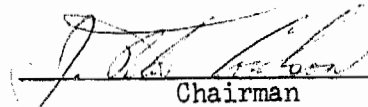
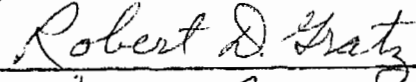
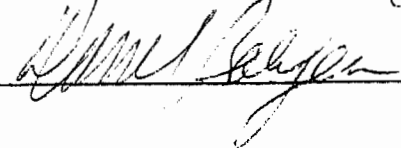
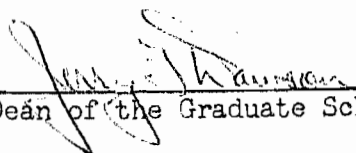


THE HISTORY OF THEATRE  
AT  
SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Approved:

  
Chairman  
  


Approved:

  
Dean of the Graduate School

THE HISTORY OF THEATRE  
AT  
SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of  
Southwest Texas State University  
in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements

For the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS

By  
Janet Barton Carroll, B.S. in Ed.

San Marcos, Texas

July, 1972

Dedicated  
to my father

James G. Barton

--with appreciation  
and love--

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Chapter	
I. The Early Years (September 1903 to August 1919) .....	3
II. The Foundation Years (September 1919 to August 1929) .....	15
III. Monroe C. Lippman (September 1929 to August 1937) .....	35
IV. Dallas Williams (September 1937 to August 1941) .....	59
V. The War Years (September 1941 to August 1946) .....	81
VI. James G. Barton (September 1946 to August 1971) .....	94
The New Speech and Drama Center (October 30, 1971) .....	175
Sources Consulted .....	179



## INTRODUCTION

One of the purposes of any historical research is to combine events into an order that places them in perspective. Such is the objective of this work. "The History of Theatre at Southwest Texas State University" is a look in perspective at the sixty-nine years of theatre at that university. A year-to-year account will be made of the theatrical growth from 1903 to 1972, preceded by a brief description of "Chautauqua" activities which took place before Southwest Texas was established. In this manner, reference to any one year or years may clarify the events that led to the present University program. It is that theatre program, located within the Speech and Drama Department, with which this work is mainly concerned.

Emphasis will be placed on five areas: academic programs in the drama area, play productions, theatrical facilities and equipment as they were introduced, the several professional productions that visited the campus from time to time, and those men and women who were responsible for the growth of the theatre program.

Information for this work comes basically from five sources: the University newspaper, records on file in the University drama offices, the University yearbook, the San Marcos newspaper and private correspondence. The first source mentioned, the University newspaper, is certainly the most vital source of information for this thesis.

Certain items should be mentioned for clarity when reading the text:

(1) The authors of the plays produced on campus will always be mentioned with the first reference to the play title, unless they are unknown.

(2) One-act play titles in the text may often be a cutting from a longer play. Should the title be from a full-length play, it will be assumed that the play has been cut, when referred to as a one-act.

(3) Founding organizations, the English Department and other groups that participated in theatre events will be mentioned until the Speech and Drama Department begins to form as a separate entity.

(4) For many of the plays presented on campus, there were reviews printed in the University newspaper. It should be mentioned that these were written by students and professors and not professional critics. Their validity lies in the addition of clarity on the different productions, not in the analysis of criticism.

(5) Southwest Texas has changed names as it grew from a normal school (September, 1903 - September, 1923) to a college (September, 1923 - January 1970), and to a university (January, 1970 to the present). In this thesis, therefore, the words "normal," "college" and "university" will be used in conjunction with the years the institution carried each particular designation.

The dedication of those men and women who devoted much time and energy to a theatre program at Southwest Texas State University is the spine of this work. Within sixty-nine years, the program grew from ideas to achievements.

## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLY YEARS

#### Chautauqua

In tracing theatrical activity on the Southwest Texas State University campus, one must look first to Chautauaua Hill. Old Main, the first building on the campus, was erected on this hill. In earlier days the hill had been the location of the Chautauqua summer meetings.

During a visit to San Marcos, Mr. H. M. DuBose, a Methodist minister, saw the potential of founding a Chautauqua cultural institute, similar to the one in New York, on the "Hill." In August of 1885, the San Marcos institute became a reality through the efforts of Mr. DuBose and interested townspeople. With a ten dollar subscription, any white individual was allowed membership and a vote on business matters. Non-members could pay fifteen cents a day or seventy-five cents a week. Small wooden cottages were leased to house members who desired accommodations for the summer,<sup>1</sup> and every effort was made to encourage families to spend their summer with the Chautauqua:

Cheap board can be obtained at the hotels of the town, or in private families, or you can buy or rent at small cost a tent on the assembly grounds, and take your meals at the restaurant on the grounds, which will be prepared to supply all with meals at from 25 cents to 50 cents: \$5.00 to \$6.00 per week, or \$20.00 for the season. Board can be had

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<sup>1</sup>Kathleen Tanner, "Chautauqua Hill? We Have Never Heard of It!," College Star, Jan. 18, 1939, p. 1.

in town, including lodging, at from 75 cents to \$1.50 per day, \$4.50 to \$6.00 per week, and \$18.00 to \$30.00 per month.<sup>1</sup>

The San Marcos Chautauqua developed a school whereby students could study philosophy, geology, astronomy, mathematics, music and surveying for a four-year period. Students were to pay for their own books and contribute twenty-five to fifty cents per year to assist in the upkeep of the school.<sup>2</sup> In later years, more subjects such as English and literature were offered and tuition was an average of five dollars per course.<sup>3</sup> After four years, deserving students received an official diploma.

Seldom was there any event one could call "theatre," but there were often presentations which could be called "theatrical." The Chautauqua meetings consisted mainly of lectures on religion. On the closing night of the first session, however, young people led the group and the event became more flamboyant--more theatrical. Included were musical numbers, speeches and fireworks.<sup>4</sup>

After the first successful year in 1885, the tabernacle, the Chautauqua meeting place, was rebuilt and some say it held 2,000 people, though it was built for only 1,000.<sup>5</sup> Fountains were erected and a steamer carried Chautauqua visitors up and down the San Marcos River. Extravagant devices, however, could not keep the Chautauqua alive. By the summer of

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<sup>1</sup>Ruby Henderson, "A Source Book of Materials on the San Marcos Chautauqua 1885-1895," (unpublished source book, University of Texas, (1938), p. 182.

<sup>2</sup>Tanner, "Chautauqua Hill?," p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Henderson, "San Marcos Chautauqua 1885-1895," p. 182.

<sup>4</sup>Tanner, "Chautauqua Hill?," p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Henderson, "San Marcos Chautauqua 1885-1895," p. 182.

1900, the cultural institute had been discontinued. Some felt the hill was too steep for many of the families to climb each day. Most felt the program was simply too "local" to ever become as popular as the institute in New York and after the project had ended, plans were made to establish a normal college. Few remember what the hill was like before Old Main was built:

Dirt roads, which turned to clay mud after summer rains, led southward into town. Footpaths struggled over the slopes to the very top of the hill. Fountains, fish ponds, and a small lake surrounded the Chautauqua grounds, and provided places for romantically inclined individuals to do their "courtin'"--a la 1885.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1903-1911

In 1901, Southwest Texas State Normal School was established and work began on Old Main. Old Main, a giant, Gothic, castle-like building, was destined to house most of the theatre presented at Southwest Texas for the next sixty-nine years. The building was the center for all group activities: plays, assemblies and, after President C. E. Evans took office, chapel. The walls of the auditorium were eventually decorated with paintings of the Seven Hills of Rome, the Colliseum and other Roman scenes. Lining the walls were the busts of Julius Caesar, Cicero and "other prominent figures of that age."<sup>2</sup>

Although the Shakespeare Society eventually became a social club, during this period it was the most important organization for the advancement of drama at Southwest Texas. In the Normal yearbook, its members stated their early goals:

It is our object to study the great author, to adapt his philosophy to our "estate"; and secondarily, from time to time "To stir up the Normal

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<sup>1</sup>Tanner, "Chautauqua Hill?," p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"The Little Theatre: Once Classic Auditorium," College Star, May 1, 1959, p. 2.

youth to merriment, to awake the pert and nimble spirit of Mirth," by giving scenes which we can compresent [sic] and thus present.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Society devoted its efforts to Shakespeare during the first few years, later years were spent "stirring up the Normal youth to merriment." In the 1950s, the Shakespeare Literary Society became a sorority. The club was responsible, however, for the presentation of several scenes from Shakespearean plays. Some of these were presented publicly, but most were performed within the intimacy of club meetings.

Miss Lula Hines, sponsor of the Society, was the founder of theatre at Southwest Texas. Though she was better known as a physical education instructor, she taught reading and sponsored the group that promoted college drama. Her Reading Department eventually developed into the present Department of Speech and Drama. Miss Hines founded the Shakespeare Society in 1904 and began, in 1905, to gather books for a library. That same year the Society studied Twelfth Night, Comedy of Errors and A Midsummer Night's Dream. Each year, new plays were selected for reading. The Society's objective was to study the plot, setting and literary quality of each play.<sup>2</sup>

On October 8, 1907, a pageant was presented and, though no specific data is available, it is probable the presentation was a re-enactment of an event in American history, a popular theme in the early 1900s.<sup>3</sup> Themes such as Pocahontas and John Smith, Washington crossing the Delaware and the first Thanksgiving were presented in full costumes. Students pieced

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1904, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1905, pp. 58-61.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 1908, p. 58.

together costumes that had some remote resemblance to those of the historical period. Scenes were often enhanced by dances representative of the time. Mrs. R. H. Montgomery, former Southwest Texas student, recalled the early pageants:

I do not remember anything in the way of theatre except a grim performance in the nature of a pageant or May fete mastered (and I mean mastered) by Miss Hines. There was a graceless performance of a so-called folk dance, in the nature of a grim drill costumed in derndles [sic], white blouses, black sort of weskit things laced across our midrifs [sic], vaguely peasantly, in which we beat imaginary [sic] rocks. Quite awkward and unlovely, very fatiguing [sic] and hot.<sup>1</sup>

The College yearbook stated that The Merchant of Venice was produced on October 26, 1907, and that Ben Hur was staged on February 15, 1908.<sup>2</sup> Due to technical problems alone, these attempts were probably not full-scale productions.

In the term of 1908, the Shakespeare Society stated their philosophy in the form of a rather memorable poem:

Shine out, shine out, oh Shakespeare girls,  
 Show to the World what we are  
 And hence be leaders, as we have always been,  
 And never that record mar,  
 If others are not convinced that this is true  
 And really want to know  
 Will you just kindly come and join our ranks  
 And see if it is not so?  
 William Shakespeare, loved in every land,  
 We are proud to bear that name,  
 His mighty works will forever stand  
 And everlasting will be his fame.  
 We sometimes sit and ponder  
 When the far distant we scan;  
 And wonder if ever a Shakespeare girl  
 Will enter into the great great's land.  
 A faint answer comes, now 'tis louder,  
 It says to us "wait and see,

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. R. H. Montgomery, personal letter, April 27, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Pedagog, 1908, p. 58.

A real true Shakespeare girl is always great,"  
 And all of us this may be.  
 Ever and ever then, Shakespeare girls,  
 Be loyal and be true,  
 Can we ever forget, no never forget our color, Baby Blue.<sup>1</sup>

Members of the Shakespeare and other literary societies would gather in colonial costumes for "Colonial Parties."<sup>2</sup> Photographs in the 1908 yearbook show students dancing the minuet in their 18th century costumes.<sup>3</sup>

In 1910, the first student-written play was printed in the yearbook. Though untitled, the script depicted college life: a parody on some of the students, professors and incidents on the Southwest Texas campus.<sup>4</sup>

That same year, the Hinshaw Opera Company visited the campus.<sup>5</sup> The company's performance was an important event for students were exposed to costumes, actors and scenery. Since so few public social activities were scheduled on campus, most of the student body probably attended.

When President Evans took office in 1910, he began daily compulsory chapel services, held in the auditorium of Old Main. Faculty members or students read scriptures and President Evans led prayers. Students and faculty became disinterested and after a few years, chapel services were discontinued.<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Montgomery remembers her experiences in chapel:

My memory of the chapel was also rather grim. An ugly barren room,<sup>7</sup>  
 dusty and bleak. There was a rostrum on which Mr. Evans stood behind

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1908, pp. 124-125.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 1909, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 1910, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>6</sup>Glen Wellniki, "Old Main Hides Remnants of Chapel in Little Theatre," College Star, Dec. 6, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>In all probability, the "Roman scenes" on the auditorium walls were removed by President Evans. The busts remained outside the entrance until the auditorium was remodeled in the 1940s.



a lecturn [sic], waited while we were counted, enumerated our sins, made announcements, admonished us, prayed over us and dismissed us. Meanwhile, we squirmed on hard benches, sang the Alma Mater, tried to look attentive, murmured [sic] the Lord's Prayer (Our Father who, and our debts) and thankfully departed. As I remember, the only slightest variation was in our sins, and very little there.<sup>1</sup>

### 1911-1919

The first annual senior play, A Bond of the Spirit, was presented on April 1, 1912.<sup>2</sup> Available records indicate that this was the first presentation of legitimate drama at Southwest Texas. Students and faculty members were actively involved. Five directors contributed to the effort: Miss Mary Stuart Butler, director of music; Miss Lilly Shaver, director of costumes and "stage arrangement;" Mr. Gates Thomas, theatrical director; Miss Jessie Sayers and Mr. A. W. Birdwell, assistants. In all likelihood, Mr. Thomas was considered the over-all director. Faculty members from the various departments handled lighting and properties.<sup>3</sup> Although records are not clear on available equipment, "head and footlights" were mentioned in the Normal newspaper. Their efforts were rewarded by an appreciative audience.<sup>4</sup>

The next four years, 1911-15, colonial costume parties remained popular. In the 1911-12 term, the Shakespeare Society presented "An English Even in America," which may have been a segment of a pageant or a Colonial Party.<sup>5</sup> They costumed themselves in "both upper and peasant" class

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. R. H. Montgomery, personal letter.

