

# The Battalion *Something To Read*

STUDENT TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER  
TEXAS A. & M. COLLEGE  
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## Aggie Spirit: A Definition

IN RECENT YEARS the term "Aggie Spirit" has been used to back every sort of undertaking imaginable. Too many drives for this and that have been prefaced with, "Do this because it's a part of the old Aggie Spirit." Exploitation and commercialization of the corps is a crime of the highest order! For the sake of clarity of all issues, a definition of Aggie Spirit is a crying need. In the first place there exists a stick-together-feeling among the students of A. & M. that exists no place else in the wide world even half so strong. "Once an Aggie, always an Aggie" is a phrase well put. The feeling of fellowship runs even stronger, if possible, among the ex-students than it does in the corps itself. This is because they have had the time to think it through.

An ex-student of the class of '09 was asked by a non-Aggie last year at graduation festivities, "Well, we won't be seeing much of you, I guess, now that your youngest son has graduated."

He replied, "No, you're wrong there. That old Aggie spirit is stronger than any man. I'll be back every year just as I have for the past 31."

Along another channel, the spirit of democracy is a part of the Aggie Spirit. Boys from all walks of life enter the portals of A. & M., but once inside the gates, the distinction is lost; they're all Aggies. In this respect it is fitting to quote from the valedictory made last year by Durward B. Varner.

"During our four years here we have followed the same democratic principle—it has mattered not that a boy be a millionaire or one working every penny of his way through school, it mattered not whether he lived in a rambling shack or in the best dormitory—he was still an Aggie. Just as America as a country has created all men free and equal and has given the opportunity to rise to the top to those who have the will and the ability, so has our training here at A. & M. created all boys free and equal. Whether he were Jew or Gentile, American or German or Japanese—he was an Aggie, loved and respected by his classmates and given the same equal opportunity to push forward, just as long as he didn't interfere with the rights of others."

The Aggie world is a fraternity of fellowship, of fun and joviality, of consideration for the rights of others, and of service to our fellow man to our school and to our nation.

The Aggie Spirit does take into account the carrying through together of goals the student body decides to undertake until the mission is accomplished.

But nowhere in the definition of Aggie Spirit is found the compulsion or any member of the corps to contribute money to any cause on the basis that to do so is being an Aggie who possesses the proper spirit. That is a long way outside the definition. The Aggie Spirit is too big a thing—it encompasses too much to be associated with any financial proposition.

Commercializing on the Aggie Spirit is a situation comparable to a petition we once saw requesting legal permission to operate a slot machine provided half the profits went to the church. Exploiting the Aggie Spirit is just as bad. If every commercial or private undertaking that comes along uses the "wolf in sheep's clothing" disguise of calling its undertaking in line with the Aggie Spirit, soon the phrase will have no meaning at all.

People who tack American flags on goods to be sold, are in the same position. They are exploiting the patriotic feeling of the American people. Just as patriotism does not hinge on grandiosely saluting the flag and bellowing the Star Spangled Banner, neither does the Aggie Spirit hinge on supporting the private graft of any individual or group of individuals.

The next person that approaches you on some proposition with "Be a real Aggie; buy this or that," don't restrain your urge. Hit him once for us, too.

## Neatness Pays

HAS IT EVER BEEN your experience to be turned down for a job because of an untidy appearance? If not, then you have missed one of the major disappointments of life. To be turned down solely because of an unkempt appearance is a most heart-rending experience and can be avoided if care is taken.

Some of the corps apparently have never had the pleasure of being turned down for a job and have never cultivated the habit of a tidy personal appearance. One has only to glance at some of these cadets to see the apparent signs of unkempt appearance. Uncombed hair, three or four days growth of beard, unshined shoes, pants not pressed neatly, all these count heavily in detracting from a neat well-kept personal appearance.

