

Silver Taps

Ritual Chills Former Editor

Editor's note: Though traditions are discussed in another section, Silver Taps, the most solemn of all A&M traditions, has been reserved for this first section. The following article details the personal reaction of Dan Louis, who was editor of The Battalion during 1963-64.)

By DAN LOUIS JR.

How many times have I gone through this same experience? I really don't remember. Back down the line somewhere I lost count. I believe it might have been in the spring of '62 that I stopped writing. That was a bad one, but Aggie's date also died in that wreck.

But unfortunately it's time to serve one of Texas A&M University's most beautiful traditions again. The one tradition that everyone wishes was never necessary. It's 10:20 p.m. and time for Aggie Silver Taps—this time for our students, both victims of the automobile.

I'd better double check and make sure that all the lights are off in the office. It's really going to be dark out there tonight, with the lights turned off and no moon. Well the lights are off and the boys are out in the hall sitting. At least I guess they are. Funny how a bunch of newspaper people who were chattering and rushing to get a paper put together can suddenly become so solemn, so sober, so aware of the

as of a fellow Aggie at 10:20—over Taps time. Of course three of those fellows had the job for going with police, hospital officials, the victim's friends and, unfortunately, his family while they pulled the story together about the accidents.

One can almost hear the cutting north wind whisper a warning to all Aggies that are about to take to the highways for the Christmas Holidays. There is a solemn silence on the campus.

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Another Student Views Ceremony

While Silver Taps is probably one of the best traditions at Aggieland, it is by far the least looked forward to. When a Fightin' Texas Aggie dies, the flag in front of the Academic Building is lowered to half staff. At 10:30 that night the tower at the Memorial Student Center walls in memory of the departed Aggie. At this time all students turn out their lights and silently walk to the flag pole in front of the Academic Building. All lights on campus are turned off and guards at all campus entrances stop any cars attempting to enter. As the entire student body thinks about and prays for this Aggie and his family the Ross Volunteers march into position. Their rifles fire three times in a 21 gun salute. Taps is then played three times. After a silent moment all the students turn, still with sealed lips, and return to their dorms; very few turn on their lights. This is Silver Taps.

We are here again Oh Lord

As you called this Aggie

So the tower called to each one of us.

And we came

Because "We are the Aggies, the Aggies are we,

True to each other as Aggies can be."

Though we do not know why he was taken from our ranks

It is to you that we give thanks

For the safety and health of all these about,

And, Lord, please meet him at the gates — he'll whip

out.

Lord please take special care of his mother too,

Who, while she should now be soundly sleeping,

Is lying on the sofa weeping.

Remember too his girl with her proud face beaming.

Comfort her and dry the tears that down her face

are streaming.

The guns have fired and taps are blown

And now we turn and go back home.

As we go to city, village, or farm,

Please oh please go with us and keep us safe from

harm

In work, in travel, and in play

And make the next Silver Taps ever so far away.

Mark Reger

Kerley To Represent A&M At Regional Conference

Auston Kerley will represent Texas A&M at a regional conference on Counseling and Guidance Institutes in Dallas Wednesday.

Designed to acquaint applicants with procedures for securing the DEA Institutes in 1967, the conference will attract counseling and guidance personnel from southwest U. S. universities and colleges.

Kerley is director of the Counseling and Testing Center at A&M and an associate professor of education. He and Dr. Charles McCandless will utilize information acquired to develop a

proposal for a six-week guidance and counseling institute at A&M next summer.

"Our methods and procedures in two-day conferences for new students will be applied," Kerley said. "Institute participants will thus get all the ramifications of counseling, have opportunity to observe registrar, housing and educational planning techniques."

The regional conference will be conducted by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare with Donald N. Bigelow acting director of educational personnel training.

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