<sup>2</sup>Normal Star, Mar. 29, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>"The Senior Play," Normal Star, April 12, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1913, p. 59.

eighteenth century attire. Two of the Society's women played the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet. All this was enhanced by music and dance. "It was nothing short of charming, showing exceptional fineness of interpretation."<sup>1</sup>

One touring group, The University of Texas "Curtain Club," performed The Fan by Carlos Goldoni. The presentation was some time in March of 1912.<sup>2</sup>

Although it is possible that a senior play was performed in the 1912-13 term, no information is available in the existing records. However, records do describe a scene entitled "The Marriage of Pocahontas," which was presented by one of the literary societies,<sup>3</sup> and on March 29, 1913, the Germanistich Gesellschaft [sic] (German Club) produced a German play performed by members of the junior class. The title of the play was not recorded.

The next year, The Federation, a pageant presented by the literary societies, consisted of several events: a grand march, a tableau of "The Entrance of Washington into Trenton" with girls throwing flowers at his feet (called a very effective scene by the College yearbook), a "modern" dance, and the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner."<sup>5</sup> It is possible that

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<sup>1</sup>"Shakespeare Club Evening," Normal Star, Mar. 8, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Curtain Club," Normal Star, Mar. 8, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Pedagog, 1913, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup>"Entertainment," Normal Star, Mar. 22, 1913, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1914, p. 234.

an adaptation from You Never Can Tell by George Bernard Shaw was presented that year; records only describe a performance some time between 1911 and 1915.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1915-16 was enhanced by several dramatic activities. The Shakespeare Society performed scenes from Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar and Romeo and Juliet. A photograph in the Normal yearbook, taken out-of-doors, shows Juliet leaning out a ground-floor window. Both players were women.<sup>2</sup> The lack of modern equipment for indoor photography may have dictated the location of the photograph. In November, the senior class in conjunction with the German Club, presented Eigensium. Students rehearsed for one week and were praised for the work accomplished in so short a time.<sup>3</sup> Miss Sayers, Mrs. Shaver and Mr. Thomas cooperated again with What Happened to Jones?, the senior play, by George Broadhurst. Though faced with many technical problems (none of which are specified in the records), the senior class persevered and President Evans reserved the auditorium for a performance on May 15. The stamina of the class was praised highly in the Normal newspaper.<sup>4</sup>

Two touring groups, The Curtain Club, from the University of Texas, and The Ben Greet Players, a professional company, performed on the Southwest Texas campus. The University players presented three one-acts: The Workhouse Ward by Lady Gregory, The Lady of Sonnets and Rosaline. Students

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<sup>1</sup>Ruth Lewis, "A Review of 25 Years of Dramatics in College," College Star, Nov. 7, 1928, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Pedagog, 1915, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup>"German Club," Normal Star, Dec. 24, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Monday Night, May 15, Reserved for Senior Play," Normal Star, Feb. 28, 1916, p. 1.

were favorably impressed and expressed desires for the Club's return the next year.<sup>1</sup> The Ben Greet Players arrived in April to present Comedy of Errors and As You Like It. Seats were sold by rows: the closer the seat, the more expensive. Seats ranged from fifty cents to one dollar and fifty cents.<sup>2</sup> The outdoor performance was reviewed favorably by the Normal newspaper. Like most of the early reviews, it was a synopsis of the plot rather than a critique, though it did mention that the players had attained "the pinnacle of realism."<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1916-17, records are scarce. One monthly calendar is available for the Shakespeare Society's April schedule. Presentations were: The Life of Nerissa (probably a theatre reading), the second scene from the third act of Merchant of Venice and a piano duet.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1918-19 term, the only certain theatre event was a performance of The Florist Shop by Winifred Hawkridge. Most of the student body and "a liberal sprinkling of town folk and faculty" viewed the performance and "gave excellent attention." The Normal critic singled out one actor for his sustained character.<sup>5</sup>

Paper collections are so sporadic from the early years that it is difficult to know how many productions were presented. In all likelihood, however, there was an annual senior play after the first presentation in 1912.

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<sup>1</sup>"Curtain Club," Normal Star, Nov. 26, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Shakespeare Tercentenary," Normal Star, April 28, 1916, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"As You Like It," Normal Star, May 5, 1916, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Pedagog, 1917, pp. 103-105.

<sup>5</sup>"Faculty Reception, Senior Play," Normal Star, June 25, 1919, p. 1.

Academically, the growth of courses dealing with dramatic arts was slow from 1903 to 1919. The most important development was that of a "Reading and Public Speaking" division in the English Department. The one class in this division dealt mainly with learning to read well aloud. Eventually, the course developed into oral interpretation, and from there, into speech and drama.

The first year the Normal School was in session, the reading classes were not included in the curriculum, but, in 1904, one class was begun. However, that course had nothing to do with dramatic arts.<sup>1</sup> From 1905 to 1909, the Reading section expanded, but little attention was placed on either drama or public speaking. Yearly, the Normal bulletin stated: "In this course there will be no attempt made to teach what is usually known as elocution." (C., 1905-06, p. 33.) In 1912, however, "Reading" expanded into "Reading and Public Speaking," and speech (not drama) was included. (C., 1912-13, p. 44.)

In the 1917-18 term, the English Department added three new courses dealing with drama:

- (1) "The Drama Before Shakespeare" (401), which was a study of the origin and development of drama.
- (2) "Modern Drama" (403), which dealt with the types of dramatic art from the eighteenth century to the present.

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<sup>1</sup>Announcement of The Southwest Texas State Normal School, 1903-04, p. 27. [Hereafter, all references to the College catalogs will be placed within the text. "C." will represent "catalog." For example, the above reference would be noted as (C., 1903-04, p. 17.). Also, no mention will be made of drama courses in a year when the curriculum had not changed.]

(3) "Shakespeare" (402), which was a reading course, whereby students studied Shakespearean plays not studied in conjunction with other English courses. (C., 1918-19, p. 45.)

In 1918, Reading and Public Speaking offered "Public Speaking and Dramatics" (104). (C., 1918-19, p. 45.) This course was the first to offer theatre study other than dramatic history.

It would appear, therefore, that the development of drama, both academically and in production, was slow during the early years; however, important foundations were laid for future growth of the Southwest Texas theatre program.

## CHAPTER II

## THE FOUNDATION YEARS

1919-1920

When Mr. G. H. Sholts arrived at Southwest Texas, theatre began to develop rapidly. He organized the Rabbit's Foot Dramatic Club (R.F.D.C.), the first group to accept the public performance of plays as its goal. On October 10, 1919, the group met to decide on objectives, rules and productions for the first year.<sup>1</sup> The decision was made to limit the organization to forty members, and to present student-directed one-act plays at each meeting.<sup>2</sup> The Bishop's Candlesticks by Norman McKinnel, A Dinner With Complications, The Obstinate Family and Stanley Houghton's The Dear Departed were performed at meetings that year. Musical numbers and readings were performed at the same time.<sup>3</sup> The first public presentation by the club (December 17, 1919) was Why the Chimes Rang by Elizabeth McFadden. On February 2, 1920, Green Stockings by A. W. Mason was staged at the New Theatre.<sup>4</sup> Proceeds from the production went to a fund to reconstruct the

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1920, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>"Organize Drama Club," San Marcos Record, Nov. 7, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Pedagog, 1920, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup>The "New Theatre" was a silent movie house in downtown San Marcos. At times, renowned professional productions were brought to San Marcos and staged there. The College also used the stage occasionally as it did for Green Stockings.

stage in the auditorium and to buy and improve theatrical equipment.<sup>1</sup> The review was flattering and the audience pleased.<sup>2</sup>

The largest theatrical event of that year was a pageant entitled Luring a Nation.<sup>3</sup> Under the direction of Miss Hines, the pageant was well-organized and extravagant: costumes were either made or ordered; a pageant booklet was printed; a stage was constructed in Evans Field; men were asked to go without haircuts until the pageant was over; Normal students, faculty members, townspeople and children were involved. Episodes such as "Forces of Air," "Forces of Water," and "The Cricket Dance" were just a few of those presented in the great affair.<sup>4</sup> The Rabbit's Foot Dramatics Club provided one episode and an "interlude dance."<sup>5</sup> The day of the pageant, a grand parade was to be held in the town square:

There is in preparation a grand parade on the streets of the town and possibly to nearby towns on the morning and afternoon of the pageant. Three hundred fifty people in full costumes of Indian, pioneer trapper, Spanish Explorer, Colonial dames and gentlemen, United States Army, etc. will participate in the parade. . . . This feature alone will be a treat to the townspeople.<sup>6</sup>

Printed in the Normal newspaper was a schedule the pageant players were to faithfully follow:

1. Night rehearsals begin Tuesday at 8 o'clock. A full attendance is requested.
2. Dress rehearsal Friday at 8 o'clock. Call for your costume at the costume room in the H.E. building. A deposit of 50 cents will be

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1920, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>"Echoes of the Play, 'Green Stockings'," Normal Star, May 22, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Pedagog, 1920, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup>"Complete Program of the Homecoming Pageant," Normal Star, May 1, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1920, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup>"Normal Pageant Growing," San Marcos Record, May 21, 1920, p. 1.



required for all rented costumes. Money will be returned after the pageant Saturday night provided all issued parts of costume are returned.

3. Casts meet at eight o'clock Saturday morning for make-up; men and boys in room 16, and women and girls in Miss Murphy's room.
4. Cars leave Saturday morning at 9 o'clock for neighboring towns; at 2 o'clock casts meet on Normal Hill for town parade; at 3 o'clock casts meet on Evans Field for final rehearsal if such be necessary.
5. At 7:30 casts assemble on pageant grounds.
6. At 8 o'clock pageant begins.<sup>1</sup>

The pageant became so immense that it had to be held on Evans Field.<sup>2</sup> Miss Hines had hoped in the beginning that it could be performed in the natural setting of Chautauqua Hill.<sup>3</sup>

The Normal "Lyceum" was comparable to the University's present Allied Arts series where students pay an activity fee to see certain cultural presentations on campus. Musicians, lecturers and plays were the most popular events. In November, The Little Playhouse from Chicago presented either A Creature of the Sea<sup>4</sup> or Jerome C. Jerome's The Passing of the Third Floor Back.<sup>5</sup> The San Marcos and Normal newspapers disagree on the title but it is more likely that the latter play was presented since it was cited at a later date.

In the Normal catalog for 1919-20, the "Public Speaking and Dramatics" course (104) was described as including principles of expression, voice training, pronunciation and bodily expression "as a means of interpretation."

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<sup>1</sup>"Final Pageant Schedules," Normal Star, May 22, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Last Call for Pageant," Normal Star, May 22, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Normal Pageant Growing," San Marcos Record, May 21, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Normal Lyceum," San Marcos Record, Oct. 24, 1919, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>"Passing of the Third Floor Back," Normal Star, Feb. 7, 1920, p. 1.

The description further stated that "some instruction will also be given in story telling and dramatics." Evidently this course was mainly devoted to oral interpretation. (C., 1919-20, p. 55.) "Dramatics" (201) was, however, a theatre course. Its objective was to instruct students on the production of plays in elementary and high schools. Plays were actually to be presented from the class. This course was introduced in the 1919-20 term. (C., 1919-20, p. 87.) The English Department retained the three drama courses mentioned in the last chapter. (C., 1919-20, p. 57.)

#### 1920-1921

Mr. Sholts and the R.F.D.C. (as it was commonly called), remained active in the 1920-21 term. Students continued to perform one-acts at club meetings for records show that Miss Civilization was done some time in November,<sup>1</sup> and A Pair of Lunatics on May 2.<sup>2</sup> Tea at Four, The Glory of the Morning, and Stuart Walker's Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil (a special project-play by one of the English classes), were also presented at the meetings but production dates are not certain.<sup>3</sup> On February 14, the organization had a public performance of The Admirable Crichton by James Barrie. Sholts had hoped to begin a patron list and print the names in the production program but it is uncertain whether or not this was ever accomplished. An added feature was the Hester Orchestra which was hired to accompany the show.<sup>4</sup> In August, Mr. Sholts presented five one-acts, all of which he

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<sup>1</sup>"R.F.D.C. Holds Regular Meetings," Normal Star, Nov. 13, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Normal Flashes," San Marcos Record, May 13, 1921, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Pedagog, 1921, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup>"Rabbit's Foot Dramatic Club of Normal to Present Drama," San Marcos Record, Feb. 11, 1921, p. 1.

directed. Master of the House, Fancy Free, Spread the News (probably Spreading the News by Lady Gregory), Dear Departed by Stanley Houghton, and Our Neighbors (probably The Neighbors by Zona Gale), were performed in the library reading room. The five casts included a total of approximately thirty-four people.<sup>1</sup>

The 1920 pageant was so popular that three more were performed in the 1920-21 year. The first was Puritan Women in American Life, written by Miss Lillie T. Shaver, Dean of Women, and staged by Miss Hines. Though never performed on the Southwest Texas campus, in November the pageant was taken to the State Federation of Women's Clubs Convention in San Antonio. Characters were varied: "The Spirit of Prophecy," "America," "Faith," "Hope," and famous American figures.<sup>2</sup> A second pageant, entitled Flashes from Texas History, also written by Miss Shaver and directed by Miss Hines, was presented some time in April or May. The theme was taken from the days of the Texas Republic.<sup>3</sup> On June 7, Mr. Sholts directed Lockhart citizens in Luring a Nation, which had been directed the previous year by Miss Hines. Though college students were not active in the production, the performance did take place at Evans Field.<sup>4</sup>

Two more dramatics classes were added to the academic program. "Dramatics Club" (202) offered one hour of credit per year for students to

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<sup>1</sup>"Interesting Plays Directed by Mr. Sholts--The Casts," Normal Star, Aug. 22, 1921, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Normal Students Stage Pageant in San Antonio," Normal Star, Nov. 20, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"The Pageant," San Marcos Record, April 15, 1921, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Normal Teacher Directs Pageant," Normal Star, June 25, 1921, p. 1.

meet and work on productions. The objective of "Community Drama and Pageantry" (205), was to instruct the students on dramatic principles as they applied to the community. (C., 1920-21, pp. 97-98.) Probably the popularity of pageants during those years was influential in the formation of this course.

