

TEXAS TECH IN RETROSPECT

By David Murrah, University Archivist

"The Time Has Come...

...in the development of the great Southwest when all of the facilities that are available in any part of the state should be made available to every part of the state." (Marvin Jones, 1920.)

Fore more than 12 years preceding Texas Tech's establishment in 1923, many West Texans worked hard for the creation of a major college in their region.

At the 1920 Texas Democratic Convention, a young Amarillo Congressman, Marvin Jones, delivered a stirring speech, the text of which was recently discovered among his personal papers in the Southwest Collection. Jones supported the establishment of a major "agricultural and technical school" in West Texas which would "furnish equal opportunity for all" and "contribute to a trained and educated citizenship." The following are excerpts from that speech.:

It is interesting to note that the major portion of this [Permanent University Fund] school land that has formed the basis of the vast public educational system of Texas was located in the western portion of the state. Much of the income, both from the sale and the leasing of those lands, has been applied to educational plans and operations in other portions of the state. We do not complain of this. Texas is one and indivisible. Her people are a unit. . . . But many people, even in our own state, fail to realize the vast stretches of acreage that are within the borders of Texas. We sometimes fail to realize the distance which men, women and children must travel from one corner or one part to reach another part of this glorious empire. . . . [Yet] the Panhandle of Texas is nearer to six different Agricultural and Mechanical schools located in other states than it is to our only A and M College. It is nearer to four different State Universities in other states than it is to our own University. . . . If we have a trained and educated citizenship and educational privileges extended to all of our citizens in every part of our land, our future will be triumphantly secure.



Judge Marvin Jones

Although the convention failed to adopt a resolution supporting the establishment of the college, Jones' address rallied West Texas supporters to continue the fight. Nearly three years later, the legislature finally created the long-sought college for West Texas.

Marvin Jones, a graduate of Southwestern University at Georgetown, served in Congress from 1917-41. An ardent New Dealer, he was named by Franklin Roosevelt to the U.S. Court of Claims in 1940 and became its chief justice in 1947. Although he retired as chief justice in 1964, he remained a senior judge until his death in 1976 at the age of 94.

Because of his fondness for Texas Tech, he left the University substantial moneys for scholarships and willed volumes of personal papers to the Southwest Collection.



Aug. 9, 1923 Star-Telegram announces location of Texas Tech at Lubbock.



Texas Tech finally became a reality on Feb. 10, 1923, when Gov. Pat M. Neff (seated) signed the bill that created the college.



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FOOTBALL FIRSTS

The luxury of a carpeted field, armchair seating and top-ranked opponents may have dimmed memories of Texas Tech's humble beginnings as a football power. But the Red Raiders' 1979 season opener against No. 1-ranked Southern California before 53,000 fans hardly resembled Tech's initial game on Oct. 3, 1925, when the then-named Matadors battled the McMurry Indians to a scoreless tie on a dirt field at the South Plains Fair.

These pictures from the Southwest Collection's extensive photograph files recall some of the historic firsts during Tech's 54 years of football.



The first kickoff—Texas Tech vs. McMurry, Oct. 3, 1925. The controversial game, which ended in a 0-0 tie, was played at the old fairgrounds and was the highlight of the Panhandle-South Plains Fair week. A large crowd that was estimated at anywhere from 4,500 to 10,000 crowded the stands and sidelines as the Matadors gained 222 yards on the ground.



Upper Right: The Matadors' first workout Sept. 15, 1925.

Right Center: The 1925 varsity football team.

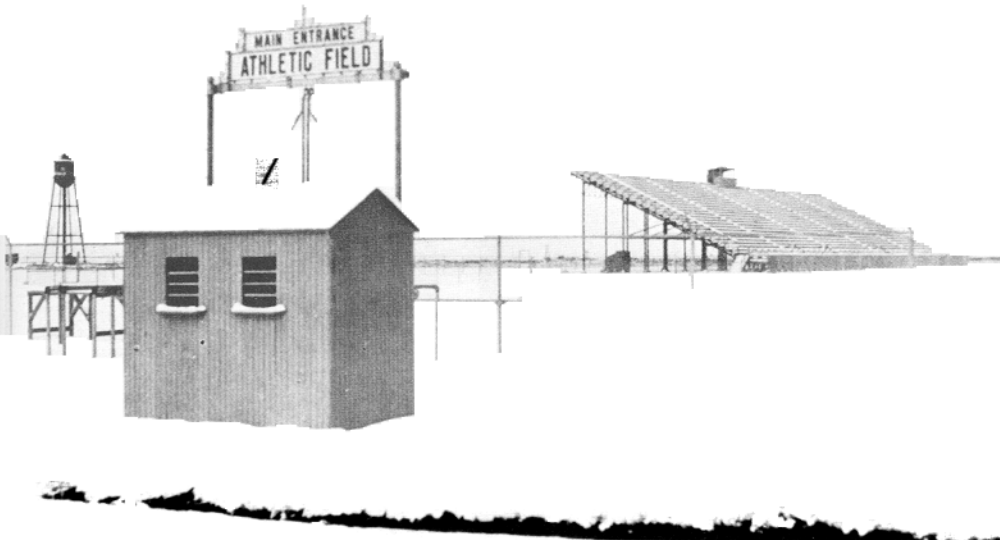
Right The first Texas Tech touchdown, scored in the third game of the 1925 season against Montezuma.





