Just what sort of a contrivance it was is influenced by the major interest of the engineer who tells of it.

As the celebration has progressed, there has also developed a certain dispute between the Engineers and a subversive group known as the Lawyers. This series down through the years reads like an FBI file for it has included cannon-napping, queen-napping and even St. Pat-napping.

The cannon involved, of course, was "Old Trusty" which early-day Engineers were wont to fire in the direction of the Law Barn on St. Pat's Day. This sometimes resulted in cracked or broken windows. "Old Trusty" was spirited away in 1916 in a speedy Stutz Bearcat, but was recovered by the Loyal Knights of Old Trusty in time to perform its annual duty. The cannon was laid away in an early



Roaring defiance to the Lawyers, Old Trusty (in the small economy size), heralds the approaching dawn of St. Patrick's Day closely guarded by the Loyal Knights of Old Trusty.

grave under the brick floor of the Electrical Engineering shop to avoid capture by University officials but was exhumed by President Stratton D. Brooks and carted off while Engineers went into mourning. Since then makeshift noisemakers have been employed to herald the dawn on St. Patrick's Day.

With the election of the first Engine Queen in 1920 the Lawyers had another subject for their abducting activities and the election of the first student St. Pat representative in 1923 provided a third objective.

Two celebrations had a sombre ending, one when an explosion at the open house caused the death of a student, and the other when the bursting of a cannon barrel seriously injured an Engineer. Festivities since have been somewhat less spectacular but safer.

The present Engineering Building was completed in January, 1925. It has been expanded since the end of World War II. W. H. Carson, present Dean of the College, joined the faculty in February, 1925. At that time the college included nine subordinate schools. The Schools of General Engineering and Natural-Gas Engineering were added in 1932.

In its fortieth year the College of Engineering, from its height of national prominence, can look back upon two generations of engineers it has trained for peace and war, two generations of engineers who are Oklahoma's and the nation's builders.

## St. Pats Give Highlights

Always one of the highlights of the Engineers' celebration is the election of a student St. Pat. This custom was originated in 1923 and since then 22 outstanding engineers have been named campus representatives of the patron saint. Since they were all highly active during their undergraduate days, we felt that a short article by each one would be of interest to Sooner alumni. Some could not be contacted and some replies were received too late for inclusion in the Special Engineering edition, but a representative group was obtained beginning with the first St. Pat of them all, Harold L. Patterson, '23eng, who was also chief gunner of LKOT in 1923.

Although he took a degree in civil engineering at the University, he is now engaged in the oil business, being district superintendent in charge of drilling and production for the Pure Oil Co. Patterson is now at West Poison Spider, Wyoming, where he has the deepest flowing well (14,309 feet) in the world. There in Wyoming he is able to indulge his favorite hobbies, hunting and fishing, to the fullest extent.

The next St. Patrick election came in 1926 when John H. Coffman, '26eng, received the honor. He recalls, not without pleasure, that that was the year the owls on the Law Barn turned green, apparently with envy of the engineers. Perhaps today, though, such an occurrence would displease Coffman, for he is now an Attorney-at-Law in Washington, D. C. He is also a retired Lt. Colonel of the Ma-

rine Corps, having served for 20 years in that service.