### 1921-1922

In 1921, Mr. Sholts left Southwest Texas and Miss Hester Graves assumed a position in the Reading and Public Speaking Department. Miss Graves' main objective was the advancement of drama on the Southwest Texas campus, working with several departments and organizations. Her first production was a Texas History pageant, the name of which is uncertain, presented to a capacity audience in the New Theatre. On March 24, her "Reading and Dramatics" class presented The Neighbors by Zona Gale to the Y.W.C.A. members.<sup>2</sup> In April, the Shakespeare Society, under her direction, presented The Twelve-Pound Look by James Barrie, Susan Glaspell's Supressed Desires, and The Buffer by Alice Gerstenberg.<sup>3</sup> The Society considered it a grand occasion:

In April, on Thursday evening, the twentieth, the girls of the club, assisted by some of their gentlemen friends and admirers, under the capable direction of Miss Hester Graves, gave the New Normal stage its initial dramatic performance: a large audience an evening of pleasure: The Athletic Fund a financial boost: and, incidentally, scored for themselves an evening of capable histrionic achievement. The beauty of

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<sup>1</sup>"Normal Girls Feature of Pageant Program," Normal Star, Nov. 12, 1921, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Dramatic Classes in Vaudeville," Normal Star, Mar. 25, 1922, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>"Shakespeares to Give Three One-Act Plays," Normal Star, April 8, 1922, p. 1.

the new stage scenery, the effective work of the different casts, the singing of Miss Dickens before the curtain rose, and the music of the Shakespeare Orchestra, all added to the completeness of the event.<sup>1</sup>

In May, Miss Graves collaborated with Miss Hines and Miss Butler on the musical comedy The Gypsy Rover.<sup>2</sup> After the June 2 performance, plans were made to repeat the show for summer students and some time in either July or August, the play was revived.<sup>3</sup> Apparently this was the first musical comedy to be presented at Southwest Texas.

Mr. Gates Thomas, who had not been active in drama for the previous two years, was also responsible for several productions. On April 17, he presented a vaudeville show as a benefit for the American Legion. Included were two one-acts: Arthur Hopkins' Moonshine and Oliphant Downs' The Maker of Dreams.<sup>4</sup> In the summer, he initiated a new drama organization called "The Moulders"<sup>5</sup> and, again, presented a vaudeville show on July 22 and 25, consisting of four one-acts: The Importance of Being a Roughneck and Oliphant Downs' The Maker of Dreams on July 22, and Zona Gale's The Neighbors and Arthur Hopkins' Moonshine on July 25.<sup>6</sup> The shows were accompanied by the Normal orchestra. The organization's philosophy was indicative of most of the drama in this period of time:

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1922, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>"The Gypsy Rover, June 2," Normal Star, May 27, 1922, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Gypsy Rover, Romantic Musical Comedy To Be Put On By The Liberty Chorus for the Present Study Body," Normal Star, July 1, 1922, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"American Legion Benefit Vaudeville," Normal Star, April 15, 1922, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Summer Dramatics Get Active Next Week," Normal Star, July 8, 1922, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"Vaudeville in Auditorium Tonight and Tuesday Night," Normal Star, July 15, 1922, p. 1.

The main purpose of these plays is to afford teachers, prospective teachers and anyone else an opportunity to witness and enjoy what has come to be known as community drama and plays of the new theatre, that field of dramatic activity which has been abandoned by the professional theatre and turned over to working groups in college, church, school, and study club, the maintenance and improvement of the spoken drama and the establishment, perpetuation, and improvement of the little theatre, or the community theatre, examples of which are springing up all over the land and are doing much toward combating the vicious influence of both the commercial theatre and the movie and of teaching people the worth of the spoken drama as a form of simple and satisfying entertainment.<sup>1</sup>

The group was proud of the fact that sets, costumes and properties were all "San Marcos made." Often costumes and set pieces were either borrowed or rented.

One other person made a theatrical debut on campus. On December 20, Miss Hearne from the YWCA presented a Christmas pageant in the auditorium of the Education Building:<sup>2</sup> " . . . five graphic impressive and impassioned scenes," were enhanced by the Physics Department's electric display, music from the Music Department, art from the Art Department and readers from Reading and Public Speaking.<sup>3</sup>

One professional company visited the campus that year: on November 7, The Impressario, a musical comedy, was presented by the American Stage Company.<sup>4</sup>

The Old Main auditorium was the recipient of some much-needed changes. The Fort Worth Scenic Company replaced the old red "drill" curtain

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>The Education Building auditorium had a very small stage, more like a lecture platform.

<sup>3</sup>"Christmas Pageant Tuesday Nite in Auditorium of Education Building," Normal Star, Dec. 7, 1921, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"The Impressario' Here Monday Night," Normal Star, Nov. 5, 1921, p. 1.

(that often did not pull) and the green burlap curtains with front drapes, wings and a drop curtain. A four-foot extension was built onto the rostrum, and costume cupboards and "property receptacles" were constructed. Lighting and dressing rooms were improved and new screens built. A "complete drawing room set" was procured from the scenic company. Opera chairs, installed in 1919, remained. Old Main seated approximately 1,200 people until it was remodeled in the 1940s. The R.F.D.C. donated its fund of \$200.00 to the improvement of the stage. Along with Normal funds, the organization's savings were responsible for the new improvements made on the Old Main auditorium. The school paper expressed its elation: "What has been the dream of everybody around Normal interested in dramatics or amateur theatricals--a theatre stage--is at last becoming a beautiful reality."<sup>1</sup>

"Community Drama and Pageantry" (205), "Dramatic Problems" (201) and "Dramatic Club" (202) were dropped and "Dramatics" (114) was added. (C., 1921-22, p. 52.) This course had the collective objectives of the dropped courses: oral interpretation; problems in selecting plays for grammar grades, high school and the community; the production of several one-acts and one full-length production. (C., 1922-23, p. 61.)

### 1922-1923

Mrs. Hester Graves King (Miss Graves married in 1923), began the 1922-23 year with tryouts for the dramatic club. Mr. Yancy Yarborough remembered the tryout sessions:

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<sup>1</sup>"Normal Stage a Reality," Normal Star, April 1, 1922, p. 1.

Early in the Fall Semester she scheduled try-outs for a program of one-act plays and membership in the R.F.D. Club. She practically conscripted her whole class in speech. We were almost constantly there-after in tryouts and rehearsal [sic] for either one-act or full-length plays.<sup>1</sup>

Students auditioned with readings or short scenes.<sup>2</sup>

With the exception of The Patsy by Barry Connors,<sup>3</sup> all of the major productions were performed in May or the summer. Records are not clear on the date The Patsy was staged. On May 7, four one-acts, all directed by Mrs. King, were presented in the main auditorium. Indian Summer by Douglas F. Parkhirst, Modesty by Paul Hervieu, Sauce for the Goslings by Elgine J. Warren, and The Playgoers by A. W. Pinero, played to a large house in the 1200-seat auditorium.<sup>4</sup> On May 14, Mrs. King directed A Pair of Boots, a play about the days of the Old South, written by Professor Marcus L. Arnold.<sup>5</sup> Arnold, a history instructor, often wrote plays for production at Southwest Texas and proceeds were always turned over to the Jack Arnold Memorial Fund.<sup>6</sup> Miss King and Miss Sayers co-directed the show.<sup>7</sup> On June 1, Fred Jackson's A Full House was presented as the senior

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Yancy Yarborough, personal letter, April 17, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>"Tryouts for R.F.D.C. to be Held on Monday," Normal Star, Nov. 11, 1922, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Yancy Yarborough, personal letter.

<sup>4</sup>"R.F.D.C. One Act Plays Played to Large House," Normal Star, May 12, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Days of the Old South Revived by Play," Normal Star, July 21, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>The Jack Arnold Memorial Fund was a scholarship fund set up in honor of Mr. Arnold's son who was killed in World War I.

<sup>7</sup>"Play to be Given at Normal for Benefit of Memorial Fund," Normal Star, May 12, 1923, p. 1.



play with Mrs. King directing.<sup>1</sup> Later in June, the dramatics club re-organized for the summer<sup>2</sup> and revived A Full House on June 25<sup>3</sup> and A Pair of Boots on July 16.<sup>4</sup> Plans were made to present more one-acts, but it is doubtful that they were staged that summer.<sup>5</sup> On August 23, Zona Gale's Miss Lula Bett, directed by Mrs. King, played in the main auditorium. The college newspaper carried a seven by fifteen inch ad both weeks before the show. Typical of most theatre advertisements, it elaborated on the success of the show on Broadway.<sup>6</sup> The review commented on the difficulty of the production:

It is probably the most ambitious performance that has been attempted locally, since the Rabbit Footers, in the heyday of their histrionic glory delighted two large audiences with a capable production of Barries Admirable Chriton [sic].<sup>7</sup>

Two professional performances were given that year. On February 10, poet-playwright Percy MacKaye visited and lectured on the campus, and on March 24, the Devereaux Players presented Much Ado About Nothing by Shakespeare and Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw.

Equipment was limited, but students adjusted nicely. Mr. Yarborough recalled:

We had a set of flats that we re-sized and painted for each full-length production. Usually the number of set changes helped determine our

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<sup>1</sup>"Senior Play Will be Presented on Friday June First," Normal Star, May 26, 1923.

<sup>2</sup>"R.F.D.C. Reorganize for the Summer," Normal Star, June 23, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Senior Play, 'A Full House' Again Presented," Normal Star, June 30, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'A Pair of Boots' to be Given Monday Night," Normal Star, July 14, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"R.F.D.C. Reorganize for the Summer," p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Normal Star, August 11, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>"Twenty-Five Years of Dramatics in Our College," College Star, Nov. 11, 1928, p. 1.

choice of play, because we could only manage one set change - from flats to cyclorama. Most of the short programs and one acts were played with cyclorama background and change effects determined by furniture and props. The stage crew for each production scoured the town to borrow props, and furniture was usually borrowed from the old A. B. Rogers Furniture Co. and appropriate credit given in the program.<sup>1</sup>

### 1923-1924

Mrs. King began the very active 1923-24 year with tryouts. Some acts seemed more like vaudeville than acting: a "negro dialect" song, a reading and a "typical love-sick country girl."<sup>2</sup>

From December of 1923 to June of 1924, Mrs. King directed five major productions. The first was The Witching Hour by Augustus Thomas. On December 17, the play was staged in one of the most elaborate sets Southwest Texas students had ever seen in amateur college theatre.<sup>3</sup> After the cast returned from the Christmas vacation, Mrs. King re-rehearsed the play and presented it again on January 2.<sup>4</sup> On March 17, the Liberty Chorus (the College choir), under the direction of Mrs. King, Miss Butler and Miss Hines, presented the operetta Paul Revere with full orchestral accompaniment.<sup>5</sup> On April 7, Too Many Crooks by Horton Turns Constable, was produced by the YMCA.<sup>6</sup> The reviewer's critique was favorable:

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Yancy Yarborough, personal letter.

<sup>2</sup>"Dramatic Club Holds Annual Tryout," College Star, Nov. 10, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'The Witching Hour' Monday Night at the Auditorium," College Star, Dec. 12, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'The Witching Hour' to be Presented Mon. Nite," College Star, Jan. 19, 1924, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"'Paul Revere' to be Presented Monday Evening," College Star, Mar. 15, 1924, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"YMCA to Present 'Too Many Crooks'," College Star, April 5, 1924, p. 1.

The play was a scream from beginning to end and all the parts were well-played. It gave evidence of the fact that the ability of the players was above par, and the play was well selected.<sup>1</sup>

On June 6, Mrs. King presented the Commencement play, The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary and, again, it proved successful with the Southwest Texas audience. Although plans were made to revive the show in the summer, records do not confirm another performance.<sup>2</sup> One summer presentation, Heloise by Professor Arnold, was staged on June 30.<sup>3</sup> Mrs. King personally directed each production.

Courses remained relatively the same. "The Drama of the Restoration" (234) was changed to "The Drama of the Restoration and the 18th Century" (234). The college catalog stated, as it did the previous year, that reading, public speaking and dramatics were an integral part of English. (C., 1923-24, pp. 63-67.)

#### 1924-1925

Though not as active as the previous year, Mrs. King with the Music Department and the R.F.D.C. continued presenting plays. On January 28, an original play, Rocks, written by students in Mrs. King's Dramatics (114) class, was performed. Though Mrs. King supervised, the students were responsible for the staging.<sup>4</sup> The Gypsy Rover, directed by Miss Butler

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<sup>1</sup>"'Too Many Crooks' Proves Successful," College Star, April 12, 1924, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Commencement Play Scores Big Success," College Star, June 7, 1924, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'Heloise' to Be Given for Jack Arnold Fund," San Marcos Record, June 27, 1924, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup>"Original One-Act Play is Presented in English 114," College Star, Jan. 28, 1925, p. 1.

without the aid of Mrs. King, was presented on March 30,<sup>1</sup> and on May 28, Booth Tarkington's Seventeen was presented as the senior play " . . . which brought gales of laughter from the crowd."<sup>2</sup>

It seemed that the campus was often visited by at least one professional theatre company each school year. On February 9, the Percival Vivian Players presented The Cinderella Man.<sup>3</sup>

"The Drama Before Shakespeare" (231) was renumbered 230 that year, and two courses were offered in "Shakespeare" (231 and 232). Both were in the English Department. (C., 1924-25, p. 71.)

