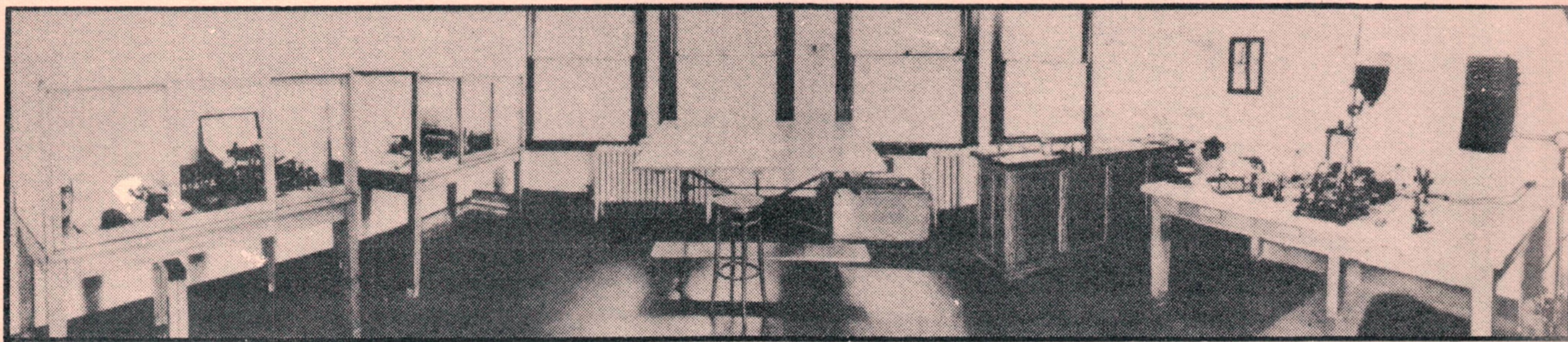


Laboratory Celebrates 10th Anniversary



First Photograph of Laboratory at the time of its establishment, November 24, 1932.

The Technical Laboratory celebrated its tenth anniversary with a turkey dinner at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington on the evening of November 24, 1942. The celebration at this time had a two-fold purpose: first, to give thanks for the opportunity of serving the Bureau for a period of ten years, and second, to pay homage to Mr. Charles A. Appel, Jr., who, under the leadership of our Director, Mr. Hoover, was the pioneer in the field of scientific work as it relates to law enforcement.

When Director Hoover took charge of the Bureau in 1924, he immediately set about to change the qualifications of the personnel so that the status of the Bureau Agents would be that of professional men. College degrees plus law or accounting were some of the fundamental requirements necessary to be considered for the position of Special Agent in the Bureau.

As the picture for the ideal investigative organization took shape, Mr. Hoover realized that there were certain types of scientific work which were not within the realm of knowledge of the investigating Agents. This work required personnel with training to make them specialists in particular scientific fields. It became apparent to him that either the Bureau would have to establish its own technical branch or it would have to rely upon technical advice and assistance from those scientists who could be found throughout the country. This latter procedure was followed for a short while; however, it did not prove entirely satisfactory for several reasons.

Steps were taken to establish the Bureau's own Laboratory where the evidence could be examined, reports furnished, and testimony offered by Bureau personnel. Some equipment was procured and Mr. Charles A. Appel, Jr., was designated to set up and operate the scientific section of the Bureau. The Laboratory officially came into being on November 24, 1932. At that time it was located in

a room of the Southern Railroad Building at the corner of 13th Street on Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C. The equipment at the beginning was rather meager: it was indeed a far cry from the Laboratory as it is known today.

The Special Agents as they were brought in for training and retraining were given a brief course of instructions as to what the Laboratory could do for law enforcement. These Agents then acted as ambassadors of the Bureau to spread the information throughout the length and breadth of the country relative to the value of scientific work to law enforcement. Slowly evidence started coming in from police agencies; the converting of many of the old-time police officers to these modern ideas was a slow and tedious process but one which paid tremendous dividends to them. The evidence from police agencies was supplemented by a steady flow of material from our own investigators in the field.

New equipment was purchased; a machine for fingerprint comparison was obtained; a binocular microscope was added to the collection of equipment; next came the ultraviolet light and a comparison microscope; a machine for making casts was added, and apparatus for projecting microscopic images for examining indented writing.

In December, 1933, due to the increase of work in personnel of the Laboratory the Bureau saw fit to appoint one to supervise the activities of this section. The supervision was given to Mr. Edmund P. Coffey, who since that date has been the administrative head of this branch of the Bureau.