It does not take five minutes more to put everything in order. And it is worth a thousand times more to the individual. Look rather critically at yourself in the mirror and see whether you can stand some improvement along the appearance line.

## Something To Read

By DR. T. F. MAYO

SINCE LONG BEFORE the old Greek gentleman said "Know Thyself," people have been interested in psychology. Apparently they are today more interested than ever. Yet no science is so abused and looked down upon by its fellows. It appears, moreover, that the various parties, so to speak, among the psychologists themselves distrust each other even more profoundly than scientific groups usually do. Perhaps the science of psychology hasn't grown up yet. Perhaps, indeed, there never will be a genuine science of psychology. We laymen are hardly competent to say.

Even if we admit all this, however, there can be no doubt that in their efforts to construct a real science, recent psychological observers have struck out some ideas that can help a man to become more sensible; more clearly aware of his own nature and motives, and therefore more intelligent in planning his life; more understanding of other people, and therefore more tolerant and wise in his relations with them.

I don't see, then, why anyone should let the rather shady reputation of psychology as a science deter him from taking a look at the ideas which psychologists offer. He needn't accept any of them as gospel, but a great many of them are undoubtedly stimulating and suggestive. The Library has a moderate supply of "popular" books on this subject, written plainly enough for ordinary people like librarians and Aggies to read with ease and considerable pleasure. Here are a few:

**Let Me Think**, by H. A. Overstreet. As good (and as short) an introduction to this subject as I know. In about a hundred pages, the author says some sensible things that stay with you.

**Psychology: What is it and What It Has to Teach Us**, by E. D. Martin. A group of short pieces, each dealing with one aspect of modern psychological thought.

**Dreams and the Unconscious**, by C. W. Valentine. The clearest available explanation of Freud's theory of psychoanalysis.

**The Ways of Behaviorism**, by J. B. Watson. A "popular" version of the behavioristic theory of psychology, which, by the way, contradicts Freud at almost every point.

**The Behavior of Crowds**, by E. D. Martin. An interesting and fairly convincing explanation of a phenomenon which everybody at A. & M. must have noticed: the contrast between the way people act as members of an excited crowd, and their behavior as individuals.

One little warning: If you find yourself becoming interested in psychology, be sure to distinguish between a healthy desire to understand yourself and others—which is to be encouraged and gratified; and a morbid love of brooding about your fascinating self—which is guaranteed, if pampered and petted, to make you a prize bore within three months. Perhaps it's best not to read too much psychology at once.

## As the World Turns...

By "COUNT" V. K. SUGAREFF

JOHN L. LEWIS'S break with the Democratic party last Friday was the culmination of long standing differences between him and democratic leaders. In 1936 the C.I.O. spent \$500,000 to re-elect Roosevelt and publicly boasted that "Labor had elected a president."

For the next two years, it looked as though labor did elect a president. "Sit down" strikes in the motor and steel industries attained a measure of success. The C. I. O. was not so successful in the strike against "Little Steel". Mr. Girdler and his associate did not mince words. Mr. Lewis appealed to the White House for help, but President Roosevelt advised the parties concerned to settle their differences.

Moreover, Mr. Lewis is said to have demanded (1) a labor leader for secretary of labor (2) a modification of the public contracts act to force the compliance of all manufacturers, receiving government orders, with the Wagner Act (3) a conference of business, farm, and labor leaders to find ways and means of unemployment relief. Instead of accepting these suggestions the democratic leaders sponsored and passed the Wage and Hour Act and the N. L. R. Act. Attacks on the C. I. O. continued in the press and in congress. In January 1940, Mr. Lewis predicted that Mr. Roosevelt would meet "ignominious defeat" if he ran for a third term. All of which shows that Mr. Lewis could not prevail upon the democratic party to support labor in every detail. Mr. Lewis's political views are undoubtedly sincere, but whether he can sway labor one way or the other only the election will tell.

