

John Anna Boyd was crowned rodeo queen in 1934. A large white hat served as her crown.

The Tradition of Showmanship

By B. Lynn Whitfield, Southwest Collection
 Photos courtesy of the Southwest Collection

The Block and Bridle Club, started in 1934, is one of Texas Tech's oldest and largest departmental social organizations. Sponsored by the Department of Animal Science, the organization supports the department and the livestock industry. Membership includes both undergraduate and graduate students as well as people in the community who help support the club's various activities. Through Block and Bridle, members can pursue training and other experiences not offered in an ordinary classroom setting.

Held in the fall, the Little International Showmanship Contest allows any Tech student the opportunity to groom and show animals provided by the Tech Farm. Other events at the Little International include the popular Milk Maid Contest and the Blue Ribbon Ham Sale, which originated in 1956 and is the club's only money-making activity.

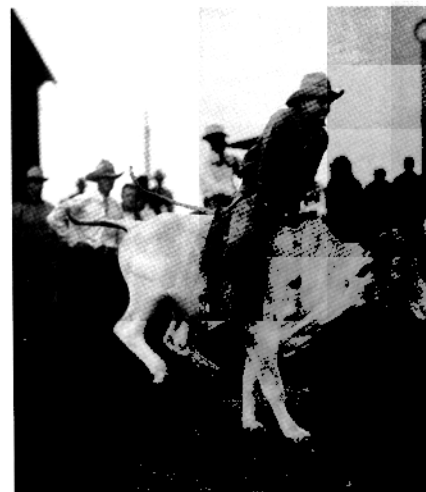
Spring activities include the Annual Beef Cattle Conference, where new livestock industry ideas and research findings are presented; a barbecue in conjunction with the confer-

ence; the spring animal husbandry judging contest, which qualifies students for state competitions; and a judging contest sponsored by the Block and Bridle Club itself.

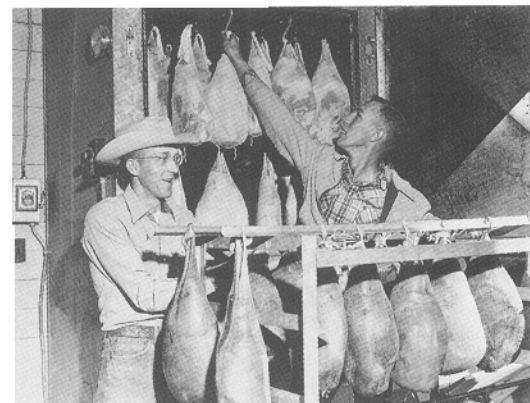
Other important events are the annual banquet, where a scholarship is awarded, and the annual "All Western Days," which kicks off the rodeo weekend activities and includes a rodeo parade, a rodeo breakfast and a western dance. The proud tradition of the Block and Bridle Club continues today at Texas Tech. ■



The 1934 rodeo thrilled those who participated and those who watched.



A Tech cowboy concentrates while he takes a ride at the 1934 event.



Students prepare for the first annual Blue Ribbon Ham Sale in 1956.

RETROSPECT

The First Techsans Lead the Way

By David Marshall, Southwest Collection
Photos courtesy of the Southwest Collection

The year was 1925. The devastating Great War was fresh in the memory even of children, and two national calamities—the Depression and a second World War—loomed on the horizon. In the meantime, Americans enjoyed a period of national prosperity and progress. Cameras, wristwatches, and telephones were coming into common use, and the radio and motion pictures provided mass entertainment. The Model T was the automobile of choice. The airplane was only a couple of decades old, and the first non-stop transatlantic flight was yet to be made. It was a time of change and a time for beginning new traditions.

