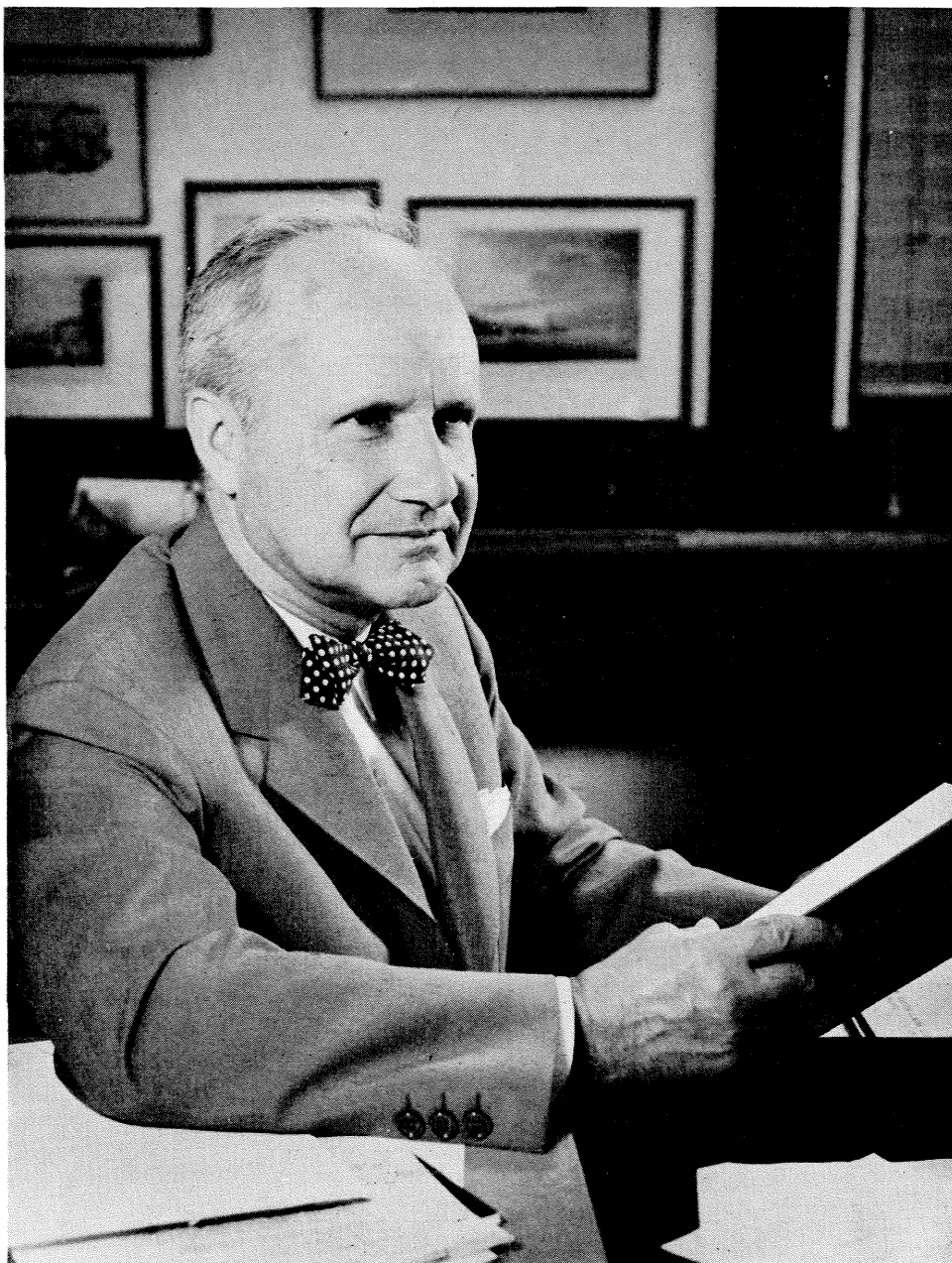


*Earnest C. Watson,
professor of physics
and dean of the
Caltech faculty.*



The Retiring Dean

Earnest Watson, dean of the faculty for the past 14 of his 40 years at Caltech, leaves the Institute this month to become scientific attaché to the United States Embassy in India. Dean Watson and his wife will leave for New Delhi in January for a two-year term.