#### 1925-1926

Since the college newspaper is missing for the 1925-26 year and the San Marcos paper carried very little information on campus drama, records are incomplete. The yearbook mentions only two productions. Billy's Tombstones, produced by the R.F.D.C. on April 12,<sup>4</sup> was witnessed by 800 people.<sup>5</sup> It was probably directed by Mrs. King. On May 3, The Wishing Well, a musical comedy, was initiated by Miss Hines and Miss Butler and, toward the end of rehearsals, Mrs. King came in to add a final polish to the show.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"'Gypsy Rover' to Be Presented on March 30," College Star, Mar. 25, 1925, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Twenty-Five Years of Dramatics," p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'The Cinderella Man' to Be Given February 9," College Star, Feb. 4, 1925, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Twenty-Five Years of Dramatics," p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1926, p. 119.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

Fanny and the Servant Problem, the last show of the year, was performed for Commencement week.<sup>1</sup>

Some time during the year, the R.F.D.C. hosted an original one-act play contest. Winning plays were entitled: Broken Hearted, Romance and Three-Fourths of Seventy-Five. The one-acts were probably never performed.<sup>2</sup>

Drama courses remained the same except for the dropping of "Shakespeare" (231). "Shakespeare" (232) remained in the curriculum. (C., 1925-26, p. 73.)

#### 1926-1927

In the fall of 1926, Mrs. King left the College and established a private class in "Expression." Students were allowed to take her course and receive college credit.<sup>3</sup> By May of 1928, Mrs. King had founded the San Marcos Little Theatre, using townspeople, faculty and students as actors and production staff.<sup>4</sup>

Taking her place in the English Department was Mr. J. W. Dunn. Mr. Dunn's first year was not an active one in dramatics, but he tended to devote an even amount of time between speech and drama. His Dramatics class presented one-acts from time-to-time, but the titles were never recorded. The only major production was Maud Fulton's The Brat. There was standing-

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<sup>1</sup>"Twenty-Five Years of Dramatics," p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>"Mrs. King Has Large Class in Expression," College Star, Oct. 7, 1926, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Little Theatre of San Marcos to Make First Appearance," College Star, May 2, 1928, p. 1.

room-only for the presentation on May 25 and the audience was quite receptive. The entire production cost the Department sixty dollars.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer, Dr. Dunn organized a college theatre group called the "Tejas Players." Students making up the organization were from Mrs. King's expression class, the College Dramatics class and various English classes. The group presented two one-acts that summer: The Beaded Buckle and Good Medicine. No admission fee was charged for the August 18 production.<sup>2</sup>

Two professional and one amateur presentation came to Southwest Texas in the 1926-27 year. The dramatic club sponsored Mr. Nathaniel Edward Ried, drama lecturer. His topic was "The Theatre and Its People" and the responsibility of both.<sup>3</sup> The Lyceum performance that year was a presentation in January of The Old Homestead.<sup>4</sup> The company that staged the show is not certain. On April 22, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. presented the one-act, Elizabeth's Young Man by L. S. Hasbrouck.<sup>5</sup>

#### 1927-1928

Mr. Dunn took leave of absence for one year to complete his master's degree. Mr. L. E. Derrick<sup>6</sup> and Miss Mattie Allison took over the productions,

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<sup>1</sup>"Dramatic Club Presents 'The Brat' With Great Success," College Star, June 8, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"August 18 Set as Date for Dramatic Club Plays," College Star, Aug. 10, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Noted Dramatist to Address Student Body," College Star, Jan. 12, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Lyceum Number Proved Big Treat," College Star, Jan. 12, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"'Five Night' Entertainment is Attended by Big Crowd," College Star, April 7, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Mr. Derrick eventually became Dr. Leland Derrick, Dean of the Graduate School at Southwest Texas. Dr. Derrick retired in 1971.

drama club and the Reading and Public Speaking division of the English Department. Together, they held tryouts and directed the two major productions. The first show, The Wonder Hat by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman and Ben Hecht, was presented late in the fall semester with Mr. Derrick and Miss Allison co-directing.<sup>1</sup> On March 10, Owen Davis' Icebound was presented in the main auditorium with Miss Allison as the over-all director and Mr. Derrick as assistant.<sup>2</sup> Students rehearsed the show for about two and one-half weeks.<sup>3</sup> The audience almost filled the auditorium and seemed to enjoy the performance.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer, Mr. Dunn returned and directed Bertrand Robinson and Howard Lindsay's Tommy, performed on July 20 and 21.<sup>5</sup> Characterizations and Mr. Dunn's direction were praised highly by the College reviewer.<sup>6</sup>

For a club project, the R.F.D.C. polled forty of the leading college and university drama departments to make conclusions on what shows seemed to be performed most on various campuses. A list was compiled of the most popular shows and how often each was presented in 1927.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Dramatic Club to Hold Its Try-Out," College Star, Oct. 19, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"'Icebound' is Staged by Dramatics Club," College Star, Mar. 14, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'Icebound' to be Staged Saturday Night," College Star, Mar. 7, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'Icebound' is Staged by Dramatics Club," College Star, Mar. 14, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"College Theatre Presents Three-Act Comedy Drama," College Star, July 18, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"'Tommy' a Great Play," College Star, July 25, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>"The Play's the Fling," College Star, Feb. 15, 1928, p. 4.

1928-1929

Mr. Dunn made some major changes in the theatre system. He did away with the Rabbit's Foot Dramatic Club and created "College Theatre." In it were two subgroups: the Apprentice Players and College Players. The second of these is still active after forty-four years. The Apprentice Players were those students who would try out for and work on productions in any capacity. To be a member of College Players, students had to be voted in and to have played at least one major role.<sup>1</sup> (A major role was defined as seventy speeches in two or more acts.)<sup>2</sup> An honorary organization, The Purple Mask, was created for those junior and senior drama students who had done outstanding work in theatre. Members were selected by Mr. Dunn.<sup>3</sup> Students planned to have a weekly luncheon to discuss dramatics with special guests.<sup>4</sup>

The 1928-29 year consisted of four major productions performed by College Theatre. The first, The Goose Hangs High by Lewis Beach, was staged on December 8 and 10.<sup>5</sup> Beautiful pieces of furniture were borrowed to add authenticity to the set.<sup>6</sup> Large audiences attended each night<sup>7</sup> and Dunn's

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1929, pp. 102-103.

<sup>2</sup>"College Players Elect Five to Membership," College Star, Jan. 25, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Pedagog, 1929, pp. 103-104.

<sup>4</sup>"College Players Have Enjoyable Luncheon," College Star, Feb. 6, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"'The Goose Hangs High' to be Given December 8 and 10," College Star, Dec. 5, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"College Theatre Presents 'Goose Hangs High'," College Star, Dec. 12, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.



casting of characters was praised by the College reviewer.<sup>1</sup> The Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A. sponsored George Kelly's The Show Off and under Dunn's direction, the play was performed on February 23 and 25. Proceeds went to the sponsoring organizations.<sup>2</sup> Audiences were small but enthusiastic and actors' characterizations were convincing, according to the College review.<sup>3</sup> On July 8 and 9, Mr. Dunn directed a revival of Heloise by Professor Arnold and proceeds went to the Jack Arnold Memorial Fund.<sup>4</sup> The last major production was another George Kelly play, Craig's Wife. Mr. Dunn stated to the College paper that it was the most "ambitious" production he had ever directed. Students rehearsed twice daily for two weeks and, at the same time, constructed the "luxurious" sets. On August 17 and 19, Craig's Wife was performed and called the "Theatre Climax" of the year.<sup>5</sup> At the beginning of the year, Mr. Dunn had planned to do four other productions. Records, however, do not show their performances.<sup>6</sup>

In March, Lula Vollmer's Sun Up was presented by Mrs. King's Little Theatre group. Miss Allison was asked to guest-direct<sup>7</sup> for, on

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<sup>1</sup>"A Review of The Goose Hangs High," College Star, Dec. 12, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"'The Show Off' to be Presented 23 & 25," College Star, Feb. 20, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'The Show Off' is Season's Hit," College Star, Feb. 27, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"College Theatre to Present Medieval Play," College Star, July 4, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"'Craig's Wife' is Theatre Climax," College Star, July 31, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"College Theatre Announces Season's Program of Plays," College Star, Oct. 24, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>"'Sun Up' Scores Big Hit as Lyceum Attraction," College Star, Mar. 13, 1929, p. 1.

October 6, 1928, shortly after she had founded the San Marcos Little Theatre, Mrs. King passed away.<sup>1</sup> Though students, faculty members and townspeople made an attempt to keep the theatre alive, by 1930 the organization had ceased to exist.

The English Department dropped "The Drama Before Shakespeare" (230), (C., 1928-29, p. 91.) and the Public Speaking division of the Department made some alterations:

- (1) "Dramatics" (214) was added and described as the selection, interpretation and production of longer plays, to prepare students to organize and direct dramatic activities in high schools and communities.
- (2) "Dramatics" (114) was changed to "Introductory Dramatics" (114). Its objective was to present one-act plays from the class.
- (3) "Public Speaking and Dramatics" (104) changed to an oral interpretation course. (C., 1928-19, p. 92.)

Although Monroe Lippman, the next Director of theatre activities, has been given much credit for the growth of drama at Southwest Texas, the importance of the foundation years cannot be overlooked. For the efforts of Mr. Sholts, Mrs. King and Mr. Dunn, who were severely handicapped by lack of adequate facilities and equipment, provided the necessary impetus to carry the program forward to a more prosperous time.

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<sup>1</sup>"College Students Shocked at Death of Mrs. King," College Star, Oct. 17, 1928, p. 1.

## CHAPTER III

### MONROE C. LIPPMAN

#### 1929-1930

In the fall of 1929, Mr. Sholts left Southwest Texas to take a position at the University of Oklahoma.<sup>1</sup> His replacement was Monroe C. Lippman, perhaps the most important figure, thus far, in the development of Southwest Texas theatre. Though still listed under the English Department, Lippman's Speech Arts program was, in actuality, an autonomous organization.<sup>2</sup>

Productions for the year were varied. The first was Philip Barry's You and I. Staged on November 23 and 25,<sup>3</sup> the show was considered a success. Audiences were receptive to the actors' "clever dramatic ability."<sup>4</sup> In February, the melodrama Set a Thief by Edward E. Paramore, Jr., was rewarded with large and appreciative audiences.<sup>5</sup> Lippman had planned to

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<sup>1</sup>"College Theatre Boasts Successful Shows," College Star, Aug. 15, 1935, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Taylor, personal letter, May 9, 1972.

<sup>3</sup>"College is to Present Play," San Marcos Record, Nov. 8, 1929, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>"College Play Big Success," San Marcos Record, Nov. 21, 1929, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>"College Play Goes Over in Fine Way," San Marcos Record, Feb. 28, 1930, p. 1.

direct John K. Stafford's Hands Up for the commencement production, but decided instead to present Kempy by J. C. and Elliott Nugent. The show was done in the College auditorium on May 22 and 23, then toured to Navarro High School in Geronimo, Texas. Though performing for Geronimo citizens may not seem exceedingly important, it was the first time students from the Department had toured a show. (Lyndon B. Johnson, later to become President of The United States, was publicity director for Kempy.)<sup>1</sup> In the summer, on August 12, three one-acts were performed: Sweet and Twenty, Dregs by Louis Brymer and Sham by Frank A. Tompkins. Though the shows played to a capacity audience, the critic was more severe than in the past, pointing out those characters who lacked consistency. As with most reviewers of this period, he elaborated on those actors who "stole" or "saved" the show.<sup>2</sup>

Under Monroe Lippman's sponsorship, Apprentice Players and College Players combined under the name of the latter.<sup>3</sup> As an organization, the College Players hosted the annual high school Interscholastic League one-act play contest.<sup>4</sup> This was to be carried on for several years.

Theatrical supplies were rather shabby when Lippman took over the Department, but he was determined to make improvements. Proceeds from the productions were used to purchase new equipment.<sup>5</sup> Though it is not certain

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<sup>1</sup>"Kempy Presentation Nights of May 22-23," San Marcos Record, May 23, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>"One-Act Plays Go Over Big," San Marcos Record, Aug. 15, 1930, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players Elect Officers," College Star, Jan. 15, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"First Three One-Act Plays Big Success," College Star, April 23, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"New Play Selected for Presentation," College Star, April 23, 1930, p. 1.

what was added or at what time, the Department did obtain a portable light board. This allowed much more freedom in the selection of plays.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Lippman's direction was a new experience for Southwest Texas drama students. He seemed to be very well organized and very astute in his directing. He would cast with a tentative or "trial" cast, reserving the right to replace any actor who was not acceptable for the role he was to play. Miss Jean Taylor, a student at Southwest Texas in the early 1930s, recalled Lippman's approach to directing:

As a director Monroe was demanding--we worked long and hard--and he was strict about things like promptness and attendance at rehearsals. But he handled his actors in a way to get the best from each. His manner with a shy and frightened sixteen-year old like me was gentle and helpful, but he was perfectly capable of royally chewing out a tougher character. During rehearsals he taught basic stage technique--often in detail and sometimes by drill--until it became second nature. He had always done his preparation thoroughly and had his concept of the play well in mind. But he was never dictatorial. After the actor had begun to develop a characterization he would build upon the actor's ideas, expanding and refining them. If the actor's concept differed too radically from his own, he was willing to discuss the problem and to work out a mutually satisfactory solution. I learned a great deal during that one year and have been grateful to Monroe. I don't think I ever had a better director. The freedom to develop whatever talents you have in a framework of discipline has remained, to me, the ideal combination for the best of theatrical work.<sup>2</sup>

Major alterations were made in the Department's academic program:

- (1) "Introductory Dramatics" (114) was retained.
- (2) "Public Speaking and Dramatics" (104) was dropped.
- (3) "Dramatic Production" (214) was added and was much like the former courses that dealt with the production of plays in high schools and community theatres.

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<sup>1</sup>"College is to Present Plays," San Marcos Record, Nov. 8, 1929, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Taylor, personal letter.

