

The first 100 years

# You have come a long way, baby

By DON MIDDLETON  
and  
JOHN ADAMS

Women at Texas A&M. They've come a long way since Professor Charles Hutson's daughter Ethel became the first woman to attend classes here in 1895. Ethel took courses in French and helped put out the Olio, the first college publication.

Ethel's younger sisters, identical twins Sophie and Mary, followed in her footsteps by enrolling in 1899. They subsequently became the first women to complete four years at A&M.

The Hutson twins studied, of all things, Civil Engineering. And while Sophie chose the life of a mother and housewife over that of a professional woman, Mary went on to become a design engineer with a

New Orleans company.

The twins were the center of attention for quite some time in Aggie land. Their boyfriends gave each of them a cadet uniform which Mama Hutson altered to fit their feminine frames and the girls took part in every aspect of college life except drill.

When the Texas Legislature created the Texas A&M College in 1871, it was more or less taken for granted that it would be a school exclusively for men. But being as isolated as it turned out to be, it proved inconvenient, if not sometimes impossible, for the daughters of the faculty to attend school anywhere else.

Probably nobody thought too much about it at the time, but when the Hutson sisters became regulars around the campus, they started a trend that would eventually lead to

trouble for the college officials.

It became increasingly popular for girls to enroll in classes at College Station, so much so that the legislature sought a way to stem the tide.

In the grand tradition of our state lawmakers, the College of Industrial Arts for Women was established to channel the women up to Denton, and away from the boys at A&M. Years before, the legislature had done the same for blacks by establishing a separate college for them at Prairie View.

But that move didn't appear to do much for the problem. By 1925 there were no less than thirty, yes thirty, women attending A&M under the status of "special student." And worse than that, Evelyn Crawford became the first woman to receive a degree that very same year.

Drastic circumstances call for drastic action. So on September 3, 1925 the Board of Directors passed a resolution prohibiting women from attending any classes at Texas A&M College.

Well, that little gem didn't make many girls happy. But the real clincher came in 1933 when several local women, including daughters of faculty members tried to enroll in fall classes and were flatly denied admission.

The next thing President T. O. Walton and the Board of Directors knew, they were standing before the judge in the 85th District Court while attorneys for the girls in question petitioned for admission of their clients.

In January of 1934 Judge W. C. Davis made his final ruling in the case. He stated that the Morrill Act made no reference to the eligibility of women to attend the land-grant colleges, and therefore it was up to the various state governments to set and enforce entrance requirements.

Petition denied, case dismissed, sed.

Judge Davis' ruling held for the next 25 years. It wasn't until March 3, 1952 that State Senator William T. Moore dared to breach the subject again by introducing a resolution which called for the admission of women once again to A&M. It was Moore's opinion that the college had been stagnating since World War I, partly due to the closed-door policy on women.

The resolution was adopted unanimously, but 11 years passed before any positive action was taken on the Senate's recommendation.

On April 27, 1963 the Board of Directors approved a policy of limited admission of women to the col-

lege. The new rules allowed women to attend the graduate college and the veterinary medicine school, as well as granting admission to the wives and daughters of faculty members and students.

The new policy came at a time when college officials, especially

President Earl Rudder, began to plan for a massive expansion of the college. When the name of the school was officially changed to Texas A&M University in 1963, it was like a gun sounded that began the race to keep up with the times and, if possible, pass them up.

## Australian professor to talk on campus during U.S. tour

University of Sydney accounting professor Raymond J. Chambers comes to Texas A&M University September 7-8 as part of a 10-campus, American Accounting Association-sponsored tour.

The Australian is the AAA's 1976 Distinguished International Lecturer, reports Texas A&M head of accounting, Dr. Larry G. Pointer. Chambers, a teacher at Sydney since 1945, has held visiting professorships at universities in the U.S., Canada, Japan, New Zealand and Australia. He is former editor of Abacus.

Other campuses on the 1976 circuit are Alabama, Louisiana State, Indiana, Ohio State, St. Francis, George Washington University, Virginia Polytechnic, New Mexico and University of Washington.



The Hutson twins, Sophie and Mary, in their modified cadet-gray uniforms. The twins completed a course in Civil Engineering at TA&MC at the age of 17. Courtesy University Archives.

## B-CS life lines improved

By DON MIDDLETON  
and  
JOHN ADAMS, JR.

Bryan-College Station is a booming mini-metropolis of over fifty thousand. It stretches from the water treatment plant southeast to the Cajun's We-No-Tell almost without a break. To get from one end to the other, one simply hops in the car and goes.

But it wasn't always like this. Believe it or not, there was a time when there was nothing but five miles of wilderness between the twin cities — no El Chico's, no Bryan Municipal Golf Course, no anything.

The College and its cadets were connected to Bryan and its saloons and girls by two lifelines. The first was the Houston and Texas and Central Railroad. It was a dependable, but expensive way to journey

from one town to the other.

The other was the bicycle road maintained by the College Bicycle Club. The only problem with that was by the time you got to Bryan you were too tired to do what you went for in the first place.

Then somebody came along and invented the gasoline internal combustion engine and later somebody else put a trolley car around it, a pair of tracks under it, a wrinkled Civil War veteran in it to drive and the next thing you know every one-dog town from Bangor to Petaluma had cheap, modern and sometimes efficient public transportation — including Bryan and College Station.

In 1908 D. F. Gammill came to the wilds of Texas from Louisiana to help two little wild-west towns keep up with progress, and possibly make a small profit, by building an interurban trolley between the two.

By 1910, Gammill's trolley was in operation running from downtown Bryan to the campus of the College, with stops at Allen Academy and the Villa Maria Convent for girls.

The line boasted two gasoline-powered cars and two open-sided park cars which could be added on special occasions when crowds were large.

For 10 cents you could ride one-way, for fifteen you got a round trip and for five dollars you were entitled to 50 round trips.

The interurban ran every hour on the hour, unless the motorman got to tinkering with the engine and then couldn't get it started. In that case you were forced to wait another hour to make the trip. It was tough luck if you waited at the College, not so bad if you were stuck in Bryan.

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