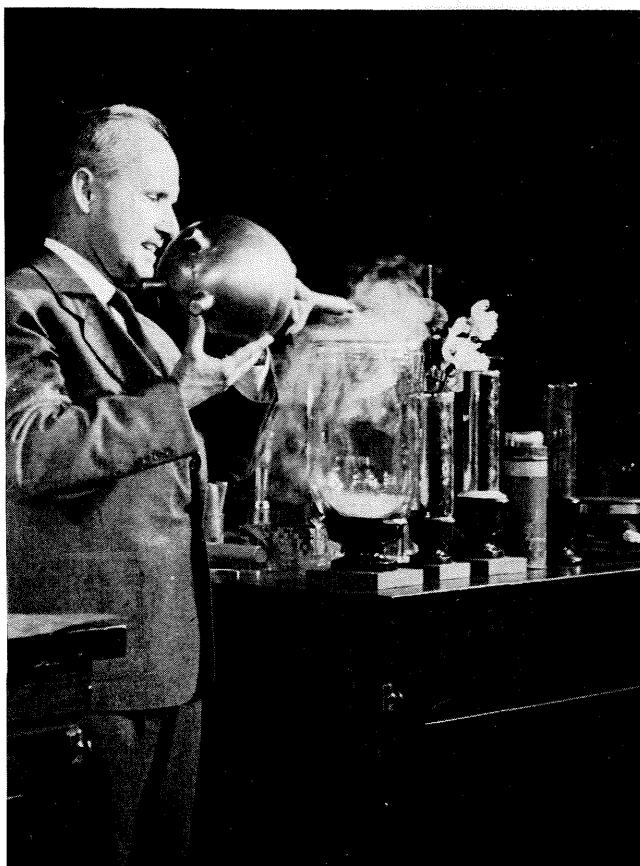
In a formal statement, President L. A. DuBridges said:

"It is fitting to express on behalf of the administration, faculty and trustees the great debt of gratitude which the Institute owes to Dean Watson for his devoted service over the past 40 years.

"He has been a dedicated and effective servant of

Caltech. No one on the faculty is more admired as an individual, or is more respected for his part in bringing Caltech to its present position of leadership. As dean of the faculty, he has never compromised with the highest quality requirements for faculty members, yet has dealt gently and understandingly with all faculty members on their personal and professional problems.

"He will be sorely missed, but his friends join in wishing him every success in the new and important task he has undertaken. He will be an ideal representative of the U.S. scientific community abroad."



Ernest Watson not only started the Friday Evening Demonstration Lectures at Caltech, but, year after year, gave the lecture on liquid air, which was the best of them all.

The story of Caltech is in many ways the story of Ernest Watson. Born in Sullivan, Illinois, in 1892, Watson was graduated from Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., then went to Columbia University in New York to ask the advice of Dr. Robert A. Millikan about doing graduate work in physics. Dr. Millikan, at that time one of the world's great physicists, offered Watson a scholarship at the University of Chicago. Watson accepted, serving as an assistant in physics there until 1917.

During World War I Watson worked on one of the first military research projects — the anti-submarine program — at the U.S. submarine base in New London, Conn. Dr. Millikan, who had moved west to start an outstanding university of science and engineering, asked him to come to the Throop College of Technology in Pasadena. Watson joined the Throop faculty in February 1919, a year before the name of the school was changed to the California Institute of Technology.

Starting out as an assistant professor of physics, Watson promptly took over the task of supervising the planning and construction of the Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics. He also started the Friday Evening Demonstration Lectures — which still continue, and which remain one of the Institute's most valuable public relations efforts.

In the 20's and early 30's Watson did research on

the spatial distribution of the photoelectrons ejected by x-rays. He designed and constructed one of the first beta-ray spectrometers in the world, for use in that work. In 1937 he published, in collaboration with Millikan and Roller, the revised edition of the famous physics text, *Mechanics, Molecular Physics, Heat and Sound*.