(4) "The Dramatic Club" (244) was added and described as: a conference course in dramatic production or experimentation for those students of approved training and experience, who wish to secure a college credit in English not to exceed three hours. (C., 1929-30, p. 94.)

In the English Department, courses remained the same with changes in description:

(1) "Types of Modern Drama" (224) was a course in which students were instructed in Continental and English drama; Ibsen to Shaw. They were to consider at least twenty-five plays.

(2) "Shakespeare" (231) was re-opened. Students were to study Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, As You Like It and Merchant of Venice. (C., 1929-30, p. 92.)

(3) "Shakespeare" (232) was retained and students were instructed in The Tempest, King Lear, Othello, Hamlet and Measure for Measure. (C., 1929-20, p. 93.)

The Department name was changed to "Public Speaking and Dramatics." (C., 1929-30, p. 94.)

### 1930-1931

In the year of 1930-31, the Department had the most active theatrical season thus far. The year began with a presentation of Is Zat So? by James Gleason and Richard Taber. Lippman was the first to incorporate the large production staff. Involved in his first production, as in most Lippman shows, were an assistant director, three stage assistants, individual crews and a business manager.<sup>1</sup> College reviewers began to be more

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<sup>1</sup>"'Is Zat So' on Saturday and Monday Night," College Star, Oct. 29, 1930, pp. 1 and 4.

critical than in previous years. One actor was accused of "dropping character" at times, needing more flexibility; another was not "nasty" enough; another needed to be more "British." Though the show played to large audiences both nights (November 1 and 3), the reviewer was not favorable.<sup>1</sup> The next show of the season, Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest, was performed on December 11 and 12. Sets, designed by a student, were stylized in black and white.<sup>2</sup> Though a review is not available, a College journalist observed one of the rehearsals and concluded that the show would "surpass" the first production of the season.<sup>3</sup>

On January 31 and February 2, two student-directed one-acts were performed. The Mayor and the Manicure by George Ade and Bee Says Yeah by Hugh Williamson were staffed by directors, assistant directors, technical directors, stage assistants, crews and business managers.<sup>4</sup> Bee Says Yeah was written by one of the drama students. (Mr. Lippman encouraged students to write original material.) The playwright was interviewed by the College newspaper:

"Why," I asked the author of 'Bee Says Yeah,' "did you write this play, insulting our esthetic taste, challenging our credulity, impugning our moral standards? Tell me," I thundered, "why?"

His lips quavered and great tears rolled down his cheeks as he answered humbly:

"Don't I bey [sic] of you, be so harsh and unrelenting in your criticism. You see, it's my maiden effort, my first wee brain-child, sent

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>"College Players to Present Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest' December 11-12," College Star, Dec. 3, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players All Set for 'The Importance of Being Earnest'," College Star, Dec. 10, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"One-Act Plays Saturday and Monday Night," College Star, Jan. 28, 1931, p. 1.

out into a cold world to earn, I had hoped, my bread and butter and the plaudits of my fellow artists. Let me tell you the whole sad story."<sup>1</sup>

After the story was told, he went on to reveal his deepest feelings:

He had lifted his head eagerly as he talked, and his eyes glowed with pride until he encountered my scornful gaze. Then he dropped like a rosebud battered by a strong wind and sighed.

"But as for my technique, masters may criticize it rightly. Little know I of stately phrase and skillful twists of language. Subtlety flows rarely from my pen, but oh! the vigor and the strength I wield. Perhaps my play will fall short of Tchekov [sic] and deMaupassant, (in fact, it likely does), but I promise that my next effort will be better, or I shall carefully conceal it from an ungratefully carping public. It was not my intention by my crude efforts either to impugn or lower the moral code of my associates, or to defend their sence [sic] of fitness, or their appreciation of beauty. If I have done so, I ask that you crave their pardon."

And so, aged immeasurably within that little while, he tottered across the campus toward the Bobcat in search of coffee and consolation.<sup>2</sup>

This satirical report on the author's melancholy attitude is more likely to be the journalist's attack on the Speech Department. The several cutting reviews and articles written on the Department were in a period of time that certain campus organizations were "at odds" with one another. The College reviewer was more favorable toward these shows than Lippman's. "On the basis of the salient observation that those who can, do; and those who can't, teach, the amateurs have it all the way."<sup>3</sup>

Lippman's presentation of Journey's End by R. C. Sheriff was the first showing of that play by an amateur group in the South. Sets were reproduced from professional and movie productions and costumes were

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<sup>1</sup>"The Why of 'Bee Says Yeah'," College Star, Jan. 28, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>"One-Act Plays Please Audience Saturday-Monday," College Star, Feb. 4, 1931, p. 1.



secured from a large costume house in New York.<sup>1</sup> The show was a grand success and reviewers commented favorably on acting, sound effects (airplanes and bombs) and lighting depicting flashing fire. Since no tape recorders were available to the Department, sounds had to be handled either manually or with phonographs. Technically, the show was difficult:

Those persons who went to see 'Journey's End' may have been conscious of a great deal of noise not altogether produced by the actors. This as [sic] produced by means of two phonographs placed just off the set, and operated by persons whose business it was to watch the script with utmost care, producing the sounds as they were necessary. Often a shell would serve as a cue for an actor's line, and many of the lines would have sounded foolish indeed without the off-stage noise. The phonographs were supplemented by a drum. Pistols were tried in rehearsals, but they were a bit too loud. Whistles were blown to indicate the noise made by a shell passing through the air.

The lighting effects were attained by means of spots and baby hercs [colloquial term for a type of theatrical light] placed so as to make moonlight or sunlight in the trenches; a blue light for moonlight and a white one for the sun. A rising sun was made possible by means of blending a red and blue spot. Green and red flashes were obvious on the wall of the trench outside the dugout. These gave the appearance of Very lights, fired over No Man's Land. Two spots were placed above the set and covered with yellow to look like candle light. Candles were kept burning most of the time, but they did not illuminate the stage sufficiently.

When the dugout was supposed to have collapsed at the end of the play, two simple expedients were resorted to for the purpose of producing this illusion. First a wet sack was placed on a movable board above the candles on the table. When the big explosion came, a rope was pulled from behind the set, causing the sack to fall and extinguish the candles. The second scheme was to throw down the canvas flaps to the dugout door, making it look as if it had fallen in.

In themselves, these noises and lights were not very difficult to handle, but the synchronization was a matter which required some study. Close-falling shells had to be accomplished by both light and sound, the yellow lights had to go off when candles were extinguished, and so on. Credit must be given to the persons who handled these offstage lights and sounds, whose parts were, perhaps, as important as the parts of the actors, and who performed their parts with understanding and ability.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"'Journey's End' Main Auditorium February 26-27," College Star, Feb. 18, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"The How of the Setting of 'Journey's End,'" College Star, Mar. 4, 1931, p. 1.

This article is one of the most complete explanations of the technical aspect of Lippman's work. The play was performed on February 26 and 27.<sup>1</sup>

For a commencement program, Philip Barry's The Youngest was staged by Mr. Lippman. This was the last production of the long term.<sup>2</sup>

In the summer, two student-directed one-acts from Miss Allison's One-Act Play class were performed on July 18, 20 and 21: Trifles by Susan Glaspell and Modesty by Paul Hervieu.<sup>3</sup> (Mr. Lippman had left for the summer to teach at the University of Texas.)<sup>4</sup>

New rules were devised that year for the Purple Mask Club. Any faculty member or student of junior or senior standing (students had to have a "C" average) could work toward membership in Purple Mask. One hundred points were required and the point system was carefully planned by the group. The system, printed in the College newspaper, is an excellent indication of the organization of the theatre while Lippman was director:

- I. Acting
  - (a) Full length play
    - 1. Major part--15 to 25 points
    - 2. Minor part--5 to 15 points
  - (b) One-act play
    - 1. Major part--10 to 15 points
    - 2. Minor part--1 to 5 points
- II. Directing
  - (a) Full length play
    - 1. Director--25 to 30 points
    - 2. Ass't Director--10 to 20 points

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<sup>1</sup>"'Journey's End' Main Auditorium," p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"College Theatre in 'The Youngest' Thursday, Friday," College Star, May 20, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"One-Act Play Try-Outs to Occur Saturday, Monday, Tuesday," College Star, July 18, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Faculty Members on Absent-Leave or Vacationing," College Star, June 13, 1931, p. 1.

- (b) One-act play
  - 1. Director--15 to 20 points
  - 2. Ass't Director--5 to 10 points
- III. Producing
  - (a) Technical director--15 to 25 points
  - (b) Art Director--10 to 20 points
  - (c) Stage manager--10 to 20 points
  - (d) Properties manager--10 to 15 points
  - (e) Wardrobe manager--5 to 15 points
  - (f) Electrician--5 to 15 points
  - (g) Business manager--5 to 15 points
  - (h) Publicity director--5 to 15 points
  - (i) Make-up--2 to 10 points
  - (j) Stage assistants--2 to 10 points
  - (k) Scene design--10 to 20 points
  - (l) Costume design--10 to 20 points
- IV. Playwriting
  - (a) Author of full length play--50 points
  - (b) Author of one-act play--35 points
- V. General Service
  - (a) President of College Players--2 to 10 points
  - (b) Secretary of College Players--2 to 10 points
  - (c) Treasurer of College Players--2 to 10 points
  - (d) Other officers of College Players--1 to 5 points
  - (e) Special service to College Players or College Theatre--1 to 5 points
  - (f) Ushers--1 to 5 points
  - (g) Ticket campaigns--1 to 5 points
  - (h) Typing--1 to 5 points<sup>1</sup>

Some equipment was added and improvements made that year. The first came after a catastrophe during Is Zat So?. The old act curtain would not pull without the aid of several stage crew members. The College journalist described it well:

For over ten years the old curtain has squeaked and lumbered up and down on the many dramatic and other spectacles that have been held on the boards in the Auditorium since it was a young thing, gay, gaudy and garishly resplendent in its greens and yellows, blues, reds and browns. For everyone who has tried to manipulate it in recent years, it has been a good deal like the old gray mare in the song, afflicted with senility and pretty badly stove-up all around, a general eyesore to audiences, tolerated as a more or less venerated tho not venerable piece of worn-out, out moded equipment. Early in the play Monday night, it showed

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<sup>1</sup>"Purple Mask Promulgates New Eligibility Requirements," College Star, Nov. 12, 1930, p. 1.

signs of wobblings and a tendency when down to refuse to get up, and tho it was helped up once or twice by a solicitous stage crew, it developed a definite attack of locomotive ataxia in the last scene of 'Is Zat So?', and seems to have disintegrated beyond reasonable economical or artistic rehabilitation.<sup>1</sup>

At least, the event precipitated the purchase of a new curtain.

In the southwest tower of Old Main, students constructed a make-up and green room.<sup>2</sup> The area remained there until 1938.

There were two professional productions, the first being a presentation of Macbeth on February 17 by the Shakespeare Players from New York,<sup>3</sup> and on July 2, V. L. Granville, noted British actor, gave several dramatic readings with a lecture on the dramatic arts.<sup>4</sup>

Major changes were made in Lippman's department. The name was changed from Public Speaking and Dramatics to Speech Arts. Courses were added and expanded:

- (1) "Dramatic Production" (102)--scene design, construction, costume design, lighting, acting, make-up, backstage organization, business and management.
- (2) "Acting" (104)--acting theory and technique, the use of the voice, face, body, and stage technique and exercises.
- (3) "Acting" (202)--advanced acting, emphasizing the one-act play and rehearsing it in the classroom.

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<sup>1</sup>"The Old Curtain Succumbs R.I.P.," College Star, Nov. 5, 1920, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Pedagog, 1931, p. 96. [The "green room" is a traditional area in the theatre for actors to await entrances on stage or for conversation.]

<sup>3</sup>"Shakespeare Players to Present McBeth [sic] Here Feb. 17," College Star, Jan. 14, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"V. L. Granville, Dramatic Reader Pleases Audience," College Star, June 27, 1931, p. 1.

(4) "Stage Direction" (204)--students were to select a play, a cast, rehearse, edit the script and construct a prompt book.

(5) "Play Production" (206)--a weekly classroom session where students worked on the current production. (C., 1930-31, pp. 99-103.)

### 1931-1932

Unfortunately, there are several periods in the 1930s for which no College newspaper is extant. The 1931-32 year is one of these. The San Marcos paper, however, contains some records on the College Theatre.

In October, Lippman held his first tryout session for The Queen's Husband by Robert E. Sherwood. Approximately forty students tried out. At the same time, Lippman announced his intention to produce five shows and one student-directed bill.<sup>1</sup> Played on October 30 and 31, The Queen's Husband seemed to please both audiences. The College critic noted "lapses in character" in certain individuals but was generally pleased with the over-all effect, costumes and sets. In this production, as well as several others, a faculty member took on a role.<sup>2</sup>

Very little information can be found on the rest of the productions that year. Bartlett Cormack's melodrama, The Racket, was performed on January 29 and 30.<sup>3</sup> On May 2 and 3, two student-directed plays, Midnight Episode by Catherine Richards and Strategy by Frank Buchanan, were presented on a bill of student-written plays. The latter was directed by the

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<sup>1</sup>"College Theatre Holds Initial Tryout," San Marcos Record, Oct. 2, 1931, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>"'The Queen's Husband' Pleased Two Critical Audiences," San Marcos Record, Nov. 6, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players Present 'The Racket' Tonight," San Marcos Record, Jan. 29, 1932, p. 1.

author.<sup>1</sup> The two audiences were "large and enthusiastic." The College reviewer was quite complimentary, but devoted most of his critique to an outline of the plots.<sup>2</sup> In the summer (July 9-11), Lippman directed Androcles and the Lion by George Bernard Shaw.<sup>3</sup>

The College yearbook mentions a production of Tommy by Howard Lindsay and Bertrand Robinson. This show was called the most "significant" presentation of the season,<sup>4</sup> although no information is recorded on it in the San Marcos newspaper. In a 1935 issue of the College paper, more plays are indicated as being performed in the 1931-32 year: The Boor by Anton Chekhov, The Man in the Bowler Hat by A. A. Milne, and Trifles by Susan Glaspell. In all likelihood, these were student-directed plays. One more production was mentioned in the 1935 paper: Outward Bound by Sutton Vane. Mr. Lippman probably directed this show at the beginning of the first summer term.<sup>5</sup>

There were two professional and one amateur presentations on campus that year. On October 17, the Jitney Players brought the melodrama Murder in the Red Barn,<sup>6</sup> and on November 20 the Ben Greet Players, an English

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<sup>1</sup>"Reception Will Follow College One-Act Plays," San Marcos Record, April 29, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>"Two Original One-Act Plays Please Large Audiences Monday-Tuesday," San Marcos Record, May 6, 1932, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players Will Present Play July 9-11," San Marcos Record, July 8, 1932, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Pedagog, 1932 (pages unnumbered).