In adding personnel to the Laboratory the Bureau has always insisted that such individuals be fully qualified with a sound scientific education so that they may be taught the scientific procedures of the Laboratory. A B.S. degree is a prerequisite for most of the Laboratory positions and in some a Master's



1 Laboratory Anniversary Dinner -- November 24, 1942.

2 Presentation of Honorary Scroll to Charles A. Appel, Jr. by Assistant to the Director Edward A. Tamm.

3 Assistant Director Stanley J. Tracy.

4 Inspector Edmund P. Coffey.

5 Some of the supervisors and 'old timers' of the Laboratory.

6 Conference of Messrs. Larmoyeux, Martin, Beach and Coffey.

degree is required. Preference is given to those individuals who have higher degrees. As a matter of fact, many of the technicians in the Laboratory hold Ph.D. degrees in various fields of science. Once an employee enters the services of the Bureau's Laboratory he is given training in the particular field in which he is to specialize. Due to the large volume of work handled by the Laboratory in its nation-wide scope, it is necessary for the Bureau to maintain several specialists in each field pertaining to law enforcement work.

In 1935 the Bureau moved to its present site at 9th and Pennsylvania Avenue. The Laboratory was given space in what is part of the space it presently occupies. Additional equipment was added to handle the increased volume and diversified work which the Laboratory was called upon to discharge.

From 1935 to 1940 the employees of the Laboratory were gradually increased until in January, 1940, there was a total personnel of 46 in this section. Many of the important cases handled by the Bureau were worked upon in some phase by the Laboratory technicians. Assistance was rendered not only to our investigating agents in the field but to other Federal agencies and local law-enforcement groups. Interesting and important cases have been so numerous in the Laboratory that it would not be practical to attempt a compilation of them here.

When the number of Special Agents of the Bureau was increased, due to the approaching national crisis brought about by the international situation, the amount of work coming into the Laboratory of the Bureau increased and it therefore became necessary for the Bureau's technical arm to expand in order to keep abreast of the work brought upon it. This expansion has been rapid and steady. Notable among those sections which have had a tremendous growth are those handling cryptographic and radio work. The exhibit room, which was created in peacetime so as to be of profit to people visiting Washington and desiring to see what the Bureau was doing in the scientific field, was abolished at the outbreak of war and that space was utilized by employees of the Laboratory.

Due to the necessity for all available space the Laboratory found it necessary to utilize corridor space for its clerical section. Therefore, this section is presently using the 5700 corridor of the Justice Building.

Additional chemists were added, firearms and explosives men were trained, the document section was increased, and the cryptographic section grew by leaps and bounds. Employees in the various sections are still being added and will continue to be added if necessary to keep abreast of the rapidly expanding work

being shouldered by the Bureau. The total personnel of the Laboratory today is 389.

The Laboratory is under the immediate supervision of Assistant Director Stanley J. Tracy, head of the Identification Division.

During this period of expansion the administrative and supervisory duties of the Laboratory became such that it was necessary for Mr. Coffey, Chief of the Laboratory, to have assistance. In December, 1939, Mr. Julian A. Martin was assigned to the Laboratory as Assistant Chief. In April, 1942, Special Agent Pierre A. Larmoyeux was brought in as a radio coordinator. Mr. T. D. Beach, one of the older technicians in the Laboratory in point of service, was called upon to handle part of the administrative duties.

No discussions of the Laboratory would be complete without mentioning some of the "old timers" who have been with this section of the Bureau for many years. Mr. Charles A. Appel, Jr., has been previously mentioned and the part which he played in the pioneer days of the Laboratory has been described briefly. He, without doubt, is the "Dean" of the Laboratory which is considered the outstanding organization of its kind in the world. Among the other technicians who have been with the Laboratory a long time may be mentioned: Don J. Parsons, Ivan W. Conrad, Walter G. Blackburn, Frank T. Baughman, Robert F. Pfafman, Richard L. Millen, Fred M. Miller, George W. Dingle, Dale Gasteiger, Paul A. Napier, Ramos C. Feehan.

Speaking of old timers, we owe much to such veterans as Marshall T. Gould, our chief recorder, and Mrs. Edith Gusack and Mrs. A. W. Kidd and Mrs. D. M. Souder of the typing section.

Much of the accomplishment of the Laboratory is due to the splendid cooperation and efforts of the younger employees who by far constitute the majority of the people who are serving the Bureau in the scientific field. Although these individuals are too numerous to mention by name, the Laboratory realizes the importance of the work being done by them and the dependancy which it is necessary for the Bureau to place in their skillful hands.

In celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Laboratory each and every employee gives thanks for the privilege of serving with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and with its Director. The entire Bureau pays homage to the Dean of all Laboratory technicians, Charles A. Appel, Jr., and trust that there may be celebrations of many more anniversaries in the future.



1 The Laboratory shortly after its establishment. This illustrates some of the equipment which had been obtained.

2 Mr. Charles A. Appel, Jr.

3 The Chemical Section of the Laboratory as it exists today.

4 The Clerical Section of the Laboratory located in a corridor of the Justice Building.

5 Preparing a photographic record of the microscopic appearance of two bullets through the comparison microscope.

6 The old Exhibit Room shown as it is being utilized at the present time.