

# Battalion Editorials

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1949

## Receiving Laudits From the News . . .

Friday's edition of The Dallas Morning News contained a lengthy editorial singing the praises of A&M and its cotton improving program.

According to the New's editors, this year's abnormally high lint yield of cotton throughout the state is a credit to the Texas farmers and is a "greater credit to the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College System that blazed the trail and preached the methods whereby man could reap such bountiful grace of nature from the tired soil.

"Favorable growing conditions, coupled with efforts of the various agencies in the field—mainly the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and the Extension Service, together with the Soil Conservation Service and other associations of the cotton industry — have assured the state its greatest cash crop. Farmers may receive more than a billion dollars for the 5,600,000 bale crop and its seed.

## The Bulge Contained Armor, Footsoldiers, and Snow . . .

This day in 1944 was a Tuesday. Four days earlier Field Marshal von Rundstedt had issued the command and twenty divisions of Wehrmacht, along with tanks and artillery enough to take them just about anywhere they wanted to go, kicked off on the great Bulge offensive.

The front chosen was the thinly guarded line of American forces strung from Eastern Belgium to Luxembourg. Allied air reconnaissance had noticed enemy movements in this region, but headquarters were assured that they were not of offensive proportions. The war had bogged down in winter. North of Bastogne American GI's were stalled on the Roer River and were moving up equipment for a crossing. All along the line, Germans peered from pillboxes in their Seigfried Line and GI's shivered in snow covered foxholes.

But the stalemate burst. An artillery barrage began on the night of the fifteenth; a half-hearted tank attack the next morning showed little strength. Then the whole front erupted. Tides of GI-clad Germans rolled past outposts and into American rear areas. Generals' command posts became battle centers, and cooks, repairmen, and clerks took up rifles and died before yielding their positions. At other points along the line, retreats were effected and men trudged down roads where three months previously they had been cheered in triumph.

This whole offensive moved under leaden skies. Fog, snow, sleet, rain — these elements calculated in the grand strategy of the attack, worked their roles well and kept Allied aircraft grounded for the first week.

Here and there, on the line isolated outfits withstood the initial German fury and hung on until they were decimated.

In Bastogne, 10,000 Americans chose

"Fred C. Elliott, Extension Service cotton work specialist, attributes the wonderful increase in yield to a more general observance of the seven step cotton program, an educational lever the Extension Service is using to pry loose farmers from year after year cultivation of cotton on marginal land. Briefly, the seven steps are the fitting of cotton into diversified farming, soil conservation, efficient labor, planting best varieties for different soil types, insect and disease control, the picking and ginning for high grades and selling for grade staple and variety value.

"There still is room for improvement, particularly in the last two steps. But A&M's hardest job is done. The system definitely has proved to the farmer that it knows what it is talking about.

On the behalf of thousands of students and faculty members in Agricultural departments at College Station, we thank you.

what seemed to be suicide. Surrounded, short on supplies and food, and their surgical unit captured, GI's in Bastogne fought back every German attack and courageously held their positions until an armor spearhead and parachuted supplies saved them.

Bastogne, and other positions along the line that held — these pegs which refused to give way — provided anchor points for counter attacking forces, and bases for forward assault after the offense had been wrested from the Germans.

Prisoners from both the attacked and the attacker were shot in cold blood. Hundreds of other soldiers captured were lucky and were huddled into cold barbed wire PW enclosures.

On Christmas Day 1944, skies cleared and Allied aircraft blasted German tanks and convoys mercilessly. Dog fights between our Air Force and the German Luftwaffe provided entertainment for men in foxholes.

The Bulge remains fresh in the memories of the men who were there, faint in the memories of civilians who only recall that it was some sort of a battle. Yet there American courage and bravery was best exemplified, for American soldiers (who were just civilians in uniform) clung to their rifles and soon stalled the mighty German offensive. There were no routs, no mass unorganized withdrawals from front line positions, no abandon that would have permitted the Bulge to become a springboard to Paris and the pincer that could have snipped off a million Americans.

