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Commemorative Issue

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ELL TO RETIRE IN '59

Seventy-Year-Old President of Northeastern Announces Retirement to be Effective in Year; Successor Unnamed

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Right Top Man Necessary, Says Retiring Prexy

"Why am I retiring? Not because I want to do anything different. But when you're 70, your days are pretty well numbered for the future."

This was Dr. Ell's special statement to the NEWS in regard to his announced retirement.

"If this institution is to progress, then it should not have its direction suddenly changed," he continued. "It should go ahead in the same direction. It should be developed and enriched."

The right top man is necessary. Why am I retiring on June 30, 1959? So that the Board of Trustees and myself can be sure we have the right new president of this institution before the present one steps out.

"Suppose I were taken out of this world. It would present a problem to the university. That's why I'm speaking of retirement now."

"We must get the right man as the third president. We must have him no later than July 1, 1959. It can be any time before that date, but no later. We had to set some deadline, and this is it. It's for the good of Northeastern in the long look ahead," he concluded.



Dr. Carl Stephens Ell

Served 18 Years As The President Of Northeastern

Dr. Carl S. Ell, president of Northeastern University, will retire June 30, 1959. It is expected that his successor will be named within the year.

For 48 years Dr. Ell has served the university, 18 of those years as president.

Dr. Ell joined the university staff on Oct. 1, 1910 as an instructor in civil engineering and later became chairman of the department, dean of the College of Engineering, dean of the Day Colleges, vice president in 1925, and then president July 1, 1940.

Dr. Ell over the past twenty years has led the development of Northeastern's physical properties from one small building on the then two-acre campus on Huntington Ave. to nineteen buildings, ten of which are located directly on the present seventeen-acre campus.

Dr. Ell, as dean of the College of Engineering in 1917, was put in charge of the reorganization, development, and administration of the school which today is the largest of Northeastern's four Day Colleges.

Later he was the prime force behind the establishment of

ANNOUNCEMENT

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'I'm Just a Kid from a Crossroad School'

By MICHAEL LEONARD

Forty-one years ago an Indiana farm boy and his friend climbed to the fourth floor of the Huntington Ave. YMCA. They entered Room 453 and looked out the window to a barren, cinder-covered circus ground.

"That's the place for Northeastern," said the farm boy to his friend.

Today that same young man from the Indiana cornfields could look through that same window if he wished and see his dream fulfilled. Although his friend is deceased, the ambitious, young country boy, Dr. Carl S. Ell, is still going strong.

The president of Northeastern has come a long way since his days in Staunton, Indiana

where he was born on November 14, 1887.

"My first eight grades were spent in a one-room crossroad schoolhouse in Indiana," recalled the president. "The streets ran parallel in one mile squares, and at every other crossroad there was a schoolhouse."

FINISHED EARLY

"There were no high schools around so I had to leave home at 14 to go to DePauw Academy. I finished high school in three years and went through DePauw University in another three years. I had no special brilliance. I'm just a fellow who enjoys life and likes to get things done.

"I didn't miss anything, though. I was a forward in

basketball and took part in all the activities."

The young engineer came east after graduating from DePauw and entered MIT to earn his master's degree. In 1910 he came to Northeastern as a part-time instructor.

From its beginning in 1898 Northeastern had only night classes, but in 1909 it became an engineering college day school also. The name, Northeastern, was still unheard of. Its title until 1916 was the Co-operative Engineering School.

NO DEGREES

"It wasn't very highly organized," remembered Dr. Ell, "and there was no degree granting until 1920."

Even though the school had an enrollment its first year of

only eight people, the co-op plan was in operation even then, with alternating periods of one week for work and study. The president of the college was Dr. Frank Palmer Speare.

Ell was hired by Speare to teach surveying, the first civil engineering subject at Northeastern.

Dr. Ell admits that he came to Northeastern because, "It was an opportunity for a part-time job with pay."

In 1912 he started as a full-time teacher.

When asked why he continued to work for a sizeable list of degrees at MIT and Harvard, the president said, "I've always been interested in learning and still am - and not for the sake of degrees."

In 1912 Ell was made head of the Department of Civil Engineering, and in 1917 he was appointed dean of the School of Engineering which was then the only college in the school.

"I still have a bound volume of the first newspapers that were printed here at Northeastern," said Dr. Ell, leaning forward in his office chair. "Here, I'll show them to you," he said reaching for an envelope in his bottom desk drawer.

"The paper started in 1916 on a monthly basis, but it was called the CO-OP then."

