



Leon Hale

Climbing the hill to visit Old Main

This is one of the best times of year to visit a university campus, because all the students have gone home for the holidays and you can find a place to park.

In San Marcos I chugged up the slopes to Southwest Texas State University and parked just outside the door of Old Main, which is the gabled and steepled building there on top of Chautauqua Hill. If you ever rolled through San Marcos on Interstate 35, you have seen the roof of Old Main poking out of the trees.

When that building was completed in 1903, it housed all of what was then Southwest Texas State Normal. It tickles me that it still dominates the campus. It's common for the oldest buildings at an institution to become dwarfed and hidden by later and bigger ones. But it hasn't happened at Southwest Texas because of Old Main's spot, there on top of that hill.

When you stand on the first floor of Old Main, you are just about even with the top floor of the university's 10-story Library-Administration Building. It is next door to Old Main but down at the bottom of that steep hill.

The Library-Administration Building is one of these mod structures, with funny-shaped windows. It gives such a sharp contrast in architectural style, compared to Old Main. In fact, Southwest Texas offers a regular orgy of architectural adventures, right there in one little bunch of public buildings.

Some of the new buildings going up right now are blocky and low, showing expanses of solid brick and long shallow windows. They

remind me of forts with gun ports. Almost like they're there to guard Old Main, with its towers and tall churchy windows and high pointed roof.

I found David Hamm and Gordon McCullough in the university information office and they took me around. One of the first things a visitor to Southwest Texas gets shown is a plaque on the outside of Old Main. Names of past editors of the school's newspaper, The Star, are on that plaque and one of them is Lyndon Johnson. He was Star editor two summers, in '28 and '29. LBJ graduated in 1930 and received a certificate to teach in Texas schools.

One of the sweetest plums that can fall to a college is for one of its graduates to go forth and become a national or a world figure. It's all the sweeter if the school is looked upon as being one-horse or remote.

If even one graduate of a small college like that turns out to become, say, a U.S. senator, that is going great. It gives cause for rejoicing, for back-patting, for plaque-hanging.

But if the graduate becomes a U.S. President, oh my law, that is almost enough to make the sun stop. It is something the greatest university in the country might tie, but can never top.

LBJ gave notoriety to Southwest Texas and I expect he gave immortality to Old Main, if a building can become immortal. It makes me grin to imagine the tumult that would result if somebody came along and seriously suggested that Old Main ought to be

razed, to make way for a modern building on top of that hill.