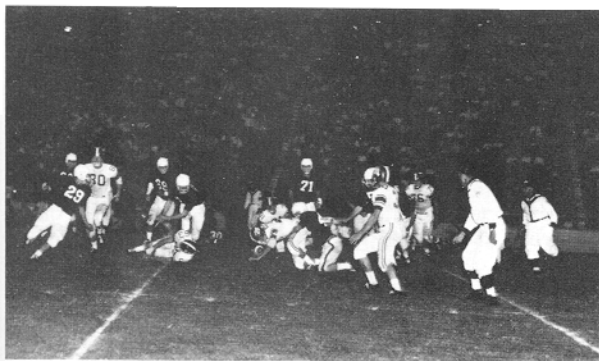
Left: Homecomings began in 1928, but apparently the first coed to be named queen was Suzanne Matteson, elected in 1954.

Below: Halftime activities highlight the dedication of Jones Stadium on Nov. 29, 1947. Tech defeated the Hardin-Simmons University Cowboys, 14-6.

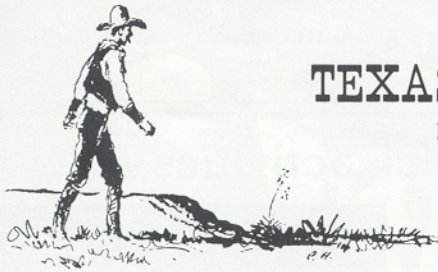


Above: The Matadors' first stadium in 1928.

Above right: Tech's first All-American, E. J. Holub, with head coach DeWitt Weaver, in 1959.



Tech tied Texas A&M 14-14 in its first Southwest Conference game, played at College Station Sept. 24, 1960.



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"An Open Invitation"

TO THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS LUBBOCK THANKS YOU FOR THE TEXAS TECHNOLOGICAL COLLEGE



Lubbock and the South Plains wish to express their appreciation of the honor and responsibility bestowed upon them in the location of the Texas Technological College at this place.

With your assistance it will become the great educational institution intended by its creators.



"Come, cast aside dull care and the worries of everyday life, and rejoice with us. Meet your friends here. Renew old acquaintances. Get soaked full of the great wholesome spirit of West Texas and know that Lubbock wants you to feel at home and to enjoy yourself." (Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Aug. 12, 1923)

In one of the largest gatherings of people in West Texas for a non-athletic event, West Texans celebrated, on Aug. 28, 1923, the establishment of the Texas Technological College in Lubbock.

Just several days earlier, on Aug. 8, the Locating Board chose Lubbock as the site for the college over Snyder, Sweetwater and 34 other West Texas communities.

Word of the decision reached Lubbock, and the townspeople celebrated long into the night. After the initial excitement, citizens planned a celebration to commemorate the event. At first Aug. 23 was selected as the date but was later changed to the 28th.

Lubbock hosted dignitaries from across

the state and delegations representing almost every West Texas town. Newspapers estimated that as many as 30,000 people attended. Gov. Pat Neff was principal speaker for the event.

Parades, speakers, a tennis tournament and a barbeque highlighted the day's activities. The townspeople of Lubbock prepared one of the largest barbeques in the city's history.

The community (population 10,000) fed 30,000 visitors, serving 146 beeves totaling 35,000 pounds, barbequed over a fire pit a mile long, 418 tubs of sliced bread, 87 tubs of pickles, 184 tubs of potato salad, 64 tubs of fried chicken, 1,950 gallons of coffee and 10,000 roasting ears.

According to the *Dallas News*, "The governor was the first man into the feeding lines and he filled his plate at 12:07. The last man was fed at 12:53."

Until recently, no photographs of the historic celebration were available. However, while attending the Ex-Students Association's 50-Year Class Reunion in May, Mrs. Inez Morrison of Portales, N.M., told us she had a large collection of early Tech pictures. She graciously loaned these to the Southwest Collection for copying. Two weeks later, we obtained from Mrs. Mosslyn Gammill of Lubbock another fine collection of historic Tech pictures. The two collections furnished us with these rare photos of the Aug. 28, 1923, celebration.

