

# Former Students Association Unites Aggies of Past Years

By BOB BALL

The Former Students' Association of A&M, organized under the name of the Alumni Association in 1889, has come down through the 75 years of A&M's history as a growing, expanding tradition that will probably reign forever as one of the most important organizations in the A&M system.

The oldest records of the Association still in existence are minutes of the organization beginning with those of the first meeting, in 1891. The first constitution is not available and has probably been destroyed. However, the principle purposes of the Association have always been to maintain friendship of all Aggies and to be of service to A&M.

The first student association in College Station was known as the Alumni Association. Its members are all students of A&M. Meetings were held once a year at commencement. The first record of a meeting is June of 1891 with members of the graduating class as officers.

The Association planned a banquet and made arrangements for a badge for the organization. (To this day there is no badge or emblem.) The first president, Charles Pescay, presided at this meeting.

On May 23, 1921, the Alumni Association became known as the Association of Former Students of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, and the first meeting of the newly organized council was held in the YMCA building with J. Webb Howell, of Bryan, presiding.

President Howell exerted stiff opposition to the new name because of its length. All his efforts were in vain, and the Association began its functions once more, with no changes other than the name.

Incorporated in 1925

The Association applied for a state charter on May 14, 1925 and became incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.

A new constitution was set up with the stipulation that the Association was "... formed for the support of benevolent, charitable, and educational undertakings by

extending financial and other aid to students of the A&M College of Texas; by promoting social, literary, and scientific pursuits; by perpetuating and strengthening the ties of affection and esteem formed in college days; by promoting the interests and welfare of the A&M College of Texas and education generally in the State of Texas."

As the organization grew, larger, more complicated problems arose, and soon there was nothing else to do but hire a full-time secretary to take charge of these problems.

W. B. Cook was the first to take up the affairs of the Association on a full-time, payment basis. Cook had obtained his B.S. degree in Animal Husbandry at A&M in 1920. He established the first office for the Former Students' Association with one young lady completing his staff.

"Texas Aggie" Begun

The first need of this newly established office was a means of communication and contact with widely scattered former students. As a solution to the problem of

communication, Cook decided upon a newspaper, "The Texas Aggie," and he became the first editor and publisher.

Later Cook resigned to take a position with the Missouri-Pacific Railroad where he is still employed. He was followed by Colonel "Ike" Ashburn, previously connected with A&M in administrative capacities. Col. "Ike" served until 1926. He then left the Association for outside employment.

Col. Ashburn was replaced by E. E. McQuillen, who served as executive secretary continuously until October, 1947. McQuillen then became director of the A&M Development Fund. His successor was James B. "Dick" Hervey, who is currently serving as executive secretary.

McQuillen Spurred Growth

McQuillen during his 22 years as executive secretary did more to influence the development and growth of the organization than has any other single person. He continually steered the organization along the path of providing maximum assistance to the College and at the same time managed to keep alumni interest at a high pitch.

His whole life during this period was devoted to making A&M graduates conscious of the ties that bound them to their alma mater.

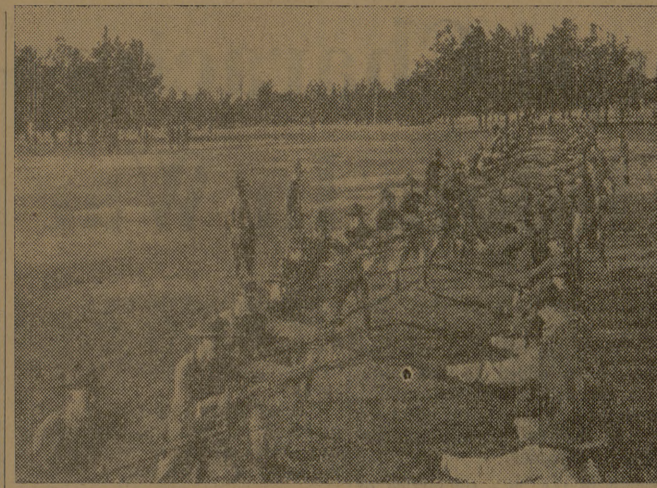
Under his guidance a placement office was developed which has since grown so large that the college has taken over its operation. He inaugurated a system of record keeping that has made the A&M the envy of other alumni associations throughout the entire South.

When Cook became the first full-time secretary of the Association, (See FORMER, Page 8)

Club history at A&M goes back to the opening of the college. Due to limited facilities and a location in the wilderness students have always been eager for some means of fellowship and recreation.

To satisfy these desires the students organized home town clubs, technical societies, and religious groups. Other factors, too, helped develop club organization at Aggeland. These were the lack of good roads and transportation, both of which kept the students on the campus. And at the close of both World Wars returning veterans organized themselves for the purpose of readjustment.

As the college has expanded, the number of organizations has also increased to meet the new demand caused by a larger curriculum and student body. Basically, these organizations can be divided into departmental organizations, home town clubs, and religious groups. Later, scholastic honor fraternities and mother's clubs were



With the warguing on in Europe in 1917-19, the Cadets stepped up their military training program. Bayonet drill was part of the regular drill period. Sharp bayonets were used and many of the former students have scars to prove it.

## Uniforms and Customs Baffle A&M Marines

The Marines have landed! Not content in having the army, navy, and C.P.T. flying course, A&M now has the fighting Marines on the campus.

In an interview with four of the Marine boys, it is found that they already think A&M is tops in every respect. The boys remarked over and over about how the people they saw, spoke to them on the campus. One said, "it's not like Chicago, where I didn't even know the people living four doors down the street from me."

Still confused about how to distinguish regular officers from cadet officers, one marine was wondering how he was going to tell who was who around here.

Most of the boys shipped in here have had one or more years of college training. Such questions as, "How are the profs here?" and "Do you get good chow like this here all the time?" were asked. "I can't understand it. You get music

with your food, and the food just slides right down with it." Compared with the chow they had been getting out of their mess kits (that is not what they called them) at "boot camp", this food is tops, they agreed.

The "boot camp" is the basic training station where they learn how to shoot a rifle and pistol and all the drill and field work that a marine goes through to make him the "outfightingest, outthinkingest critter on two legs."

Now what about the girls? "I haven't seen a girl in two months," one of the men muttered. "How can one go about getting acquainted with these girls around here?"

Boy did they put us through the mill at "boot camp"! Why we were human pin cushions by the time the doctors got through punching us for tetanus, typhoid, smallpox, and an extra jab or two just for good measure. When the supply sergeant issued them their rifles he said something like this, "This is your mother." Then he gave them a bayonet to put on the rifle and said, "This is your brother. Take care of 'em." And the marines did take care of that rifle right. "When you hit the bull's eye at 500 yards you have to know that old rifle pretty well." And when an air raid alarm was given each marine took his place in the trenches ready to kill an invader.

National defense marches on at double times with the many branches of Uncle Sam's fighting machine here at A&M. Each branch of course has its own characteristics and attitudes; each branch being the only branch to get in, but every last man, even to his last breath is ready to give the Axis a wallop of such a nature that they will stay walloped.

(BATTALION, Tuesday, April 28, 1942)

March 18, 1908—It is hoped that at the next general cleaning up day the occupants of the upper stoops will be more economical with the use of water.

April 15, 1908—During the progress of the play last Saturday night and especially during the more serious scenes, certain fellows smacked their lips, shuffled their feet and actually laughed aloud. The exhibition of such gross ignorance cannot be excused as it is the height of rudeness.



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75 Years Young... The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas

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