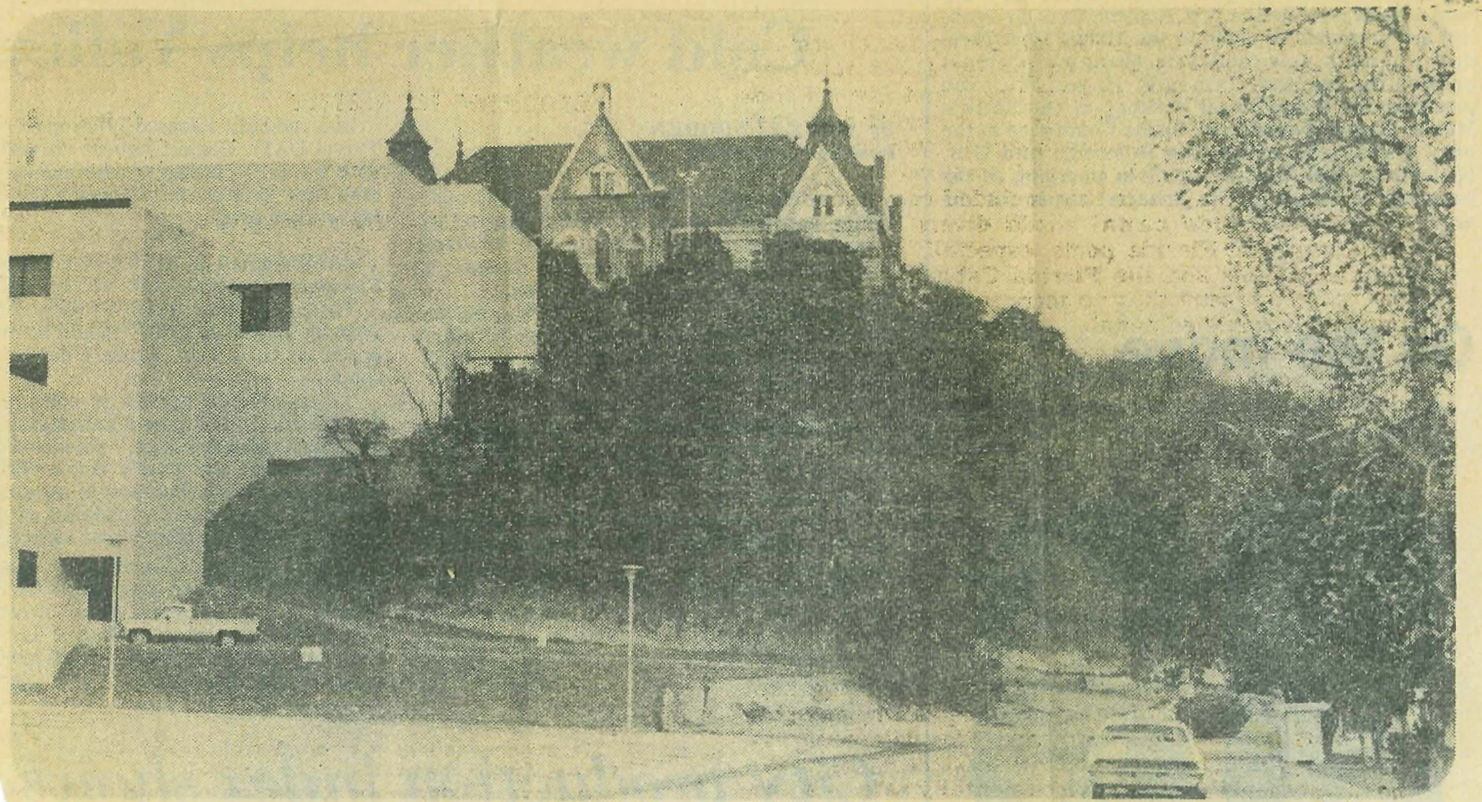
Because this is the building where The Man walked, and attended classes, and debated, and edited The Star. And where he sometimes returned.

Yes, he returned as President. In 1972 he stood right there near the entrance to Old Main and was honored by the University, along with 45 other former editors of The Star.

David Hamm gave me a transcript of what LBJ said that day when it came his turn to talk. I wish there had been a way for Lyndon Johnson to speak to the American people in the same style he talked to small crowds — the way he did there at Old Main:

"I have so many memories (of his college years) I would violate my doctor's orders more than I already am if I attempted to repeat them . . . I look out into this crowd and I see my friend Jesse Kellum who graduated from here in 1923, seven years ahead of me . . . I've always been a little envious of Jesse because he has always been about seven years ahead of me on everything . . ." All loose that way, and grinning. But then I guess it wouldn't be easy to talk like that while running a country.

One more thing. I don't want to leave you with the notion that Southwest Texas State is still a one-horse school. Its enrollment is now crowding 14,000, and it's the sixth largest university in Texas. Does that surprise you? It did me.