<sup>5</sup>"College Theatre Boasts Successful Shows," College Star, Aug. 15, 1935, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>"Jitney Players to Present 'The Murder in the Red Barn,' Main Auditorium, Saturday," San Marcos Record, Oct. 16, 1931, p. 2.

company, performed Twelfth Night for a matinee and Macbeth that evening.<sup>1</sup> On July 25, The San Antonio Little Theatre brought in four one-acts: Grapes Are Sometimes Sweet by Josephine Niggli, The Boor by Anton Chekhov, Sorella, and Yes Nellie.<sup>2</sup>

In 1931, the College catalog announced that Speech Arts would be accepted as a second minor to a major in English. Because the Speech Arts area was becoming an independent department, English courses dealing with theatre will no longer be mentioned in this thesis. All courses in Speech Arts remained the same with one exception: "Continental and English Drama" (224) and "World Drama Since 1922" (225) could be considered for either English or Speech credit. The latter was a revision of "Modern Drama." Students studied twenty-five plays, stressing American dramatists since 1910 and younger European dramatists. (C., 1931-32, p. 100.)

### 1932-1933

The number of plays was increased in the 1932-33 season. The Perfect Alibi by A. A. Milne was played on November 5 and 6, 1932. The College critic was still rather harsh, remarking that the British accent of one actor "would have set an Oxford senior aghast. Nothing like it was ever heard in the land of Johnny Bull."<sup>3</sup> One young lady was said to have over-acted; one actor could not be heard and "over-expressed" with his face. Sets were fine, but the suggestion was made that the curtain should

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<sup>1</sup>"Ben Greet Players Here for Two Shakespeare Plays Friday," San Marcos Record, Nov. 20, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"College Lyceum Presents Players From San Antonio," San Marcos Record, July 29, 1932, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players Get Workout in 'Perfect Alibi'," College Star, Nov. 9, 1932, p. 1.

fall on both sides of the stage at the same time.<sup>1</sup> Lippman's next production, January 27 and 28, was Martin Flavin's Children of the Moon.<sup>2</sup> Seldom did he or any of his predecessors attempt anything so serious in nature. Though the reviewer admitted college theatre should not be compared with professional theatre, he expected a professional performance:

The tragedy was not badly done here. As college plays go, it was well above the average; but no member of the cast is yet ready to crash the portals of Broadway--nor yet, for that matter, to set Hollywood ablaze.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the review, Children of the Moon was a popular show and a very striking photograph was printed in the Theatre Arts Monthly magazine.<sup>4</sup> In May, Philip Barry's Holiday was presented for Commencement Week. Designed for the show was one of the most "novel" sets yet constructed at Southwest Texas.<sup>5</sup> The scenery was said to be "unique in design, showing up, as it were, like a friendly gathering of Mother Goose Rhymes, or the like."<sup>6</sup>

Monroe Lippman seemed to be knowledgeable in technical aspects of theatre. Miss Taylor recalled:

Monroe was equally good at technical work and at play direction. He was meticulous about the details of setting, costuming, props, and

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>"College Theatre to Present 'Children of the Moon' in Two Night Performances," College Star, Jan. 25, 1933, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>"College Theatre Shows Marked Improvement, Yet Falls Short," College Star, Feb. 1, 1933, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"College Theatre Boasts Successful Shows," College Star, Aug. 15, 1935, p. 3. [Theatre Arts Monthly was a well-known national magazine.]

<sup>5</sup>"Work on 'Holiday' Being Accelerated," College Star, May 17, 1933, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"Philip Barry's 'Holiday' to be Presented Here Two Nights," College Star, May 24, 1933, p. 1.



lighting. . . . I do remember working with several stage managers who were trained by Monroe. They were loud, positive, profane when necessary, unimpressed by actors, and capable of keeping a production running smoothly and efficiently.<sup>1</sup>

Lippman had some very definite ideas on tryout sessions. Often he would take from one to two weeks to cast a show. Students were to have a dramatic reading prepared and were to have read the entire show before tryouts. Always, the cast was tentative until he was sure that each actor was correct for the role.

College Players remained active during the 1932-33 year, but just before the summer session began, Lippman made some major alterations. College Players was divided into four organizations:

- (1) Alumni Players, made up of former Southwest Texas drama students.
- (2) College Players, made up of students who had gained enough points to join the club.
- (3) Freshmen Players, made up of freshmen and new students who wished to become involved in College Theatre.
- (4) Purple Mask, made up of juniors, seniors, graduates and faculty members who had gained at least one hundred points.

College Players were to be responsible for the major productions during the long term and one to three one-acts in the summer session. Freshmen Players were to present one-acts during the long term. Alumni Players could present performances at any convenient time, when graduates could come together to rehearse.<sup>2</sup>

Though Lippman had planned for the Alumni Players to do Ferenc Molnar's The Play's the Thing, he cancelled the show and presented three

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<sup>1</sup>Jean Taylor, personal letter.

<sup>2</sup>"College Theatre to Make Change," College Star, June 14, 1933, p. 1.

one-acts: Rising of the Moon by Lady Gregory, The Game of Chess by Kenneth Sawyer and The Twelve Pound Look by James Barrie. The second of these was done by the Alumni Players. One unit-set was designed for all three shows.<sup>1</sup> The July performances were enhanced by musical interludes played by the College band.<sup>2</sup>

Lippman was on leave during the second summer term. Professor L. A. Osgood, extension service instructor for the College, took over the Speech Arts classes and directed J. Hamilton Kanes' Romance Over Nice, staged August 18.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1933-1934

The College newspaper is missing for the 1933-34 year, but fortunately, the San Marcos newspaper was quite complete on its coverage of College productions. The first show was The Nut Farm by John C. Brownell. The production date is uncertain, but it probably played either late in September or early in November.<sup>4</sup> The second show of the year, Ten Nights In a Barroom by William W. Pratt, was presented on November 27 and 28. In between the acts were singing, dancing and "elocutionists."<sup>5</sup> A set was designed as a replica of a saloon interior in the days of "Demon Rum and

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<sup>1</sup>"Three One-Acts to be Theatre's Last Production," College Star, June 28, 1933, pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>2</sup>"One-Acts Presented to Large Audience," College Star, July 12, 1933, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Players to Present 'Romance Over Nice,'" College Star, Aug. 9, 1933, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'The Nut Farm' is Initial Production of College Theatre," San Marcos Record, Sept. 20, 1933, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>"'Ten Nights' to be Revived by College Players Next Month," San Marcos Record, Oct. 13, 1933, p. 9.

Ten Nights." Costumes were either rented or borrowed and the townspeople were helpful in gathering costumes and properties. Dr. L. N. Wright of the English Department was the company manager, but Lippman directed the show.<sup>1</sup> The next presentation was by the Freshmen Players on January 15 and 16. Lippman directed freshmen and new students in three one-act plays: The Wonder Hat by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman and Ben Hecht, The Flattering World by George Kelly and The Medicine Show by Stuart Walker.<sup>2</sup> On April 5 and 6, Three Cornered Moon by Gertrude Tonkogy was performed and all proceeds went to the Jeffersonian Literary Society to "form a nucleus of a student loan fund."<sup>3</sup> In early April, the San Marcos newspaper announced the show with a traditional statement on the play's success on Broadway. Cast and crews rehearsed and worked for four weeks. Two short plays, Jubilee, and Moliere's The Doctor In Spite of Himself, were presented on May 25 and 26. Jubilee, chiefly performed by the Alumni Players, was a southwest premiere and was only the third presentation in America. The Doctor in Spite of Himself was played on the traditional Restoration period set. Both plays were presented for Commencement Week.<sup>4</sup> At some time during the year, Lady Gregory's Rising of the Moon was performed;<sup>5</sup> however, the production date is not certain.

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<sup>1</sup>"'Ten Nights In a Barroom' to be Presented at College," San Marcos Record, Nov. 24, 1933, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>"Freshmen Players Make Appearance Jan. 15, 16," San Marcos Record, Jan. 12, 1934, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>"Players to Present Bright Comedy as Spring Attraction," San Marcos Record, Mar. 30, 1934, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>"Two Short Plays are Scheduled for Night at College," San Marcos Record, May 25, 1934, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup>"College Players in Benefit Play Tonight," San Marcos Record, April 6, 1934, p. 4.

Drama courses were curtailed severely in the 1934-35 year. Only three courses were offered:

- (1) "Elements of Play Production" (73)--play production in high school: organization and functions of a production staff, design, construction, painting and scenery, lighting, costuming and make-up.
- (2) "Acting" (77)--for the teacher-director of school theatre: acting theory and technique, incorporating the use of one-act plays, exercises and scenes from full-length plays.
- (3) "Stage Production" (83)--for the teacher-director of school theatre: problems of the director, selection of plays, choosing of a cast, rehearsal, editing, and composing a promptbook. (C., 1934-35, pp. 74-75.)

#### 1934-1935

When Lippman came back in the fall of 1934, he began work on Frederick Longsdale's Aren't We All. He began immediately to develop characterization in his actors, postponing work on the set until some of his male students were more in control of their roles. Lippman seldom used the manuscript when he directed--he knew almost all the lines from memory.<sup>1</sup> For Aren't We All and for the rest of the year, Mr. Lippman hired a full-time "stage keeper" to work on construction of sets. By the first of November, the sets were nearly complete.<sup>2</sup> On November 15 and 16, the show was presented to an audience of four hundred fifty, then to a capacity house the second night. In between acts were piano "musical numbers." The

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<sup>1</sup>"'Aren't We All' Cast is Now Well Into Rehearsals," College Star, Oct. 24, 1934, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>"'Aren't We All' Set Construction Nears Completion," College Star, Nov. 7, 1934, p. 1.

audience was appreciative, and Aren't We All was reported to be a successful production.<sup>1</sup>

On February 4 and 5, Elizabeth McFadden's melodrama Double Door was presented by a rather small cast.<sup>2</sup> Lovely costumes and a well-constructed, well-designed set enhanced the show.<sup>3</sup> The College reviewer called it the best show of the year and the audiences were quite receptive.<sup>4</sup>

Because the staging, acting and costuming were very difficult, Lippman began rehearsals for John T. Balderston's Berkeley Square rather early. Tryouts began on March 11<sup>5</sup> and the play was presented on May 20 and 21. Beautiful costumes from New York were rented for the College actors and students were thrilled to find actor Leslie Howard's name in one of the coats.<sup>6</sup> The sets consisted of a flat system with small electric bulbs, representing gas lights, on the walls; floor-length windows with drapes that pulled back to reveal a cut-out of Berkeley Square; tapestries on the walls and beautiful period furniture.<sup>7</sup>

Plans were made in early June to present Oliver Goldsmith's

<sup>1</sup>"College Theatre Has Successful Play Production," College Star, Nov. 21, 1934, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Monday and Tuesday, Dates for 'Double Door'," College Star, Jan. 30, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Double Door, photographs, belonging to Jean Taylor.

<sup>4</sup>"The College Theatre Play, 'Double Door' Proves Best of Year," College Star, Feb. 6, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Tryouts for College Play to be Monday," College Star, Mar. 6, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Jean Taylor, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 24, 1972. [Leslie Howard played the original "Peter" in Berkeley Square]

<sup>7</sup>Berkeley Square, photographs, belonging to Jean Taylor.

She Stoops to Conquer<sup>1</sup> but for some reason, the play was dropped and This Thing Called Love by Edwin Burk was presented in its place. Sets were constructed by the Play Production class.<sup>2</sup> Lippman made his Southwest Texas acting debut in This Thing Called Love when, on the night before the opening, an actor was injured in a jump from a burning two-story building. Mr. Lippman took the role at the last minute and was received with much applause.<sup>3</sup>

The two performances presented by professional companies were done during the summer session. On June 12 and 13, The Great European Passion Play, a spectacular affair depicting the happenings in the New Testament, was performed in the College auditorium. The company came originally from Freiberg, Germany, and began touring in the United States in 1928. There were eight hundred fifty costume changes and five tons of scenery.<sup>4</sup> Choirs from several San Marcos churches provided the music.<sup>5</sup> The second professional presentation was a double bill: Richard Sheridan's The Rivals and Moliere's The Merchant Gentleman, performed by the Coffey Miller Company on June 14.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"'She Stoops to Conquer' Try-Outs Held by Lippman," College Star, June 12, 1935, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>"'This Thing Called Love' to be Staged Thursday, Friday," College Star, July 11, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Jean Taylor, private interview.

<sup>4</sup>"Two Performances of Religious Drama Scheduled Here," College Star, June 5, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Crowded House Greet's Passion Play Here," College Star, June 12, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"'The Rivals' Famous Sheridan Comedy Comes Here Friday," College Star, June 12, 1935, pp. 1 and 7.