On the South Plains, the groundwork

had been laid for an event that would prove important to the lives of West Texans for many generations. In 1925, Texas Technological College opened its doors to students for the first time. They came from near, but also from afar. They came to study agriculture, education, engineering and the liberal arts. These first Techsans were destined to complete their education just in time to face the

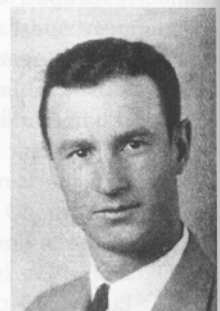
national calamities of the next two decades. Their successes and the hardships they endured molded them into capable individuals who would provide leadership for much of the rest of the century.

Paul W. Horn, Ph.D., commenced the academic existence of the university in the fall of 1925, by addressing the 914-member student body.

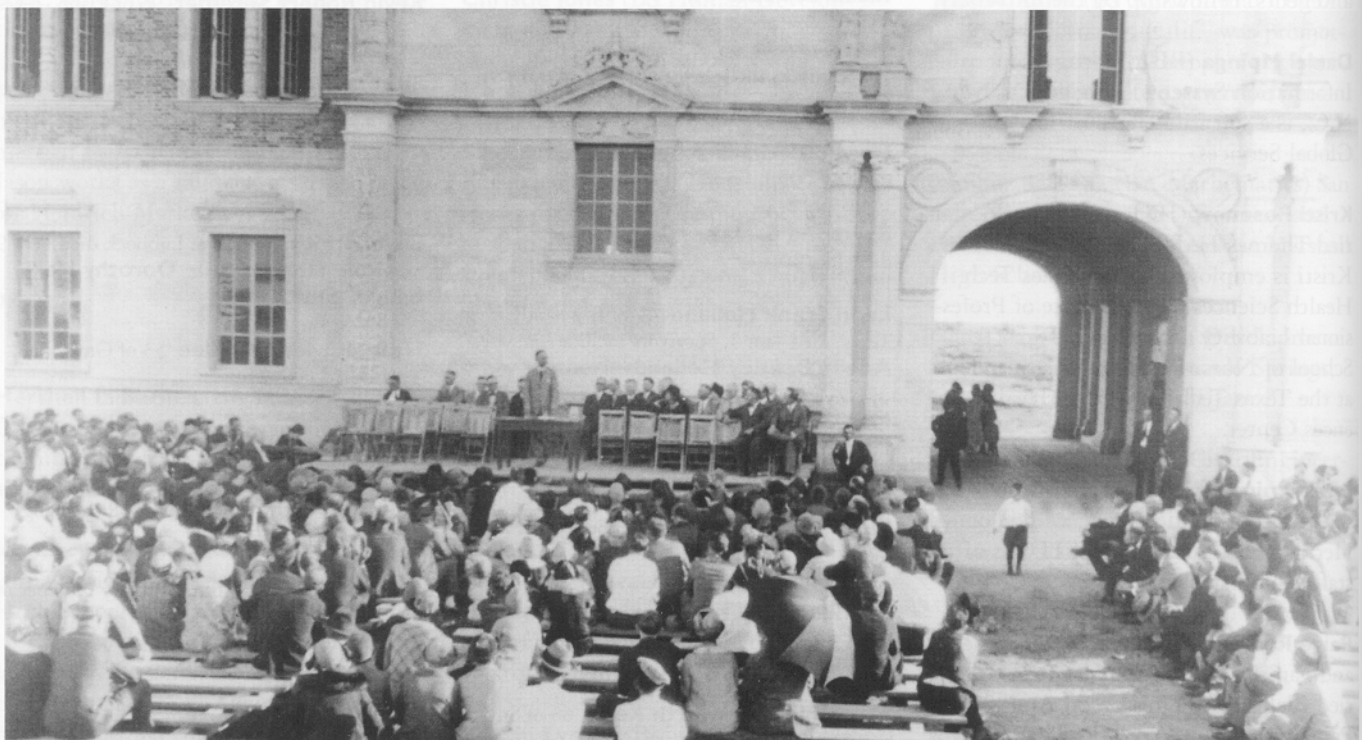
He emphasized their unique position as



President Paul W. Horn, Ph.D.