National Defense Progresses—Last week a priority on National defense orders was established. This priority may not be strictly applied to all contracts for national defense, but the authority has been set up should the necessity for using it arise. It is expected that the priority principle will soon be applied to the manufacture of airplanes. All planes must be delivered to the United States and Great Britain. England is cooperating with the United States in the aviation industry in an effort to produce 36,000 planes by the end of 1941 instead of by the fall of 1942. It is rumored that England is now getting about 80% of the combat planes produced in this country.

The Thompson Automatic Arms Company is now operating on two ten-hour shifts and a half day on Saturday. This company produces 2,000 sub-machine guns weekly. The bulk of these guns are now bought by England and are shipped to British forces.

Lack of machine tools is one of the chief handicaps in the national defense program. Public schools and colleges have quickly turned over their vocational training facilities to government authorities. At present 462 cities have established training centers with over 7,000 instructors and an enrollment of 107,000. By the end of the present school year approximately 1,350,000 mechanical workers will have received training for making machine tools. Of course, private interests are supplementing the efforts of schools and colleges.

## BACKWASH

By George Fuermann

"Backwash: An agitation resulting from some action or occurrence."—Webster.

### In Rebuttal - - For the Twelfth Man

As the Twig Is Bent . . . The sports page of a metropolitan Texas newspaper yesterday morning contained an article which, pure and simple, declared that "A. & M. is taking unfair advantage of its football opponents." The writer supported his theory on the foundation that "the rolling roar of deafening yelling by thousands of massed students at the games" causes opposing players to be unable to hear signals called.



Fuermann

The writer calls this an effort to confuse A. & M.'s opponents; says that the practice is disgusting to many fans; and concludes by saying that it's time to call attention to the condition. He adds that the alleged fault should particularly be pointed out at this time because now is the time that the team is winning.

His point is well taken . . . Since 1876 the corps has observed the tradition which he speaks of, but it wasn't until the college won the mythical national football championship that anything was said about an "unfair advantage." But that's not the important thing . . . The corps is more concerned with the right and the wrong of the contention.

The first thing which may be considered is, what teams have objected to the Twelfth Man as a yelling section? Baylor University stands alone in that class. This year, and last year on Kyle Field, the Baylor team objected to the yelling on the grounds that they were unable to hear signals called. Both years it was the same man on the Baylor squad who protested—Robert Nelson. It is not the purpose of this column to discuss Nelson as a personality, but the fact remains that he is unpopular at A. & M. and, in his own turn, apparently returns the feeling. Certainly, then, it may be logically assumed that these facts have considerable bearing on the case.

But the corps has a better rebuttal than that . . . The statements of the opposing players themselves indicate that there is no feeling on their part in this respect. A varsity letterman of Baylor, who asked that his name be withheld, stated, following last Saturday's Aggie-Bear game, "The players don't notice the yelling. Of course, we would notice the absence of it but, in reality, we are unaware of the yelling and it certainly doesn't keep us from hearing signals nor does it confuse us."

And again, from a T. C. U. letterman, "There's no such thing as a football player being bothered by the Aggie yelling section. Any team that asks for silence is pulling a psychology gag, and one that's pretty effective at that."

Then too, other colleges and universities throughout the nation follow the same tradition as A. & M. The fact is true that A. & M. has what is probably the largest coordinated yelling section in the world—and that's one reason why the Twelfth Man is an easy target for the contention that the corps takes an unfair advantage of its football opponents.

Furthermore, if the alleged unfairness was true it would work harder against the Aggies than against the opponents. A. & M. calls defensive signals and, on offense, the team is more spread out than on the offensive. That means it's a double-tough job for Tommy Vaughn to call the signals so that the entire team can hear them and the odds are six-two-and-even that the coaches and the team would not let this practice continue if it was as serious a detriment as the contention indicates.

And then there's one thing else—the article maintained that the Aggies were unsportsman-like. Whenever a team has asked the corps to quiet down—regardless of what the reason—the corps has hushed in a hurry.