Because of that American courage and bravery and, in many cases, foolhardy recklessness the Bulge turned out to be "just some sort of big battle" where an American general told the German commander demanding his surrender, "Nuts!"

Sammy had just had a new baby sister. A neighbor, to tease him, offered to buy the baby and give him a dollar a pound for her, but Sammy refused. The neighbor then said: "Sammy, you seem to like your

little baby sister a lot." "It ain't that," said Sammy, "but if you are going to buy her by the pound I'll wait until she grows some more!"

## The Battalion

"Soldier, Statesman, Knightly Gentleman"

Lawrence Sullivan Ross, Founder of Aggie Traditions

News contributions may be made by telephone (4-5444) or at the editorial office, Room 201, Goodwin Hall. Classified ads may be placed by telephone (4-5324) or at the Student Activities Office, Room 209, Goodwin Hall.

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THAT'S THE SPIRIT



## Letters To The Editor

(All letters to the editor which are signed by a student or employee of the college and which do not contain obscene or libelous material will be published. Persons wishing to have their names withheld from publication may request such action and these names will not, without the consent of the writer, be divulged to any persons other than the editors.)

### COMMENT FROM SAM

Editor, The Battalion:

For five weeks now I have suggested you write an editorial on the fine job our yell leaders did this year. Since you, the editor, feel as if our yell leaders were not up to standard this year, I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate them for a job well done. (I only wish I could say the same for our editors!)

To Glen, Tex, and Red, I say thanks. Thanks for leading the Aggie spirit which is still undefeated. Yes, thanks for the best job done in my four years here. No one could have done a better job. Thanks again to you, the yell leaders.

Sam Clark '50

(Editor's Note—When you approached us five weeks ago, we told you we also thought it would be a good idea to acknowledge the work of the yell leaders in an editorial.

However, their job is like ours in one respect. It isn't finished yet and won't be for some time to come. Do you mind if we do our editorializing at the time we consider most appropriate? (And, while we're at it, may we extend our thanks to you and all the others who worked around the clock on this year's bonfire? We know all of you did an A-1 job and are glad to say so, regardless of your feelings on our efforts.)

### FISH PROTEST

Editor, The Battalion:

This is a letter to protest the quality of the class of '53. I think that a definite lack of Aggie spirit has been shown all through the year, and especially on the night of December 14. An incident occurred in one of the Annex barracks that makes us wonder if this school will ever be the same as it was back in the good days.

A couple of Tea-sippers came out to visit a fish buddy of theirs, and thinking they would have some fun with the lowly Aggie fish, they decided to impersonate upperclassmen, and started a hazing party. The thing that gripes me is that some fish thought this was good Aggie bull, and took up for the Tea-sippers when they were found out and reprimanded by certain of the better members of the class of '53. It ended up that nothing was done to the Tea-sippers or their Fish sympathizers, and that, Mr. Editor, is not good spirit. We can't help wondering just what the class of '39 would think of it . . . not much, we're sure.

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From Where I Sit . . .

## Griffith, Houston Theatre Abound in Theatrical Skill

BY HERMAN C. GOLLOB

Present-day movie audiences are inclined to accept as a matter of course such technical devices of the screen as the fade-out, close-ups, soft focus close-up, cut-back, and back lighting. They cannot realize that before the days of David Wark Griffith, these things did not exist.

Griffith was one of Hollywood's true geniuses, perhaps the greatest innovator the screen has known. Generally acknowledged as the first director to treat the motion picture as an art form, he injected into his pictures a genuine atmosphere.

Last Wednesday Ben Ferguson, manager-owner of the Campus, gave the denizens of Bryan-College Station an opportunity to see Griffith's "The Birth of a Nation," which introduced to the screen possibilities that had been unheard of before with its appearance in 1915.