COACHED BASKETBALL

Thumbing through the book, the president came across a page with a basketball team

INTERVIEW

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How The First Husky Came to Northeastern

The Husky, a Band and All The Students Paraded Through The Streets of Boston

As the University athletic teams developed, starting with the first basketball team in the college year 1915-1916, the students clamored more and more for a name for the teams and for a mascot.

Finally, during the college year 1926-1927, the clamor became very loud. Many students suggested that the University adopt a dog—any dog—which would make its home here around the University and invade corridors and classrooms occasionally.

What they had in mind apparently was, some, homeless dog which could come to live as the Northeastern mascot.

It seemed to me that if we were to have a mascot, we should have a good one—one which typified, at least in some degree, the qualities found in Northeastern students or which were representative of the university itself.

TRANSPORTED SERUM

About this time, in February of 1927, the famous dog-team driver from Alaska, Leonard Seppalla, was at Poland Springs in Maine to participate in sled-dog races. Seppalla had been one of those transporting serum at the time of the great malignant diphtheria epidemic in 1925 over the vast fields of ice and snow from Nenana to Nome, Alaska, some 665 miles.

Nome could be reached by no other means except dog sled. In that famous run, Seppalla was one of the relay drivers and one of his lead dogs was Togo. It seemed to me that this was an opportunity to get a real sturdy, dependable, working dog as a Northeastern mascot.

After making an appointment with Seppalla by telephone, I took the train early one Sunday morning and arrived at Poland Springs where I was met by Seppalla and his dog team. The sun was shining brightly on four feet of snow.

I had the pleasure of my first ride in a dog sled with Togo as the lead dog and with 12 dogs in the team. All of the Huskies were black and white except two, hitched next to the sled, which were young, beautiful Siberian Eskimo dogs with long silver-gray coats.

BARGAIN MADE

My eye fell on these immediately, but Seppalla was set against parting with either of them. Finally, it was agreed that \$100 would make the difference and Seppalla agreed to come to Boston on a certain day in March by train to bring the chosen dog, and present Northeastern with its first mascot.

Consequently, on March 4,

By DR. CARL S. ELL



HOLD THAT HUSKY - Dr. Ell poses with King Husky I in unusual photo taken shortly after the dog's arrival at Northeastern. The regal canine acted the part as King, but had his fun during the summer.

1927, a mass meeting of students was held in Jordan Hall, after which classes were cancelled, and a parade, led by the Northeastern band, left for North Station.

There Seppalla and the Northeastern Husky were met and, following the band, led the parade through Scollay Square, up Boylston St. and Huntington Ave. to the University where the Husky was presented to Northeastern and inaugurated as King.

BU UNFRIENDLY

The only untoward incident which happened in the whole affair was that the Northeastern parade received a barrage of tin cans, tomatoes, and other miscellaneous articles as it passed the Boston University School of Business Administration, then located where the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company building now stands. But, as usual, Northeastern was fortunate that the parade held its line, did not accept the challenge of rioting, and proceeded on its journey.

This original King Husky I found to be a most unusual animal. He always appeared to be monarch of all he surveyed—beautiful, dignified, and

striking; very friendly in his attitude toward men, but afraid when women came near, and rather wild when he took to the open.

We now had the mascot, but I had not given thought of where he was to be kept. I built a chain-link pen some eight feet high in the back yard at 21 Beaumont Ave. Newtonville, but this was not high enough. He was later assigned to the care of Mrs. P. L. Norton, where he lived when not on parade at Northeastern.

HARD TO HOLD

The first summer I endeavored to keep Husky cool by taking him down to Harwichport on the shore, but discovered it was not possible to keep him either penned up or chained. He invariably jumped the fence or broke the chain; never vicious but always strong and full of mischief.

On one occasion he visited a neighboring farm where registered chickens were being kept for exhibition purposes. He got mixed up with the chickens, killed 19 without regard as to whether they were banded or not, ate none, but simply had a good time.

They Wanted Blood, So . . .



WON'T HURT A BIT - Dr. Ell gives blood in answer to a drive at Northeastern on Dec. 26, 1941. "They wanted blood, and I had some, so I gave it," he comments today.

Northeastern News COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

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President Responsible for Start of Three Colleges

Announcement

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evening engineering programs of study which developed into the present Lincoln Institute.

GUIDED THREE

Three of Northeastern's four Day Colleges began under his guidance. These are the College of Business Administration in 1922; the College of Liberal Arts in 1935; and the College of Education in 1953.

When most young men were turning West to begin their careers and seek their fortunes in 1909, Dr. Ell came East to Boston.

He received his first degree, an A.B. from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana in June 1909 and began study for

his second degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the fall of the same year.

