



A&M and L.S.U. clash in College Station in 1899. The Farmers, in the striped uniforms, won the battle 52-0.

Photo courtesy of University Archives.

## Aggie football

# The humble beginnings

By DON MIDDLETON  
and  
JOHN ADAMS

Any column on the history of Texas A&M would be incomplete without something being written about Aggie football. Aggie gridmen have been in the forefront of A&M life for the past century, whether they were winning the national championship or sweeping out the Southwest Conference cellar.

Aggie football had its beginning in the intramural teams which battled each other in the earliest days of the college.

In 1894, Dean Emeritus Charles Puryear, for whom Puryear Hall is named, persuaded the administration to let him organize a varsity team. Puryear mustered fourteen rugged boys, some of whom had never played before, and began

workout with one football, a few canvas jackets for uniforms, some shin guards and one nose guard.

Puryear took his players to the line for the first time against Galveston Ball High School.

The Farmers won that clash 14-6, and confident in their abilities, headed for Austin and their first tilt with the State University.

One of those original gridgers, Milton Sims, recalled that Texas University "even had a coach, and they wore these big turtle neck sweaters. We just had a little bitty old team."

When the Farmers took to the field and saw their opponents for the first time, Sims remarked to quarterback W. G. Massenburg, "Massey, if those SOB's are as big as they look from here, God help us."

"Well, on our first play Massenburg fumbled. And I contend A&M's been fumbling ever since. It's A&M's long suit."

Did they lose that game? "You bet we did," Sims said. The final score was 38-0.

The '96 season saw the Aggies open by battling Galveston High School to a scoreless tie. The season was rounded by a 22-4 win over Austin College and a 25-point shut-out of Houston High School. However, in the opening game of 1897, Houston got their revenge by defeating the Farmers 10 to zip.

In the fall of '98 the Aggies resumed their rivalry with Houston High in an opening game 51-point shut-out of the schoolboys. Houston, not to be outdone, came back that same season to defeat the collegians 6-0.

The Farmers also met the State University that season, after having two years to polish their skills. This time the "varsity 11", as the State boys were known, whipped the Aggie team 48-0.

In 1899 the young Aggies came into full bloom. Their six-game season included shutout victories over Tulane, Baylor, L.S.U. and of course, Houston High. In going down in defeat 43-0, Houston decided they had had enough and returned to Buffalo Bayou never to darken the West Gate again.

The only losses that year came at the hands of Sewanee, who blanked the Aggies 5-0, and Texas State University, who belted the Farmers 6-0.

The game against State U. in that notable season was played on the grounds of the San Antonio International Fair, before a record-setting crowd of 10,000.

Since game day, Nov. 4, had been designated A&M College Day, college President L. L. Foster loaded the student body and faculty into 18 railroad coaches. The entire population of the school was present for the one o'clock kick off time.

When the Varsity 11 showed up two hours later, the crowd was on the verge of mild annoyance. The two teams fought tooth and claw, with the State team grinding out six points to the Farmers' none.

In the second half the referee awarded a controversial fumble to the Varsity on the Aggie's one-yard line. Enraged, Farmers' captain Moseley picked up the ball and walked off the field to the railroad station, followed by the rest of the team.

The next day an Austin news-

*First Foot Ball Team of 1894*



The Aggie football team of 1894. Top row, left to right: California Morse, A. P. Watts, Atwood Bittle, Bill Mathews, Frank Houston, Harry Marlin. Center row, seated: A. W. (Mike) Bloor and Milton Sims. Bottom row: John Burney, Altorf, Dicky Peden, W. G. Massenburg, Hiram T. Coulter, Fort Ellis. Photo courtesy of University Archives.

## The Battalion

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6:00 pm Bible Study  
7:00 pm Evening Worship Service  
WEDNESDAY  
5:30 pm Church Supper  
7:15 pm Prayer Service  
8:30 pm College Rap  
BUS SCHEDULE  
9:08 ... Cain Athletic Dorm  
9:10 ... Keathley-Fowler (rear)  
9:11 ... Crocker-Moore (rear)  
9:12 ... Schumacher-Walton (Houston St.)  
9:13 ... Milner  
9:14 ... Corps Dorms (Archway)  
9:15 ... Krueger-Dunn  
SPECIAL EVENTS  
September 28 - "Truth" 8:15 a.m. worship service

## Confusing

# Parking fee refund unfair

Editor:

When I, an innocent Freshman being led to the slaughter, was paying my fees, you slid a "Parking/two semesters — \$27.00" in, regardless of the fact that I do not have a car and did not request it.

You won the bet that I would not have time to fight the crowds at the police office and the Coke Building my first week.

I was duly shocked to learn that after the first week I could receive only a \$15 refund on a \$27 Parking Permit I didn't ask for. Thus it is that you are now in the possession of \$12 which belongs to me but is clearly

## Listen Up

beyond my control.

I would like to request that none of it is spent on the wall around the golf course.

Mary Hirsch

Editor:

The seats in which we sat during the A&M-Ole Miss game were numbered (section 131). This was very confusing while trying to find our seats. Why has money not been spent to paint numbers in the stands?

Ron Light



—Brad Foster

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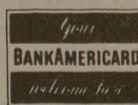
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