



L-R Pres. Walker, Dean Marston,
R. Gunness at dedication.



Dean Marston presenting flags to
School of Engineering through Dean
Picha to show his appreciation for
the honor accorded him.

REMARKS BY DEAN GEORGE A. MARSTON

When I retired from the University seven years ago I remarked that I wanted to leave while I still had one friend on campus, but I wasn't sure who he was. You have convinced me that I was very wrong -- a dean is very seldom wrong you know -- and even more rarely will he admit it!

I did hear rumblings of this recognition last year but knowing of the Trustee ruling I hastily mentioned that of the choices open to me I preferred to stay around a bit longer. Then when I learned of the Trustee action, I have been worrying as to whether they knew something I didn't.

After these eulogies I now know why the Trustees made their policy. It is difficult to listen to such kind words knowing that some of them couldn't possibly be true. But I do appreciate more deeply than you will know all you have done. With your indulgence, I do have a few brief words and comments on the past.

Engineering did not develop on this campus the way it did at the other land grant colleges. There was another school in Boston which shares the original land grant funds and it was felt that they adequately provided the engineering education in the State. Some will agree that M.I.T. has used their \$16,667 yearly land grant effectively. On our campus engineering was restricted to one professorship, in the Department of Mathematics and Civil Engineering housed in a wooden frame building adjacent to Fernald Hall. Agricultural Engineering under Professor Christian Gunness' able leadership, later developed in the School of Agriculture. But after World War II, the returning G.I.'s were technically oriented and U.Mass. got its big impulse in this field.

It was a fascinating period for many of us. Not completely accepted as legitimate scholars and yet we were not segregated, for at one time we had engineering classes in 13 different buildings on campus including the attic of Flint Laboratory. Our neighboring college down the street would allow an occasional student to take a course with us but would not give the boy credit for it -- as they considered our work too vocational! We developed rapidly. Certain philosophies evolved as we grew. I recall the comment that education in a University is not

limited to students. I've known a dean who learned a thing or two from an outspoken janitor. Faculty learned from students, some of whom were older and certainly more experienced. Administrators and even a president or two occasionally learned a bit from the faculty. I gather some students today are trying to educate certain administrators. It's not an easy task as faculty have known for some time, but it can be done.

When maintenance could not provide the construction changes we needed, the School of Engineering did it themselves and this included faculty, witness the erection of Gurski Hall. We occasionally did jobs for other academic departments with the wry comment "that's the price we pay for your allowing us to be on campus." The humanist who needed a bookcase and didn't know a screw driver from a wrench may not have liked us, but he respected us.

At a time when certain administrators were expounding the theory that each faculty member should be a teacher, a researcher and an extension specialist, we observed there were very few super men in our area and tried to form a "well rounded school out of lopsided people" -- some doing best as teachers, others as researchers and some as extension workers.

In those days a research study, without grant or Federal support, clearly proved that engineering had the largest percentage of honor graduates. Some years we attracted over 40% of the freshmen boys into engineering. We respected these students, most of them first generation college people like many of us on the faculty and they respected the faculty and the courses were relevant and many are the decision makers in industry and government today. It may be that we attracted better teachers in those days for salaries were not comparable with other professional practice and only the dedicated wanted to share our work. The engineering recipients of "Outstanding Teacher", "Metawampe" and "Western Electric" awards in recent years may prove my point. I can mention Keyser, Dittfach, Day, Marcus, Boyer, Duus and even John Mitchell. We worked hard with 12 and 15 s.h. or more teaching loads, but we also had help from many quarters. The fact that President Van Meter and Registrar Lanphear each had two sons both of whom were engineers was a sympathetic asset. What would we have done without Frank Teahan and his "Mrs. Surplus," or Bob Morrissey and his effective handling of recruiters, or Herb Randolph who helped our students and faculty with housing. Even Ken Johnson provided funds for a hard surface road to Guinness Laboratory and John Conklin would loan the extension truck, one of the few on campus, to our late Stanley Rogers but not to me. Mr. Appleton designed our buildings, and Mr. David was always willing to let our students use the power plant as a laboratory under the watchful eye of John Swenson with his 2nd Class operators license. I should also mention the assistance provided by the engineering wives at Christmas parties, annual picnics and numerous other occasions.

Engineering occupied the first million dollar building on campus -- but it was built in two parts for obviously the legislature did not trust the University with such a large sum at one time. The Electrical Wing was complete in 1950 for \$500,000 and the completing unit 5 years later for over \$700,000 including furnishings and equipment. We provided quarters for the School of Nursing for a few years and later for part of the history department in addition to W.M.U.A. Engineering offered the first course in Russian on this campus and was the first to offer city planning with Ted Bacon as instructor.

But our accomplishments were small compared with those of today and tomorrow's will be greater by far. I hope we laid a good foundation, and our good wishes go to those who follow us.

I want to thank all -- faculty, trustees, students, secretaries, technicians, legislators, administrators and even fellow deans on this campus and elsewhere for the contributions each made to my education and the development of the School of Engineering during those busy but productive years. Thank you.