In addition to the A.B. from DePauw, Dr. Ell holds the following degrees: S.B., M.I.T.; M.S., M.I.T.; Ed.M., Harvard University; Sc.D., DePauw University (honorary); LL.D., Tufts University (honorary); L.H.D., Boston University (honorary); LL.D., University of Rhode Island (honorary); LL.D., Emerson College (honorary).

In 1912 President Ell was named head of the Civil Engineering Department at Northeastern and during the next few years was engaged part time as inspection engineer for the New York State Department of Health for water sheds and public water sup-

plies.

HEADED FACULTY

Appointed dean of the College of Engineering in 1917, Dr. Ell a few years later was put in general charge of the work of the faculty and students as dean of the Day Colleges.

He was elected vice president in 1925 and served in that capacity until 1940 when elected president.

He married the former Etta May Kinnear of Boston in 1913 and has one daughter, Mrs. Judson Scott Strong, and three grandchildren, Susan Ell Strong, Judson Ell Strong, and Rebecca Ell Strong. They are now living in Long Island, New York.

He lives at 21 Beaumont Ave., Newtonville, Mass.

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Fewer Vacations Than Any Other Faculty Member

Vice-President Tells What It's Been Like to Work for Dr. Ell

By DR. WILLIAM C. WHITE

In the building of a strong and highly serviceable educational institution, three elements are essential: a clear concept of the purposes to be served; courageous, capable, dedicated effort towards their ever-more effective accomplishment; and sustained leadership of the kind that inspires all members of the academic community to share with enthusiasm in the achievement of common objectives.

The steady and substantial growth of Northeastern University during the past two decades is attributable to the happy combination of these three factors under the guiding hand of Dr. Carl S. Ell. Indeed, his vision, ideals, and amazing capacity for work have been powerful influences in the development of our University since 1910 when he first came to Northeastern as a teacher of civil engineering, soon to become dean of the newly founded college.



WHITE

PIONEER YEAR

There are no members of the full-time faculty in active service now who shared with Dr. Ell the toil and trials of those early pioneer years when the College of Engineering was struggling to establish in New England the new co-operative plan of education, but there are some 34 of us now on the

staff who have had the exhilarating experience of working shoulder to shoulder with him for the past 25 years or more, the period during which the permanent home for Northeastern has been built on our present campus.

We look back over those exciting years with glad satisfaction over the progress they have brought, with poignant memories of the hard work and the good fun in which we shared, and with fond admiration for the distinguished educator who has led Northeastern with such consummate skill throughout a period fraught with wars and depressions and great social change.

As one who has been privileged to work closely with Dr. Ell for almost a third of a century, I have had many opportunities to see in action the stalwart personal qualities which have enabled him to bring about such fruitful results as leader of a growing university. Among these qualities is the rather unusual capacity of regularly subordin-

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Tribute By Trustee Chairman

By DAVID F. EDWARDS

Chairman of the Executive Committee
Of the Board of Trustees

Dr. Ell is a truly rare combination of dedicated idealist, hardheaded realist, and dynamic leader.

His idealism has enabled him to see the shining vision of Northeastern's future and inspire others to work with him toward realizing that vision.



EDWARDS

His realism and practical wisdom have enabled him to make the most of his resources, always meagre in relation to needs, and do the job of organizing and directing the operations of the university in a way that has won the admir-

ation and support of the men of affairs in the community.

His dynamic leadership, his contagious enthusiasm and his boundless energy have given the university a vitality and drive that have made its growth in size and excellence a truly extraordinary achievement.

Thousands of Northeastern's alumni will remember Dr. Ell in years to come with affection and gratitude as the man who did so much to bring within their reach the training that made possible for them a fuller, richer and more useful life.

And withal, he is a simple, kindly Christian gentleman who loves his fellow men, has a deep loyalty to the American way of life and a resolute determination to do all he can to safeguard and preserve it.

He's Never Too Busy for Us, Says Secretary

By MARJORIE G. PROUT
Administrative Secretary
Office of the President

If I were to try to put into one sentence my impression of President Ell's outstanding characteristics, gained from 25 years of work under his direction, I would want to say first that he has that rare ability to view problems objectively and then solve them to the greatest good of all, but always with deep concern for the wel-

fare of the individual.

In spite of great responsibilities and pressure of work, Dr. Ell is one of the most thoughtful and considerate persons I have ever known. He is never too busy if any one of us has need of his counsel. His answer so often, in reply to a question of his time, is: "I have 24 hours a day like everyone else."

