

Dr. John C. Treacy, '45 Killed in Campus Blast

The cause of the blast that took the life of Dr. John C. Treacy, '45, Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering at Notre Dame, on March 31 while he was conducting an experiment in a rocket fuel mixture, may never be known, according to administration officials. The explosion which sent a shrapnel-like piece of metal flying into Dr. Treacy's neck, wrecked a concrete block rocket test cell located near the Aeronautical Engineering Building on campus. Four students who were with him at the time of the blast escaped injury. The students were doing rocket fuel research needed for their senior thesis assignments.

Dr. Treacy was standing about 30 feet northeast of the building when the explosion occurred. Professor Ronald E. Rich, '28, head of the University's Department of Chemical Engineering, said the details of the blast are vague and "it was one of those things, the reason for which we shall probably never be able to determine." Professor Rich said similar experiments in the test cell had caused only "minor flare-ups" and no previous explosion.

Dr. Treacy, a specialist in the chemical study of fuels, was given the last rites of the Catholic Church by Rev. Charles E. Sheedy, C.S.C., Dean of the College of Arts and Letters, who arrived at the accident several minutes after it had happened. John Treacy was graduated from Notre Dame in 1945 and earned his master's degree in 1947. He received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin in 1950 and joined the Notre Dame faculty that same year. Dr. Treacy was a lieutenant (j. g.) in the Naval Reserve and was a native of Danville, Ill.

He is survived by his widow, Mary Ann, and three children, Eileen, Kathleen and Michael, and his mother, Mrs. Mary Treacy. Funeral services were held in Holy Cross Catholic Church in South Bend.