## 1935-1936

Although Lippman took leave of absence for two years to complete work on his Ph.D., 1935-37 will be included under the "Monroe Lippman" chapter since he returned the second summer session of 1937. In his place were Buren C. Robbins, director of Speech Arts for 1935-36, and Claude S. Sifrett in 1936-37. Unfortunately, there are no College newspapers available for these years and the San Marcos paper may not have complete records on Southwest Texas theatre activities.

From all indications, Mr. Robbins directed four major productions and sponsored a bill of student-directed one-acts. The first major production was Rose Franken's Another Language, presented on November 23.<sup>1</sup> The second production, Nine Pine Street by John Colton and Carleton Miles, was performed on May 21 and 22.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Robbins made a special effort to cast the show with inexperienced students.<sup>3</sup> Some time in June, Porter Emerson's The Bad Man was presented as the last major production of the year.<sup>4</sup> The College yearbook mentions one other show, Oliver, Oliver by Paul Osborn,<sup>5</sup> but no reference is made to a production date. The show must have been given some time in the winter, however, because Miss Taylor remembered that the combination of a "blue norther" on performance nights and costumes

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<sup>1</sup>"Plans Made for College Homecoming Saturday," San Marcos Record, Nov. 22, 1935, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"College Play to Show Next Week," San Marcos Record, May 15, 1936, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Jean Taylor, private interview.

<sup>4</sup>"Robbins Selects Play to be Given at College Soon," San Marcos Record, July 3, 1936, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1936, p. 90.

consisting of brief tennis clothing, resulted in some rather frigid evenings.<sup>1</sup> Costumes were "present-day"--sets were well-constructed, but not as well designed as in the previous year.<sup>2</sup> The last bill of the 1935-36 season was three student-directed one-acts. Frances Pemberton Spencer's Dregs, Alfred Kreymborg's Manikin and Minikin and Helen Simpsen's Pan in Pimlico closed the year on August 14 and 15.<sup>3</sup>

A few changes were made in drama courses:

- (1) "Stagecraft" (75) was added to benefit future drama teachers.

Instruction was given in set design, construction, painting and lighting. Laboratory hours were required.

- (2) "Stage Production" (83) was changed to "Stage Direction" (117).

The course remained basically the same with emphasis on the director.

- (3) "Types of World Drama in English" (143) was accepted for Speech credit. (C., 1935-36, pp. 76-79.)

### 1936-1937

Even fewer plays were performed under Seifort's direction in the 1936-37 season. The first was James Barrie's The Admirable Crichton, presented on November 13, preceded with a concert by the College orchestra.<sup>4</sup> The only other production was The Rivals by Richard Sheridan.<sup>5</sup> The production date is not known.

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<sup>1</sup>Jean Taylor, private interview.

<sup>2</sup>Oliver, Oliver, photographs, belonging to Jean Taylor.

<sup>3</sup>"Theatre to Show Three One-Acts August 14, 15," San Marcos Record, Aug. 7, 1936, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>"Homecoming Proves to be Gala Affair," San Marcos Record, Nov. 20, 1936, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1937, pp. 91 and 93.



In the middle of the 1937 summer session, Lippman returned to Southwest Texas and presented six scenes from full-length plays. The scenes were from Kaufman and Hart's Once in a Lifetime, Maxwell Anderson's Both Your Houses and Winterset, A. A. Milne's Dover Road and Romantic Age, and George Bernard Shaw's Village of Wooring. This project was produced by the directing class.<sup>1</sup>

One professional production was staged on July 7: The Pollard Players brought Elliott Lester's Take My Advice and performed it in the College auditorium.<sup>2</sup>

Though Lippman was expected to stay on, he left San Marcos in the fall of 1938 to take a position at Tulane University. He became chairman of the Tulane Drama Department during some of its most active years. During the time Lippman was at Southwest Texas, he had built an impressive reputation. He produced twenty full-length plays and eighteen one-acts.<sup>3</sup> His students went to all areas in the country for positions: many were speech teachers, several worked in community theatres, one became a member of the State Legislature, one a drama critic for the Austin American newspaper, another a lawyer and another a technical director for a theatre in Big Springs, Texas.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"College Theatre Presents Play Tomorrow Night," San Marcos Record, Aug. 20, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Take My Advice is Comedy for Wednesday Nite," San Marcos Record, July 2, 1937, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Mary Kessler, "'Duke' Will Return to College as Doctor After Two-Year Leave," San Marcos Record, June 18, 1937.

<sup>4</sup>College Theatre Boasts Successful Shows," College Star, Aug. 15, 1935, p. 3.

Lippman made tremendous improvements in theatrical equipment at Southwest Texas. Lighting equipment had been connected to several dimmers mounted permanently on the left side of the stage. In the beginning of the Lippman years, there were probably only about ten spotlights and a row of footlights. A portable box was built to house a dimmer system and in this manner, the lighting technician could move his equipment to an area in the wings where he could see the action on stage. Before, he had to rely on a relay messenger for his cues. The Department was particularly proud of a set of border lights where red, green and blue lights could be worked individually. Some time later (probably about 1936 or 1937), the portable dimmer board was placed in the back of the auditorium and a light booth built around it. In this manner, the light crews could always see and hear the action on stage. Hanging lights, however, was a difficult matter. Students had to crawl through a very fragile attic or hoist themselves up to the ceiling with ropes. In one show, small lights were placed around the stage to act as a cuing system. Mr. John W. Hopson (presently a chemistry professor at Southwest Texas), remembered a sliding panel that crew members would lift at the sign of the small light.<sup>1</sup>

Lippman was highly respected by his students. Miss Taylor said, "There was an awful lot of hero-worship for Monroe Lippman."<sup>2</sup> This respect was reflected in Lippman productions:

When he came to this school . . . The College stage looked like an apple crate draped with tissue paper and placed very crudely out in front of the auditorium. . . . The College Players had lousy organization with only nine members. . . . There was no fund provided for College theatre

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<sup>1</sup>John W. Hopson, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 26, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Taylor, private interview.

productions as there was no College Theatre and very few productions. After a few seasons of successful directing and producing, Mr. Lippman now has a large, well equipped stage with most of the necessary facilities for lighting and scenery hanging. The College Players are organized into the most progressive and most active organization on campus. . . . He has been successful in securing a working fund out of the blanket tax appropriations for the productions of more and better shows.

. . . . .  
This is an enviable mark for future directors to shoot at, and in conclusion, let us say that in case he is ever rewarded with the success he deserves, the vacancy which he leaves at SWTSTC will be hard to fill.<sup>1</sup>

Monroe Lippman's achievements at Southwest Texas were to influence College drama for several years to come.

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<sup>1</sup> "College Theatre Director Has Many Successes," College Star, Oct. 17, 1934, p. 1.

## CHAPTER IV

### DALLAS WILLIAMS

#### 1937-1938

Though Monroe Lippman was an excellent Director of Theatre, his successors, Mr. Dallas Williams in drama and Mr. Hugh F. Seabury in speech, were also successful. Both of these men began their careers at Southwest Texas at the beginning of the 1937 term. The work they accomplished as a team was greatly responsible for a new, well-organized department.

When President Evans interviewed Seabury in August of 1937, he asked that suggestions for changes be made before the fall term began. Because he was hesitant to make recommendations until he had arrived in San Marcos, Mr. Seabury rushed to Southwest Texas soon after his position as chairman of the department was certain. After reviewing the situation, he made several suggestions:

My philosophy which guided me in making proposals to President Evans consisted of several facets:

1. Make every reasonable effort to separate the speech and drama from the Department of English and into a separate Department.
2. Extend the offerings in a Department of Speech to at least 36 semester hours in order to be able to offer a degree of Master of Arts instead of only a degree of Bachelor of Arts with a minor in Speech even if the degree were to be under the wing of the Department of Education. If my memory serves me correctly, the degree turned out to be a Master of Education with a major in Speech with a paucity of offerings in dramatic art, and the same in speech.
3. Since your University was then a Teachers College and most of the graduates of the college who were prepared in Speech were to teach speech, the teachers in the area were to be prepared with an emphasis on speech preparation, or on dramatic art preparation, or both with less emphasis on either or both.
4. Since no one person could teach all of the courses and direct both forensics and theatre activities on an extra-class and intercollegiate

basis especially if a beginning course in the area were to be required of students in the Department. . . . Due to the number of students electing the first course in the Department, additional faculty members in the Department would be needed immediately.

5. Offerings in speech were to be taken by students interested primarily in Theatre and Offerings in Theatre were thought to be important for students in speech, even though each student should be helped to choose the courses thought best to serve his goals.

. . . As I remember, he [President Evans] did not reject a single one of our proposals.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Seabury was an excellent administrator. Though he was a speech instructor, he was anxious that the Department develop a balanced program of speech and drama. Some of the changes he made were:

- (1) He saw that the Purple Mask Club was acting more as a social club than an honorary organization, "blackballing" certain students who had fulfilled the requirements to become members. His first "battle," as he called it, was to create a more just group.
- (2) When informed that the "greenroom" at the top of Old Main was to be closed, Seabury agreed on the condition that another room would be provided. It was, and within the year, the old room was closed forever.
- (3) To reverse previous tendencies to cast the same students in leading roles, Seabury, with the help of Mr. Williams, saw that more people were given an opportunity.
- (4) College Players, a theatre organization that exists today, was developed. Its purpose was to include all students in some society while they were working on requirements for Purple Mask.<sup>2</sup>

Due to Mr. Seabury's recommendations, a Department of Speech Arts was created and a major in speech was realized. He was interested in the individual student and his development in the Department. When asked about the goals of the Department, Seabury stated simply: "The act of promoting the all-around and continuous growth of the individual. Speech has to offer education."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Hugh F. Seabury, personal letter, April 19, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>"Hugh F. Seabury Talks to Men's Faculty Meeting," College Star, Oct. 20, 1937, p. 1.

In the fall of 1937, Dallas Williams arrived on campus to become Director of Theatre, and began to further the development of the college theatre at a rapid pace. His first year was a tremendous undertaking.

Williams and Seabury decided it would be best to begin the year with a sophisticated comedy and, by the end of the term, present something more serious. Plans were made for three full-length major productions and a one-act every three or four weeks.<sup>1</sup> This was an impossible schedule, but Dallas Williams made an admirable attempt to carry it through.

On November 19 and 20, the first production, Accent on Youth by Samson Raphaelson, was presented by the new director.<sup>2</sup> Though casting was done by both Seabury and Williams, Williams was the sole director.<sup>3</sup> Try-outs began late in September and the search for an actor to play the lead role was still in progress in mid-October.<sup>4</sup> The sets, designed by Mr. Williams, were modern for 1937, with neat, matching furniture instead of an assortment of pieces from many people's homes. New flats were built under the leadership of the stage manager, a student who was also in charge of set construction.<sup>5</sup> A thirty-minute concert by the college orchestra

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<sup>1</sup>College Star, Sept. 22, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Accent on Youth, program from the collection of production files, Speech and Drama offices, Southwest Texas State University.

<sup>3</sup>"Try-outs Started for First College Theatre Opening," College Star, Sept. 29, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Casting of Coming Theatre Production Nearing Completion," College Star, Oct. 20, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Set Construction for College Play Nears Completion," College Star, Oct. 27, 1937, p. 1.

preceded the play.<sup>1</sup> One review said the production was " . . . very well executed . . . ,"<sup>2</sup> while another called it a bit "amateurish"<sup>3</sup> but both seemed to agree it was a good show.

Even while Accent on Youth was in rehearsal, a new group called "Experimental Theatre" was becoming active. Williams felt that a series of student-directed, experimental one-acts would actively involve students who were not working on a major production. The philosophy of this new idea was quite sound:

First, it aims to give students, interested in broadening their cultural background, a knowledge of and appreciation for the various aspects of theatre art and second, to train students in the principles of acting, stagecraft, directing and scenic design.<sup>4</sup>

Since there were no membership qualifications for Experimental Theatre, any interested student was encouraged to become a part of it. It was such an eclectic adventure that drama students could look to several areas of work: design, costumes, direction, make-up and acting. By participating in Experimental Theatre, students could gain points to become members of College Players and, by further work, gain points for entrance into Purple Mask.<sup>5</sup> Through this program, many one-acts were produced in the four-year period Dallas Williams was at Southwest Texas. Each play had one or two student directors, and, usually, several committees such as: the casting.

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<sup>1</sup>"Little Symphony Will Play for Theatre Show," College Star, Oct. 20, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Accent on Youth' to be Presented Again Tonight," College Star, Nov. 19, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Accent on Youth Proves Success at Homecoming," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Where the Cross Is Made, The Same Old Thing and Rehearsal, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

committee, research committee, typing committee and critique committee. A critique session was held after each production.

On December 2, the first Experimental Theatre one-act, Dregs by Frances Pemberton Spencer, was produced and critiqued. Before the play began, the director gave a customary introduction to the show. In the critique session afterwards, comments were made on the actors' roles. Though some felt one actor was "convincing" and another "able," another was thought to have played a mature role rather immaturely. One actor " . . . deserves a hearty comment for his ability to lie deathly still in cramping positions." Comments were exchanged on sets, make-up, lighting, diction and acting.<sup>1</sup>

Other one-acts that year were handled similarly. A Night at an Inn by Lord Dunsany, was presented on March 9<sup>2</sup> and due to the fact that the Speech and Music Departments collaborated on an operetta that year, three student-directed one-acts were presented on April 13 in lieu of another major production. Where the Cross is Made by Eugene O'Neill, Rehearsal by Christopher Morley and The Same Old Thing were the productions presented.<sup>3</sup> Plans had been made in December for a showing of The Twelve-Pound Look by James Barrie but it is doubtful that it was ever produced.<sup>4</sup> Each

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<sup>1</sup>"Dregs," College Star, Dec. 8, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"One-Act Play to be Presented in Aud. Wednesday," College Star, March 9, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Three One-Act Plays Scheduled for April," College Star, Mar. 23, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'Twelve-Pound Look' Will be Second One Act," College Star, Dec. 8, 1937, p. 1.