Dr. Ell plays as hard as he works — ask those who have been with him on the golf course and the squash or bas-

ketball court. And many of us "old timers" have pleasant memories of office staff parties when Dean and Mrs. Ell entertained us at their home and when, on one occasion, Dean Ell appeared as the "French maid" to serve the luncheon!

President Ell is dedicated to the task of making permanent, as he puts it, "Northeastern's place in the sun". It is a privilege and inspiration to serve as his secretary.

'I Pray I May Have The Skill'

The following is the response given by Dr. Ell after the induction speech by Robert Dodge, chairman of the Corporation, when Dr. Ell was made president of Northeastern on November 19, 1940.

Mr. Dodge, I deeply appreciate the honor which the trustees of Northeastern University have conferred upon me. It is a great honor, and a great responsibility.

"In these insignia of office, I recognize a sacred trust; and during the years, in which I may be privileged to serve the University, I pledge myself to the fulfillment of that trust.

"I pray that I may have the

knowledge and skill, the insight and Divine guidance necessary to discharge, in an intelligent manner, the duties of this office.

"All the energy and all the ability which I possess, I shall devote to Northeastern, to the end, that the University may ever render a better and a greater service to our youth and to our country."

'I'm Just as Full of Energy as I Ever Was'

Interview

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which he happened to coach. We beat BU twice that year. Basketball was a lot rougher in those days. That's how I broke my nose. But we had a lot of fun.

"During World War I we had at Northeastern what was called SATC - the Student Army Training Corps. Barracks were built where the Library is now standing, and the mess hall was situated where Science Hall is.

"We also had the Freshman-Sophomore Rush every fall. One of its highlights was a rope pulling contest between the two classes which took place across the Muddy River. The losers were dragged through the river. If they let go, they were cowards."

FIELD DAY

There was also what Dr. Ell referred to as the "Field Day at Riverside". All the students and faculty members would pack box lunches and leave Back Bay by special trains for Riverside.

"Dr. Speare was primarily interested in evening work and left the day work for me to develop," said Dr. Ell as he put the book away. "I had the fun of organizing and developing the day work. I had the pleasure of visualizing organization, engaging competent people, laying plans, setting goals, and working to get the curriculum raised to its highest possible level.

"In 1934 we set our goals for the present Northeastern. We had four plans drawn up by architectural firms. We selected one of those plans, and that's what we've built on since.

"All these years I've never had any idea but endeavoring to advance this institution.

"I've always thought that the co-op plan was ideal because it could combine theory with practice. I saw Northeastern as an institution for able men and women with limited financial means who were willing to work in order to learn



CARL S. ELL as a member of the 1908-09 varsity basketball team at DePauw University.

at the same time. Northeastern has always been devoted to people of limited means who want to get ahead.

FUN PLANNING

"The plan of combining theory and practice has always been a great challenge. I've had fun doing it. Everything has come naturally to me. I'm no genius, but I do things as they seem right to me at the time.

"I work. My day is from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and I love it. I'm just as full of energy as I ever was, and I hardly know what a sick day is. And, Mike, I can still plow a cornfield.

"I don't want to stop working. We have developed a great institution - well-organized,

well-manned, with a splendid curriculum and with students who want to get ahead. I want to make it possible for them to get ahead.

LOST CONTACT

"I used to be very close to the students before 1940, but since then I have been pushed farther and farther from my association with them. From 1910 to 1940 my greatest opportunity was to organize the students and faculty and to get creditation for the University. Since 1940 I've had to be devoted to housing and financing.

"I'm just a farmer from Indiana - a kid from the crossroads who wanted to learn and is having a lot of fun doing it.

"I still like people. I love them, and by the gods of war, I'm going to help them. But how can you help them without land, buildings, equipment and funds? I didn't want to be president, but somebody had to do it, and I guess it was the farmer's job.

INCREASED ASSETS

"Now three - fourths of my time is devoted to housing and finance. In 1940, our total assets were two million dollars. Last June they were 23 million.

"It's been my job since 1940 to see land acquired, to see funds obtained and to see buildings built - and there are going to be more before I finish. I've got to get a million dollars for a graduate center.

"I've had three great satisfactions in my years at Northeastern.

"First, the satisfaction of having a magnificent challenge ahead.

"Second, the satisfaction of seeing young people grow and develop and become intelligent, strong, sturdy Americans.

GOOD WORKERS

"Third, the satisfaction of having complete confidence in the people who work for me. I've been fortunate in having the right people with the right character, with the dedication to the cause to be sold in this ambition. You'll never find more devoted people than around here. The kind of people we have here, you don't

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