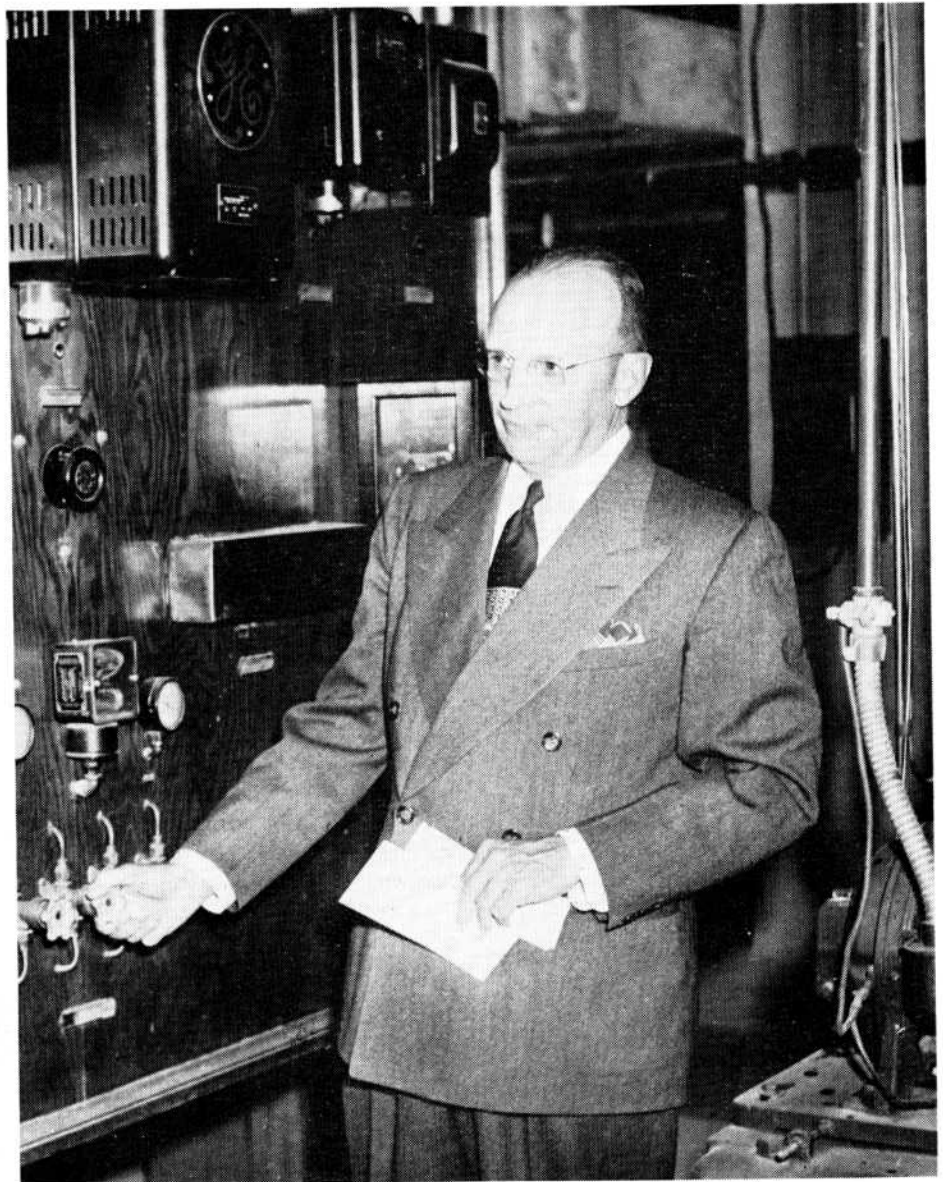
After another lapse of three years, Paul Turnbull, '29eng, Corpus Christi, Texas, was named St. Pat in 1929 and the election became an annual affair, continuing to the present.

In 1930 James H. Pernell, '30eng, Dallas, received the honor. That was the year the Engineers' sign, which Pernell helped to design and build, was put atop the Engineering Building. It was taken down last year.

Paul Thurber, '31eng, now of Caracas, Vene-

cluded a general bird's eye view of the University. Although I had been told of the expansion during the war by individuals who have visited there within the past year or so, I was astounded at the changes, particularly over in Engineering.

"These fifteen years must also have made changes in personnel there. Dean Carson was Professor Carson then. I owe to him the support which obtained for me that additional loan from the Lew Wentz fund which I needed that last year so much. That year I was president of the local chapter of American Society of Mechanical Engi-



*W. H. Carson, dean of the College of Engineering, and professor of mechanical engineering, invades a new field as he tests some electrical equipment. Dean Carson has been attending the World Engineering Conference in Cairo, Egypt.*

zuela, was named St. Pat his senior year. The following year Ray Lynch, '32eng, Oklahoma City, was elected, while Lee Minter, '33eng, Bradford, reigned in 1933.

Lewis McBride, '34eng, now Chief Engineer of Panama Engineering District, Corps of Engineers, at Ancon, Canal Zone, was 1934's St. Pat. He writes as follows:

"Your letter has been the first of its kind received since I graduated in 1934. Have often wondered whether St. Pat still reigned on March 17.

"Recently I received a publication which in-

cludes and Tau Omega, which, though it meant much extra curricula work, added much to my senior year."

1935—J. Bruce Wiley, '35eng, '41m.eng, now associate professor of electrical engineering at the University and mayor of Norman, was named St. Pat.

1936—Louin Roberts, '36eng, Blair.  
1937—Floyd Hildebrand, '37eng, Tulsa, remembers his term as St. Pat very well:

"I am sure that every Engineering graduate of the University has fond memories of St. Pat's