Old Main contrasts with modern construction at Southwest Texas



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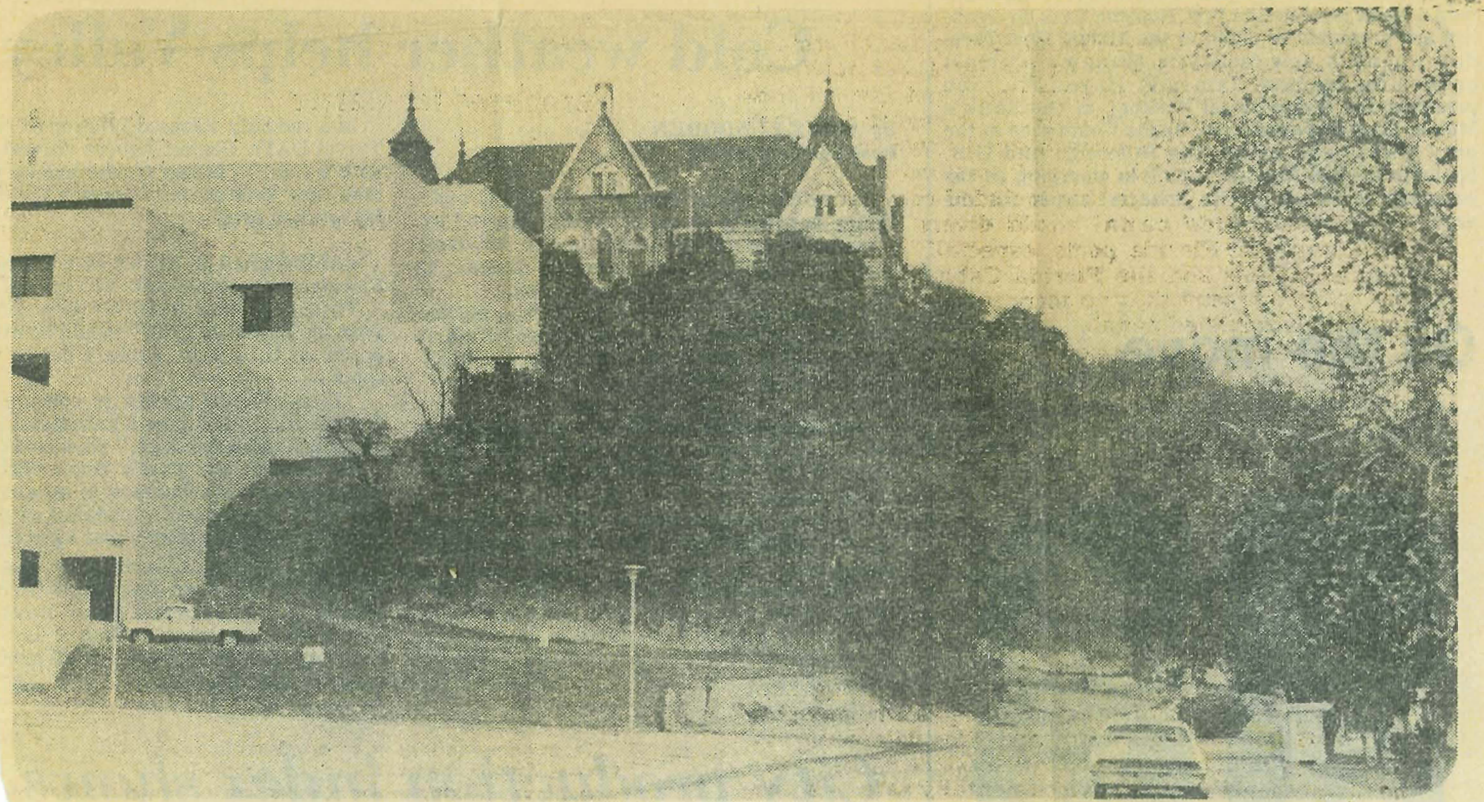
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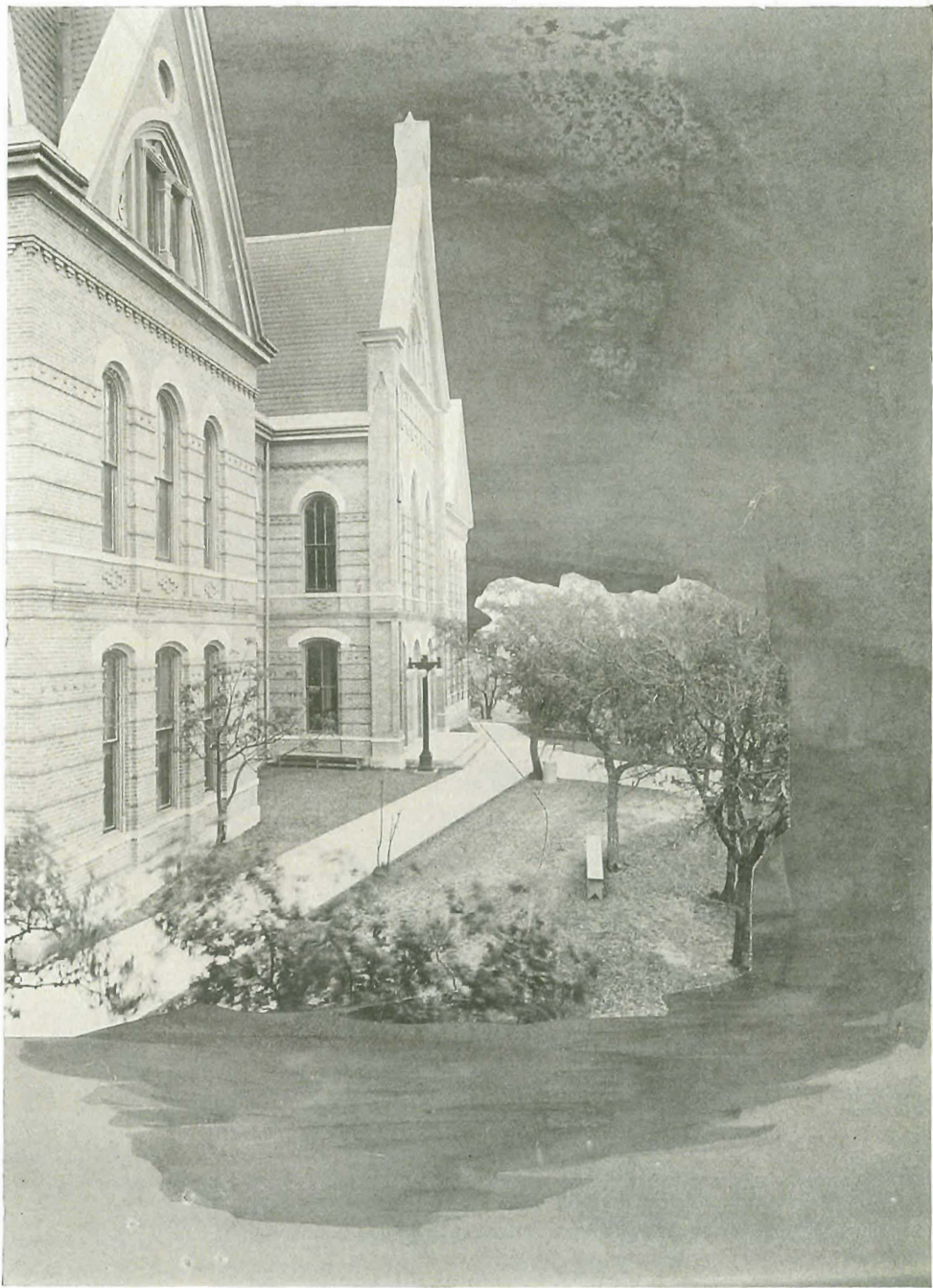
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THE MAIN BUILDING