For a quarter of a century Watson was a right-hand man of R. A. Millikan. When Millikan retired, Watson became acting chairman of Caltech's Division of Physics, Astrophysics, Mathematics and Electrical Engineering. He was made an associate professor in 1920 and a full professor in 1930.

World War II

During World War II Watson took on the overwhelming job of administrative director of Caltech's rocket project, supervising an organization that did 80 million dollars' worth of work for the government in rocket research, development and manufacture. About 4,000 people were employed on this project for the Navy.

For a short time, during the war, Watson relieved the late Dr. Richard Tolman as vice chairman of the National Defense Research Committee, which — among other things — supervised the development of the atomic bomb.

After the war Watson was made dean of the Caltech faculty. In recent years his administrative duties have precluded his doing research, but he has continued teaching. And he has pursued his hobby of collecting old prints and books on the history of physics. He has won national recognition for his studies in the history of science and for his remarkable collection of manuscripts, pictures and prints on the subject. He has published nearly 80 articles in the *American Journal of Physics*, depicting the history of physics. Three years ago he presented Caltech with a collection of 300 very rare scientific books, including first editions of Galileo, Copernicus and Kepler.

An assortment of jobs

In addition to serving as dean of the faculty and as acting head of his division, Dean Watson has presided as chairman of the faculty board and as acting president of Caltech. He is a fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the American Association of Physics Teachers, History of Science Society, American Association of University Professors, Foreign Policy Association, Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi and Tau Beta Pi.

He is also a member of the Twilight Club of Pasadena, Friends of the Huntington Library and of the Pasadena Library Board, of which he has been chairman since 1956.

A bachelor most of his life, Dean Watson met Jane

Werner while they were on a Mediterranean cruise in 1954. A few months later they were married in Scotland. Mrs. Watson is the author of nearly 200 children's books, including *The World of Science*, which he helped her write.

At a dinner honoring Watson on November 23, William A. Fowler, professor of physics, presented the retiring dean with a scroll from the Caltech faculty:

"The faculty of the California Institute of Technology takes pleasure in presenting this memorial to Earnest C. Watson on the occasion of his completing 40 years of service to the Institute and 14 years as dean of the faculty.

"His signal achievements include the original planning and construction of Bridge Laboratory, leadership in the teaching of physics, development and maintenance of healthy relations between the public and the Institute, most considerate and unremitting care of all the interests of the faculty, and the cultivation of free and fresh inquiry into principles and policies of higher education as undertaken at the Institute. From the beginning he has won and kept the high esteem as well as the gratitude and affection of his colleagues."

The years of development

"It has been a wonderful experience," said Dean Watson in a retirement statement, "to live through the years of development at the California Institute of Technology which have raised it from a small, local engineering school to an internationally known institution. Working in the early days with men of such

vision and stature as George Ellery Hale, Arthur Amos Noyes, Robert Andrews Millikan, Thomas Hunt Morgan, Richard Chace Tolman and William B. Munro was indeed a privilege. Though these men who shaped the Institute are now gone, the institution whose path they charted with such foresight has moved steadily forward.

"Equally able and far-reaching men have been found to take the place of these early leaders, and the faculty has been enlarged and strengthened until it now ranks with the very best in the world. What better can one ask of life than the opportunity to live and work in such an environment, helping in small ways to shape that environment and enjoying the friendship of such men?"

"I am deeply grateful to the trustees of the Institute for the confidence they have placed in me, and for their continuing support and personal friendship. I know of no institution with a finer and more dedicated Board of Trustees, or one where the relations between trustees and faculty are as good.

"With the success of the current development fund drive, a new era has been inaugurated at the Institute. Still greater opportunities and responsibilities lie ahead for its leaders. It is with some regret and even envy that I step aside at such a time. As a younger and abler man than I takes over as dean of the faculty, with every confidence in the future of the Institute I can wish him no richer reward for his service than the kind of deep satisfaction which has been mine. This is a great institution, with a wonderful Board of Trustees, faculty and student body — and its finest years still lie ahead."



Faculty and staff members honored Dean Watson with a farewell dinner at the Athenaeum, followed by a performance of an original musical, "The Importance of Being Earnest."