Gordon Treadaway as a student at Texas Tech



The first convocation—Sept. 30, 1925.

founding members of what was destined to be a great university, and stressed the need to prepare the path and establish an example for future generations of students to follow.

Seventy-three years have passed since that day, but those who attended the opening address vividly recall his message, especially his exhortation to lead the way for others. Three of the original students have given recent insight into the circumstances that brought them to Texas Technological College, and have related the impact that that experience has had upon their lives. Their reflections are preserved in the Special Collections Library's Oral History Center.

Gordon Treadaway was the son of a cotton farmer in Lamesa, Texas. As one of the original Texas Tech students, he studied government as an undergraduate and graduate student, then used

his expertise to teach government courses at the university. Because of his interest in politics, he attended the famed 1932 Democratic Convention that laid the foundation for Franklin Roosevelt's four terms as President. Years later, in 1960, Treadaway attended the Republican Convention to nominate Richard Nixon.

During the Depression, Treadaway worked for the Department of Labor, and with the outbreak of war in 1941, entered military service, eventually attaining the rank of major while stationed at Lubbock Army Airfield. Afterwards, he settled into civilian life as a lawyer in Lubbock and continued as such until his recent retirement.

His support of Texas Tech has continued steadfast. Among other things, he was a co-founder of the original Ex-Students Association. Treadaway also served as president of the Friends of the University Library.

Willie Mae Hawthorne recalls the years before attending Texas Tech. She



Willie Mae Hawthorne in her graduation regalia

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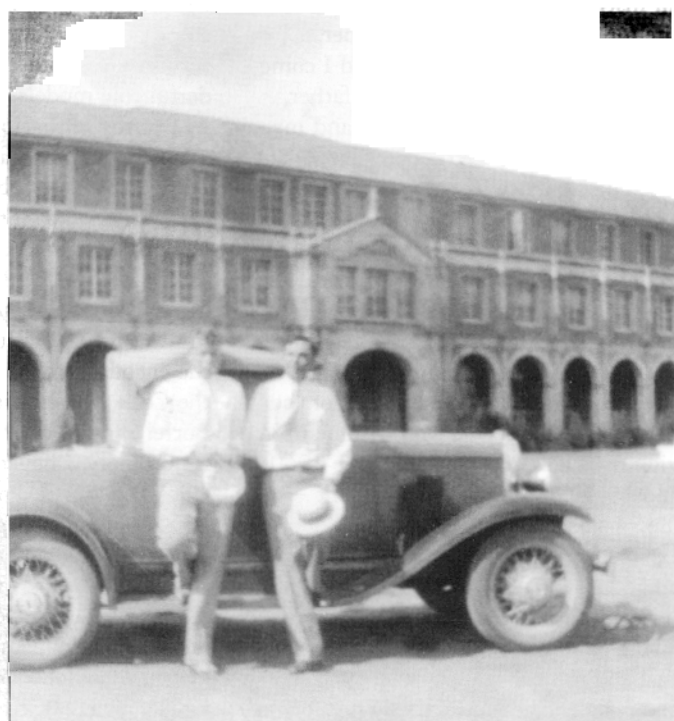
remembers her childhood in Post, Texas, when her father was a farmer growing experimental crops for C. W. Post. After spending her later childhood in Plainview, Texas, she attended West Texas State University, then transferred her college credits to Lubbock when Texas Tech opened. In 1927, she was a member of the first graduating class, and soon afterward, married T. A. Rogers, who received the first degree in electrical engineering.

By the early 1930s, the Rogers were involved in a business that would eventually become known as Lubbock Manufacturing Company. During World War II, their company contracted with the government to produce war materials, including pontoons and anti-submarine netting. In more recent times, the company became known as Lubbock Steel. Rogers' support for her alma mater also continues unabated.

In 1906, a violent tornado ripped through the unsuspecting town of Bellevue, Texas, destroying most of the buildings in this once thriving community. W. A. Greer, a six-week-old infant, was listed by on-site reporters as one of several fatalities because of the severe head injuries he sustained. Yet, he miraculously survived the ordeal and

grew to be a sharp-minded, active child.

