

The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University
Ohio State Engineer

Title: Around the Quadrangle

Creators: Weed, John Merrill, 1897-

Issue Date: Mar-1931

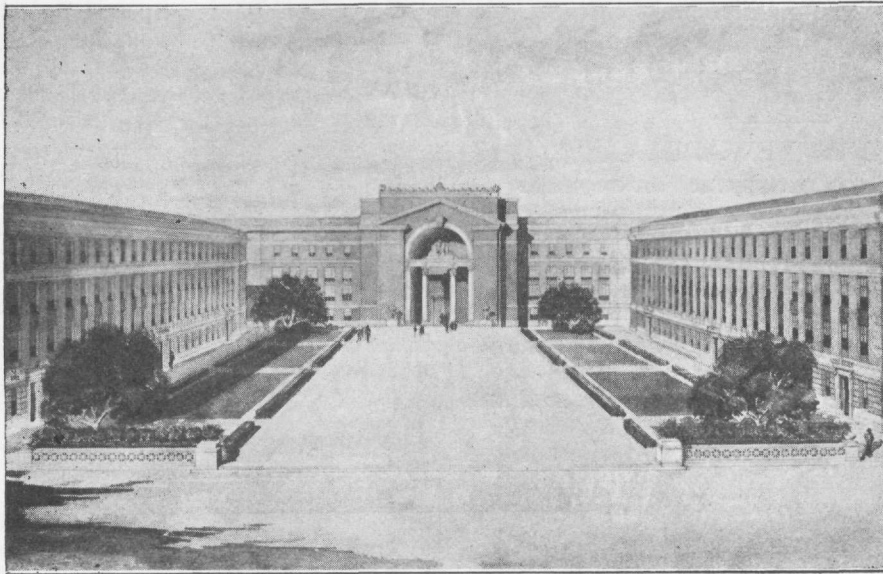
Publisher: Ohio State University, College of Engineering

Citation: Ohio State Engineer, vol. 14, no. 5 (March, 1931), 11, 16-17.

URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/1811/34762>

Appears in Collections: [Ohio State Engineer: Volume 14, no. 5 \(March, 1931\)](#)

Around the Quadrangle



By MERRILL WEED

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Engineering Quadrangle, while still a vision of the future, is coming closer to reality every day. We think that Mr. Weed has christened his column wisely and has taken the step forward that will make the engineers "quadrangle-conscious." At least, this is the step that will break down the multi-syllabled title of the proposed engineering group to the inevitable "Quad."

Distinguishing the figs from thistles may be a difficult task in this column of comment and reflections that the editor has placed at my disposal. At first we thought it might be called "The Weed Patch." But some of the ideas will surely deserve kindlier treatment.

The editor has given me carte blanche (though I see his blue pencil poised) to jot down opinions, facts, suggestions, and anything else that may come along. Sometimes I may tell you about books I've been reading. When you agree, or disagree, or are indifferent, I'll be glad to have you send in your ideas. Letters from readers, if any, are splendid column fillers.

SHAFTS

Professor Sherman has taken exception to a remark I made last year about Bernard Shaw, to the effect that Bernard is almost too clever a man to live, or something like that. Real cleverness, avers Professor Sherman, includes more of a constructive, helpful nature than Shaw has thus far exhibited. And he's seventy-four, so he's unlikely to change materially. Bernard is a smarty, but not really clever.

There is only one way to settle this question: read *The Doctor's Dilemma*, *The Apple Cart*, or something else by Shaw, and decide for yourself. It is unlikely that looking up "clever" in the dictionary will do any good.

* * *

This inquiry has been batted from one department of the University to another:

Science Department

Dear Sirs:

As it is necessary, in order to recieve (sic) a credit for the year's study of general Sci-

ence, I am going to ask you a question to which I request an answer. The question is, "Do we put mortar (sic) between bricks to hold them together or to hold them apart." Answer as soon as possible.

If any buck is to be passed, I'll pass it to the readers of the *Ohio State Engineer*.

* * *

The second annual debate between the industrials and electricals brought out an innovation in forensics, new to me, at any rate. Wishing to present some statistics involving unit costs, one of the gentlemen of the negative calmly picked up his slide rule, manipulated it, and announced the figure. The effect upon the engineer audience was distinctly favorable.

In court, however, slide rules will probably not be allowed; it would look too much like slipping something over on the jury.