Audiences at Wednesday's showing found it easy to laugh at the grossly exaggerated performances of the cast and the maudlin melodramatic story. But they failed to realize that the exciting realism which was achieved by Griffith in his battle scenes and the use of the panoramic shot, had up to that time been unknown quantities. And the story itself, with all its contrived emotions, carried the weight of social import, a load which stories had previously been lacking.

No doubt the appearance of Lillian Gish, Mae Marsh, Henry Hathall, and Wallace Reid opened the flood gates on a tremendous wave of nostalgia for members of the audience who used to shell out their weekly allowance for the privilege of watching these former box-office draws in action. We found particularly interesting the performances of Raoul Walsh, now a top Warner Brothers director, as John Wilkes Booth, and Donald Crisp, veteran character actor, as General Grant.

For the second time we must sacrifice the quality of local interest and comment on the theatrical activities of another community, which again happens to be Houston, entertainment mecca of the South.

That booming and bustling city owes much of its cultural prominence to its Little Theatre group, as talented a bunch of non-professionals as may be found anywhere in the country.

Saturday night we had the privilege of seeing their second production of the year, "Dark of the Moon." Howard Richardson's and William Berney's stage and fascinating tale concerning the love affair between a "Witch boy" and a mountaineer girl.

Technically an amateur group, the Little Theatre players delivered a production that was professionally handled in every way. Direction by Irl Mowery was splendidly imaginative, and carefully evoked and constricted the moods of the story with fullness and clarity.

None Carlson's sets were ex-

pressive and convincing, while the lighting was equally meritorious, heightening the dramatic effect considerably.

As to the performances, each member of the cast transferred his or her role to the stage with the utmost fidelity and verve, making the group of rustic superstition-ridden folk whom they represented real and sympathetic.

The leading roles of John and Barbara, John Shanks and Betty Hairston displayed particular excellence, and Al Sadler as Preacher Haggler took supporting honors, his revival scene being one of the play's highlights.

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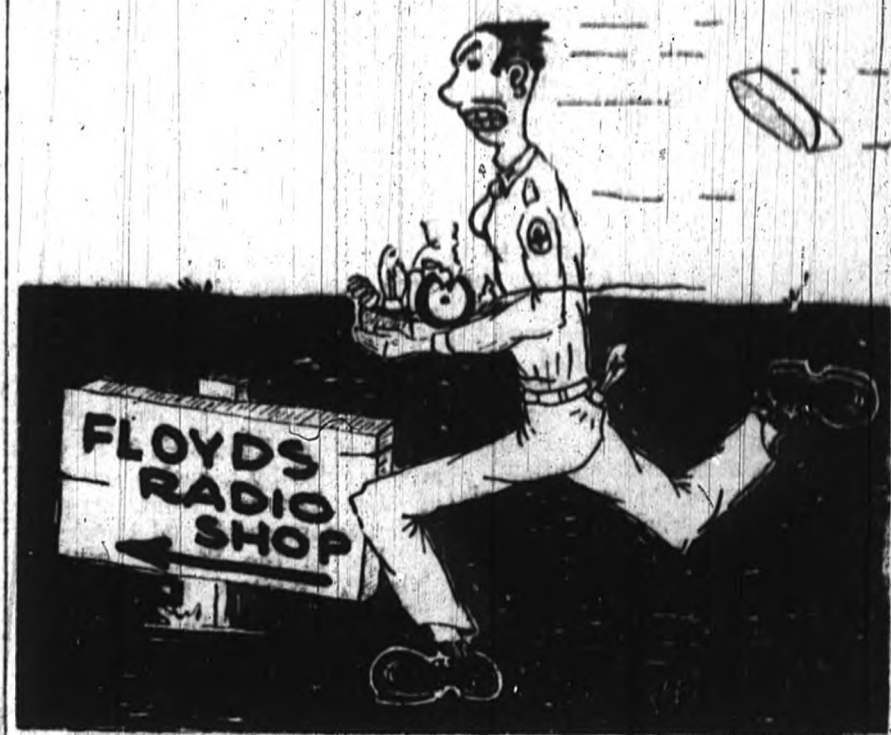
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