PEDAGOG



LUCILE STANLEY
San Marcos, Texas

ZELMA PRESLAR
Florence, Texas
Y. W. C. A.
Story Tellers League
H. E. Club

FRANCES WILLARD KING
Hale Center, Texas
H. E. Club

MAGGIE JONES
San Antonio, Texas

CECILE STEVEN
Fremont, Texas

ETTIE COX
Belton, Texas

MARY KNOLLE
Sandia, Texas
H. E. Club
Country Life Club

MILDRED FREEMAN
Crystal City, Texas
R. F. D. C.

LELA WILSON
Rogers, Texas

CORNELIA RICHARDS
Bandera, Texas
Country Life Club



PEDAGOG



“TENTION!” CLASS '20

HOW often during the fall of 1918 did the S. A. T. C. boys of the Junior Class respond to this call. These young fellows in uniforms swarmed over the hills and settled in the east wing of the library and utterly destroyed the quiet that once reigned there. Just as the war demoralized the ordinary life of the people so these soldiers in embryo disorganized the work of the school. It was a period of confusion due to the presence of this great number of new students with an entirely new object in education.

November the eleventh ended these conditions and the uniforms gradually disappeared. Many of the boys went home and the college returned to its normal condition as an institution designed for training teachers and not for drilling soldiers. This episode of teaching military science in our peaceful Normal College will long be remembered.

“When will their memory fade?
Oh, the great change they made
All the world wondered.”

In a measure this year of preparation for war and its excitement seems to throw the freshman and sophomore years far into the past. In most institutions the Senior begins as a freshman. Not so here, only a small per cent of the Senior Class of 1920 entered in nineteen hundred-and-sixteen. Most of those who formed the class then obtained certificates and each is already ruling over his kingdom, a school. Several of the girls gave up their efforts to obtain a college degree being quite content to be M. H.—, Mistress of a Heart.