* * *

This is not a comparison of university salaries with outside remuneration. Engineering students and I know little about either.

What I was going to say, though, after observing and being in the mad scramble to reach downtown offices at 8 o'clock, the congestion at closing hours, and the jams at noon on Saturday, is that people at Ohio State University don't realize how lucky they are in being able to report for work three miles away from the congested district. Those who live near the campus can walk to their offices, leaving automobiles protected from the weather. And those who drive are at least spared the rush into the smoky twilight zone of the city.

As a good round guess, it's worth fifty dollars a month to have the privilege of teaching or working at the University and be freed from the rush and confusion of getting to and from downtown offices.

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 AROUND THE QUADRANGLE

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BARBS

Speaking of officers, I'm sure that students and others who have tried to see or call campus people will share the fervent hope that the new engineering buildings, if and when erected, will have the professors' desks grouped intelligently. Surely all the offices of a department—or even all the offices in each building—could be in small rooms adjacent to the space for the clerical force. Then all telephone calls for the professors can be answered, and typing and filing be more businesslike.

Suppose Engineers' Council wants to round up all the profs in civil engineering to extend an invitation to dinner, or something equally popular. There's the department office in Brown Hall, with an extension telephone in Professor Sherman's sanctum adjacent. So far so good. But civil engineering has four more offices in Brown Hall each with its independent telephone, and the remaining members of the department have desks in three similarly detached offices in another building.

I don't question the value of desks near classrooms and laboratories, but making each professor independent as a hog on ice seems neither businesslike nor convenient for the teacher and his students and visitors.

Engineering Drawing has some centralization, though some of the profs are pretty hard to make contact with. For intelligent grouping I commend the Bureau of Business Research, though that's off the quadrangle. The Bureau offices are almost cubbyholes, but they are convenient, light, and serviced in a way that is conducive to efficiency.

* * *

This may be heresy, but lingering on the other side of the oval, take a look at our Doughboy, the statue at the north entrance of the Archaeological Museum. Striding along, head erect, rifle at right shoulder, puttees neatly wrapped, clothes in formal order, he is every inch a soldier.

You probably like him. Many people do. My feelings are personal, and I'm inclined to think that debunking and disillusionment can be carried too far.

MARCH, 1931

For a soldier on parade, however, one thing is very much amiss. To carry a German helmet is distinctly not regulation. Yet as the doughboy swings along he carries such a trophy.

One of my friends, a soldier who served overseas, spotted that helmet first thing. Promptly he dubbed the statue "The Souvenir Hunter."

BOOKS

One of those disturbing books, the kind that get you out of bed early in the morning for at least a week after you've read it, is *The Psychology of Achievement*, by Harry Pitkin.

Why a professor of journalism should be writing on psychology I don't know; it probably indicates that psychology, so-called, is anybody's game. I remember overhearing a conversation in which a woman lightly dismissed the whole subject of advertising, "Oh, there's nothing to advertising; it's just applied psychology." So this book may be dismissed as pseudopsychology. Asked if it has value I should say "Yes and no." It tells nothing that we don't already know, although most of us are unwilling to face it. It may not change the lives of readers; people are seldom moved to life achievement by reading a book. On the other hand, it may. It may encourage those who seem to have chances of success, and cause others to cease trying.

Kicking hard work and such formulas as "Early to bed and early to rise" into the discard will make a big hit with some. But don't throw your hats into the air too soon. For real achievement pretty nearly every kind of sacrifice is demanded, even social life that is supposed to knock the rough corners off the engineer.

If you are under thirty-five and among the smart people, this book is prescribed for you. That should make it universally read among the engineers.

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Every action has its corresponding and opposite reaction. So it's appropriate to follow *Achievement* with a recommendation of *Modern Conversation* by Barrington Hall. You may decide that your achievement will be drawing-room popularity, and here is expert coaching for you.

Such a cheerful-looking, green-covered book is cordially suggested as a textbook in Miss Harbarger's English classes.

No better way can be found for vivid speech and writing than the concreteness of Mr. Hall. He advises calling a spade a spade, or even more so. Taking his advice, you may be mildly interesting if you admit that you committed a crime, but downright exciting if you plead guilty of murder.

Perhaps you'll like *Modern Conversation* better if you don't have to buy it as a text. In any case, don't miss it.