Backwash isn't presenting a defense for the Twelfth Man—none is needed! This is only a rebuttal, but here's a hope on behalf of the entire corps that those persons who wish to deride the Aggie traditions remember one thing. Most of these traditions have been here since 1876 and that's long enough for a tradition to receive the test of time. In that length of time a bad tradition would be ridden out of existence by the corps.

The fact that the world-famed Aggie Spirit is real enough to give the team support and backing which is more tangible than most American colleges and universities have to offer is no reason to give the corps a "ride" at the expense of a tradition which has proven its worth for 64 years.

## Brain Twisters

By R. R. Lyle

Last week we had an easy problem in division and hence we are ready for a harder one.

A | HARD

ONE

Each letter represents a different digit and each digit is represented by a different letter. Answer 6 | 2610

435

Here is a simple problem in addition. It may or may not be of interest to boys who write home.

SEND

MORE

MONEY

Each letter represents a different digit and each digit is represented by a different letter. Answer 9567

10652

Here is a nice little game to while away some of your spare time.

The performer places 20 coins on the table and asks someone to have a magical race with him. The rules of the game are that the volunteer opponent is to pick up either one, two or three coins, after which the performer is to pick up one, two or three coins. This they continue, in turn, till all the coins have been picked up. The player picking up the last coin loses the race. How can the performer always win?

Answer:

In order to win always, the performer must contrive to pick up the 19th coin. This he can do by remembering the other key numbers—3, 7, 11 and 15. If the volunteer opponent picks up one coin, the performer takes one, making seven, three, then, if on the second turn the opponent takes up 3 coins, the

## Movie Reviews

By Tom Gillis

"STRANGE CARGO" is a strange tale of strange people that is well worth seeing. They are all convicts and low grade humanity but in one of them there burns the fire that has made man the ruler of the earth and in another a tolerance of faith that makes man respectable.

The story takes place in the French penal colony, Devil's Island, and the manner in which a group of willful men and a woman escape. The most willful man of the group is Clark Gable who has two invisible weapons to aid his escape—ingenuity and the will to be free. With this combination he takes long chances and carries himself through the worst hardships imaginable. He will not be dominated or put down and his spirit is forever fighting upward with undaunted fury. Joan Crawford is the only woman among this group and Gable has to protect her from men who have not seen a female in years. None of the escaping convicts has scruples about slitting a friend's throat for his crust of bread except Ian Hunter, who casts the shadow of morality over all.

As the members of the fleeing band begin to die in their fight for freedom, each of them finally comes to Christlike Hunter for solace and comfort in death. He provides it for all without question and his philosophy even gets Clark Gable in the end.

Peter Lorre has the role of the stool pigeon in this show and even the officials to whom he squeals despise him. Joan has been trying to act under the guise of respectability for quite some time, but she drops it entirely in this feature. The good character portrayals by all members of the cast will create character types in your memory after the details of the plot have been forgotten.

"ALL THIS AND HEAVEN TOO" was first hailed by Warner Brothers as a second "Gone With the Wind" but a little too much of the wind was gone to work it up to a hurricane. The best stars are in it and one of the best classical plots has been selected. It is one of those plots that only Bette Davis could play and it has a rather impressive length, 143 minutes, and even that is a condensation of the original. But GWTW set the high water mark for current movies, and although "All This And Heaven Too" causes a minor flood, it can't compete with Scarlet

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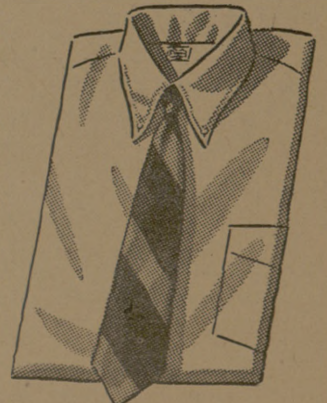
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