Both the freshman and sophomore years were marked by war-time activities. Many a lesson was learned to the tune of the knitting needles. We heard with enthusiasm numerous patriotic addresses and responded generously to the many calls for money for the Salvation Army, the Red Cross and similar causes.

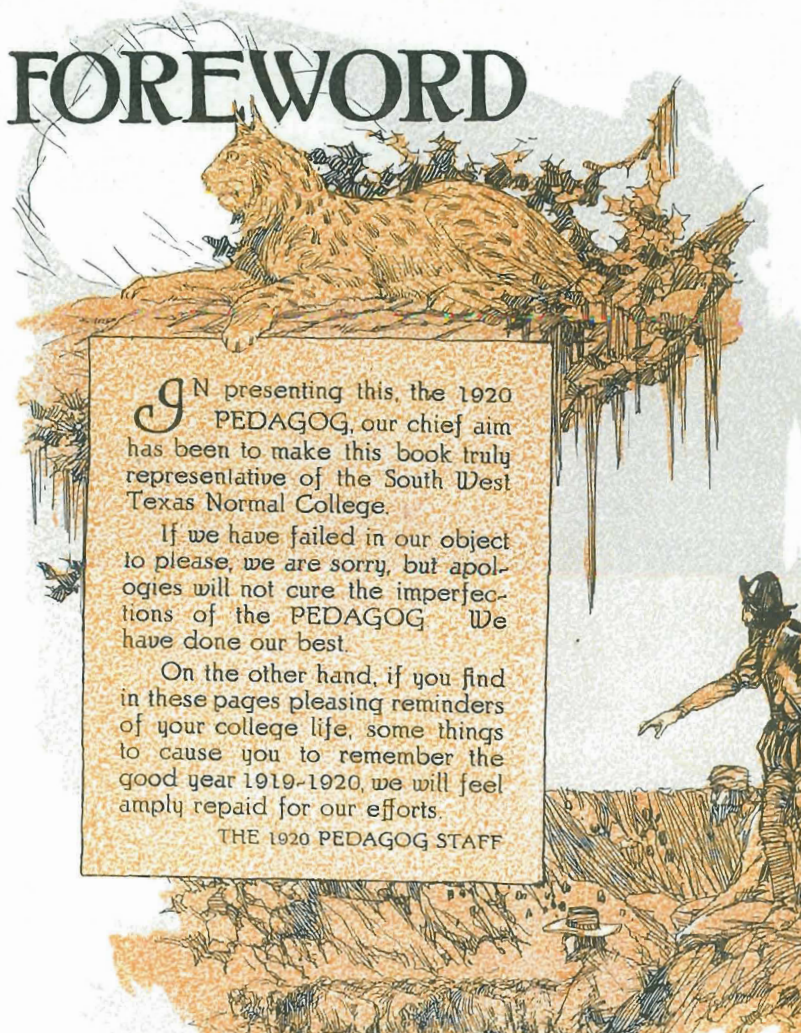
But the Senior Class is far from the war cloud, and the battle in which it was the most interested was fought on the gridiron with the Academy on Thanksgiving Day, our boys won. A new feature on this gala occasion was the appearance of the girls in gold caps and maroon streamers to “root” for S. W. T. N.

Another event worthy of note was the Senior party. Practically all the Seniors were present. Many games were played and the evening was spent amid much merriment.

But the school year is waning and “leafy June” will soon be here, which will see us bidding our Alma Mater adieu. Despite the interruptions and distractions occasioned by unusual conditions we feel that much excellent work has been done and the Class of 1920 has done its part in upholding a high standard of scholarship and in promoting harmony in the student body.



FOREWORD



IN presenting this, the 1920 PEDAGOG, our chief aim has been to make this book truly representative of the South West Texas Normal College.

If we have failed in our object to please, we are sorry, but apologies will not cure the imperfections of the PEDAGOG. We have done our best.

On the other hand, if you find in these pages pleasing reminders of your college life, some things to cause you to remember the good year 1919-1920, we will feel amply repaid for our efforts.

THE 1920 PEDAGOG STAFF



*Coronado discovering
the buffalo
in Texas*