In 1925, he became a member of the original student body at Texas Technological College. After receiving degrees in education, he became a teacher, then



W.A. Greer (left) and L.W. McGlottlin pose in the science quadrangle during the first semester, 1925.

a principal, and finally superintendent of schools in Bellevue and later Bowie, Texas, where he resides today.

These are only three examples of Techsans who entered the university as promising students in 1925 and have continued to live out those promises despite the trials and tribulations of their time.

As with one voice, they point back with pride to their participation in the first student body and remember vividly the exhortation of Dr. Horn to lead the way for the future. ■

Christmas Traditions

By Albert Camp, *Southwest Collection*

Photos courtesy of the National Ranching Heritage Center



Above: Luminarias surround the Barton House. Below: Volunteers dress and act the part of pioneers during the event.

Did you know that the first Christmas in the United States was celebrated near El Paso, Texas in 1599? It was very different from the holiday celebrations of today. In many ways, the pioneer Christmas celebrated on the South Plains only a hundred years ago was different also, but in many ways, it was the same.

No Christmas is complete without a Christmas tree, but trees were not plentiful on the plains of West Texas. Scrub cedar was often used, and sometimes it was necessary to ride for miles to find these trees. If cedar was not available, then mesquite or hackberry trees or even tumbleweed could be used. Once a couple of ladders wrapped in calico substituted for the real thing. Although decorations of the store-bought variety were scarce, some were beginning to be available through mail order catalogs. Most, though, were handmade and included strings of popcorn and cranberries, pieces of brightly colored yarn or cloth, paper chains, puffs of cotton or cut-up greeting cards.

Sometimes presents were bought—picture albums or celluloid frames, articles of clothing, an orange, a doll. Many presents, however were handmade also—whittled animals, knitted socks or scarves, rag dolls. And cowboys

sometimes bought all the ribbons in a milliner's shop to make festive bows for their best friends. There is a story about cowboys who went into town to find presents for the young girls in the family they were visiting. Sadly, there were no toys left in Plainview that year, but they found four cups and saucers, and they bought them for the children. Community celebrations were common and were often held in schoolhouses or churches. There was music, good food, presents and decorations. There was giving and happiness and warmth—not very different from how Christmas is celebrated today.

Candlelight at the Ranch is an annual gift from the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock to the people of Lubbock and West Texas. For a short while each year, on an early December evening, it is possible to step back in time to a not-so-distant past, to Christmas as our grandparents celebrated it.

You can see rooms lit by candlelight, trees made festive by handmade decorations and men and women in period dress celebrating Christmas as it was a hundred years ago. There is music—songs from carolers, cowboys playing guitars, an old pump-organ

and perhaps a plaintive wail from a harmonica. There may be ladies making quilts or cowboys whittling in the bunkhouse. Children may be seen rehearsing a pageant for their parents in the schoolhouse. You may see a Christmas dance in the barn or a lonely traveler in the depot hurrying home for the holidays. You can sip hot cider or coffee and eat a freshly cooked doughnut. There are campfires with cowboys gathered around, and you can hear the Fourth Memorial Cavalry singing in the dark. The scenes change from year to year, yet it is always the same because the spirit and meaning of Christmas do not change.

Candlelight at the Ranch is a wonderful tradition and an even more wonderful gift, for the memory of what you see and experience will stay with you through many seasons. If you want to learn more about a pioneer Christmas, stop by the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library. The library has many county histories and manuscript collections that mention these celebrations. You can even listen to voices from the past in the oral history collection.



Candlelight at the Ranch will be presented Dec. 10 and 11 this year. Hours are from 6 to 8 p.m. Those requiring special accommodations may make arrangements for a Saturday showing at 5 p.m. by calling (806) 742-0498.

If you happen to attend the Carol of Lights on Dec. 3, please stop by the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library after the lights are shining to enjoy a cup of wassail offered by the Friends of the University Library/Southwest Collection. ■