Experimental Theatre play was reviewed by a committee before it had a public performance.<sup>1</sup> With all the advantages of experience in the theatre and only ten cents for membership dues,<sup>2</sup> the Experimental Theatre was a great success.

Two more major productions were done that spring: Magda by Herman Sudermann and Once in a Blue Moon by Noble Cain. The production of Magda was apparently a successful one. An effort was made to portray the "old German spirit" in the setting. A faded wallpaper effect was accomplished with stenciling and lined with oak paneling. On a dish rack above some large windows were reproductions of old hand-painted china. Furniture was obtained from some of the older San Marcos and New Braunfels homes.<sup>3</sup> On March 3 and 4, Magda was viewed by large crowds. Though the length of it was difficult for an untrained audience, most seemed to enjoy it.<sup>4</sup>

The second production, the operetta Once in a Blue Moon, was sponsored mainly by the Music Department under the direction of Miss Mary Stuart Butler. (Miss Butler had earlier directed some of the first operettas at Southwest Texas.) One hundred cast members rehearsed nightly until performances on May 11 and 12.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Williams and his students were

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<sup>1</sup>"One Act Play is Cast on Tuesday," College Star, Feb. 16, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"One-Act Play to be Presented in Aud. Wednesday," College Star, Mar. 9, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Crew Completes Set for Magda," College Star, Feb. 23, 1938, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>McGhee, "'Magda' is Successful Production," College Star, Mar. 9, 1938, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>"Operetta Cast Works Nightly on Production," College Star, May 4, 1938, p. 1.

kept busy on the sets.<sup>1</sup> Although the College review of the show was rather severe on the operetta itself, much praise was given to Williams' sets. One "garden set" was said to have been the best in the College's history.<sup>2</sup>

Drama organizations were active that year. College Players presented their annual Jamboree,<sup>3</sup> and a school assembly of radio acts, skits and songs;<sup>4</sup> and The Purple Mask Club initiated four new members. This made a total of thirty-two members since 1929. A large end-of-the-year banquet was held for some seventy drama students and their guests.<sup>5</sup>

The summer session, although not exceedingly active, was certainly a memorable one. The major production, Bury the Dead by Irwin Shaw, was done on August 11 and 12. Since this show is technically very difficult, it was admirable to attempt it in the summer. There were forty-three lighting cues, sounds of exploding shells and a wind made of a cylinder of yardsticks turned under stretched duck material. All cues were executed perfectly.<sup>6</sup>

On campus that spring, the professionals were primarily presenting Shakespeare. The James Hendrickson and Claire Bruce Company, Shakespearean

<sup>1</sup>Once in a Blue Moon, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Tor E. Adore, "Operetta Review," College Star, May 18, 1938, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>"Jamboree Set for Monday Night at 8," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"College Players Assembly," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Purple Mask Banquet Held on Saturday," College Star, May 18, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"More than Acting Found in a Play," College Star, July 29, 1928, p. 4.

players from New York, did Hamlet on March 16, Merchant of Venice on the afternoon of March 17 and Julius Caesar that same evening.<sup>1</sup> In April, Jack Rank did a one-man show, centered around such productions as Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet and As You Like It. Before each scene, he presented his comments on the play.<sup>2</sup> The only non-Shakespearean presentation was a lecturer, Harold A. Ehrensperger from Northwestern University, who spoke up for an appreciation of amateur theatre and the need for audience education.<sup>3</sup>

Academics that year were basically the same as the previous year. Apparently Mr. Seabury had little time to make major changes before the year began. "Stagecraft," (75), "Stage Direction" (117), "Elements of Play Production" (73), "Principles of Acting" (77) and "Types of Modern Drama" (143) remained with the curriculum. (C., 1937-38, pp. 78-79.)

#### 1938-1939

Whereas Williams had not been able to keep up with the season he had proposed at the beginning of the previous year, in the 1938-39 season he surpassed it. In September, he announced that there would be three major productions and six bills of two one-acts. A list of twenty plays was given to the "Experimental" directors from which they were to select twelve for production. The number of major and Experimental Theatre plays

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<sup>1</sup>"Shakespearean Players Billed for Three Performances on College Stage this Week," College Star, Mar. 16, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Shakespearean Revue Featured in Lyceum Here," College Star, April 27, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Drama Lecturer Favors Audience Education in U.S.," College Star, Feb. 23, 1938, p. 1.

predicted by Williams, however, was expanded by the end of the year.<sup>1</sup>

The year began with two student-directed one-acts: Trifles by Susan Glasspell and Box and Cox by J. M. Morton on October 13.<sup>2</sup> The plays were shown to a full house, followed by the traditional critique session. The group was quite complimentary, indicating a marked improvement over last year's experimental plays. Mr. Seabury was asked to comment on some of the shows he had seen in New York during the summer and he seemed to feel that the Southwest Texas production of Bury the Dead held up nicely to the New York production.<sup>3</sup>

The first major presentation of the year was First Lady by Katherine Dayton and George S. Kaufman, presented on November 18 and 19. For six weeks, forty students worked on the two sets required by the show. There were twenty-four cast members who worked that same amount of time on the production itself.<sup>4</sup> The review was rather harsh on the actors. Bad acoustics, mixed with the heat of the weather, seemed to make the audience restless in the first act. More variety was needed from individuals and costumes were not always right for each character. On the other hand, there were no weak roles and the audience seemed to like the production.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"College Theatre to Present Three Major Productions," College Star, Sept. 21, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Experimental Theatre Presents Two One-Act Plays Thursday," College Star, Oct. 12, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Theatre Presents One Act Plays," College Star, Oct. 14, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'First Lady' Will be Given Again Tonight for Homecomers," College Star, Nov. 18, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"'First Lady' Actors Better Than Average," College Star, Nov. 14, 1938, p. 4.

The College Players' Jamboree went back to presenting a student-directed production. The Drunkard, a melodrama by William H. Smith, was performed on December 12 to over two hundred students in the girls' gym. All seemed to enjoy it.<sup>1</sup>

Next, there were two bills of Experimental Theatre one-acts: Pink and Patches by Margaret Bland and The Intruder by Maurice Maeterlinck, presented on December 19;<sup>2</sup> Submerged by H. Stuart Cottman and There's Always Tomorrow presented on February 16 and 17.<sup>3</sup> An effort was made in these productions to involve new people: " . . . play directors are urged to select those with the least experience and pair them with those who have had more experience, in order to teach the inexperienced ones the ropes."<sup>4</sup>

The next bill of one-acts was Minuet by Louis N. Harker and Moonshine by Arthur Hopkins. These were also presented twice, once in an assembly on March 2, and once the evening of March 3. Minuet was double-cast so each cast played one performance.<sup>5</sup>

A series of three one-acts comprised the next bill on March 17: The Cajun by Ada Jack Carver, Miss Julie by August Strindberg and The Eve in Evelyn.<sup>6</sup> The last of these was directed by Mr. Williams and taken

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<sup>1</sup>Dorothy Voitle, "'Drunkard' Cast, Others Are Good; Wallace Wins," College Star, Dec. 14, 1938, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Pink and Patches and The Intruder, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Theatre Presents Plays in Assembly Thursday Morning," College Star, Feb. 15, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Dorothy Voitle, "Experimental Theatre," College Star, Jan. 25, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>"Assembly Plan for Thursday is One-Act Plays," College Star, Mar. 1, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>The Cajun, Miss Julie, The Eve in Evelyn, program, Speech-Drama production files.

to the Baylor University One-Act Play Festival on March 23, 24 and 25.

Dr. T. Earl Pardoe of Brigham Young University critiqued the shows,<sup>1</sup> and was very complimentary of William's choice of play, the performance of the leading actress, the staging, movement, balance and tempo of the entire show.<sup>2</sup>

The Experimental Theatre group did not limit themselves to the production of student-directed one-act plays; often the group had discussions on such theatrical items as lighting, make-up and direction. This year they had a three-day series of discussions.<sup>3</sup> To add to this activity, the group, under the sponsorship of College Players, conducted an original one-act play contest. The student-authors were to direct their own shows with the help of some of the more experienced Experimental Theatre directors. Work was constantly in progress, but the performances had to wait until the next major production, Mary of Scotland by Maxwell Anderson, had been staged.<sup>4</sup>

Mary of Scotland was apparently one of the most magnificent productions to be done by the Department. Home Economics and Art students were asked to design accurate, period costumes.<sup>5</sup> Twenty-seven costumes were made by Home Economics students under the direction of faculty members

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<sup>1</sup>"Local Thespians Take 'Miss Julie' to Baylor Fete," College Star, Mar. 22, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Dramatic Entry Praised Highly," College Star, Mar. 29, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>"Experimental Theatre Has Discussion Series," College Star, Mar. 1, 1939, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"Dramatists Submit Plays for Contest," College Star, April 19, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"Students Will Design Costumes for Play," College Star, Feb. 15, 1939, p. 3.

from both departments.<sup>1</sup> Scenery was designed and built in six units for the seven scenes in the show.<sup>2</sup> The design consisted of an assortment of arches, levels and stairs. Again, Mr. Williams designed the set and a student was in charge of construction. The performances on May 3 and 4 represented ' . . . perhaps the most outstanding achievement in costuming, acting, and staging in its [the college theatre's] history."<sup>3</sup> Actors worked nightly and a total of one hundred students participated in the production in some capacity.<sup>4</sup> The audience was quite receptive. The Drama Department had always been somewhat wary of presenting serious productions and one can see why from this statement in the college newspaper:

They, the audience, have, at any play presented, whether it was comedy, melodrama, or tragedy, had only one reaction--laughter. If the hero was killed, the audience laughed; if there was a love scene, the audience howled; if the characters threw pies at each other the audience practically rolled into the aisles; and if the play was extremely tragic, the audience still laughed.<sup>5</sup>

Soon after Mary of Scotland closed, the original one-act plays were staged. The Fires of Wakefield, Girls House and Time and the Man had their premieres on May 19, 1939.<sup>6</sup> The plays were judged by three English

<sup>1</sup>"'Mary of Scotland' Will be Presented Here Next Week," College Star, April 26, 1939, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>"Try-Outs for Major Productions are Set for March 18 & 20," College Star, Feb. 15, 1939, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>"'Mary of Scotland' Will Be Presented Here Next Week," College Star, April 26, 1939, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"'Mary of Scotland' Opens in Auditorium Tonight at 8:15," College Star, Mar. 3, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Congratulations, Audience!," College Star, May 10, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>The Fires of Wakefield, Girls House and Time and the Man, program, Speech-Drama production files.

professors, two of which were L. E. Derrick and L. N. Wright, active men in drama during the earlier years.<sup>1</sup>

A major in speech was finally offered. A student could not take over twenty-seven hours in the Speech Department and he had to take at least one course in speech or drama (whichever he was not emphasizing in his major). Students were encouraged to combine speech and English for a major. (C., 1938-39, p. 63.)

Drama courses were quite different. "Acting" was combined with "Oral Interpretation" to become "Oral Interpretation and Acting" (73). The course was to deal with technique, stage terminology, characterization, stage movement and diction. It was designed for those who might direct in theatres outside of the college. "Play Production" (77) was designed for prospective directors as well. Play selection, casting, theory, rehearsal, production staff, make-up and audience psychology were some of the items studied. "Stagecraft" (113) added a laboratory, so that students were expected to work outside the classroom. "Costuming" (137) dealt with design, history and make-up. "Development of the Theatre" (233) dealt with the history of theatre with an emphasis on theatre architecture and design, social evolution and types of drama. All of these courses were new or revised. All other courses were discontinued. (C., 1938-39, pp. 69-71.)

An article in the College newspaper mentions a model set built for Karel Capek's R.U.R. as a special project for the Modern Drama class taught by Mr. Williams. The set had a grand drape, an act curtain, a footlight trough, rugs and leather-upholstered furniture, a swivel chair that

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<sup>1</sup>"Three Original One-Act Plays Finish Theatre Season Here in Main Auditorium," College Star, May 17, 1939, p. 1.



swiveled, desks, a typewriter, a lamp that lit, miniature test tubes and a microscope.<sup>1</sup>

For drama students, the summer session was an active one. Three Experimental one-acts and one major production were presented. The one-acts, Mirage by George M. P. Baird, Maid of France by Harold Brighthouse and Helena's Husband by Phillip Moeler were staged on July 7. All three plays cost less than twenty-five dollars to stage and costume, yet were called the best one-acts of the year. The seven costumes made for Helena's Husband cost \$4.75<sup>2</sup>—one beautiful Grecian dress was made of an old curtain.<sup>3</sup> Though the rattle of fans, trains and cars made quite a bit of noise through the open windows of Old Main, all went well according to the college reviewer.<sup>4</sup>

The final major production was Room Service by John Murray and Allen Boretz, presented on August 17 and 18. The reviewer said that actors went a little too rapidly and that the set was not pretty but accurate, and ended by calling it "the most entertaining production offered by the players under Williams' directorship."<sup>5</sup>

Only one professional group performed that year: on June 30, the

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<sup>1</sup>Opal Frances Vernon, "Backstage," College Star, June 16, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., July 14, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Florene Beckham, "Backstage," College Star, July 28, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Vernon, "Backstage," June 16, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"Final Presentation of 'Room Service' Scheduled Tonight," College Star, Aug. 18, 1939, p. 8.

Hansom Players from Chicago presented On Borrowed Time by Paul Osborn.<sup>1</sup>

Very little theatrical equipment was added to the Department. However, the grid was reinforced with steel and the lighting improved by a double batten along the concert border drape.<sup>2</sup>

An article was written by an advanced drama student advising new drama students on how to gain notice in the Department. Because this statement is so universal to college drama, it might be well to end the analysis of the year with it:

Scrub your paint buckets, run errands, get hammers, hunt lost tools, sweep floors--do all these little thousand and one jobs that you consider beneath your dignity but while you're doing them, observe, listen, and learn from those more experienced. Then, when you're fairly certain, take a running leap and jump into the middle of it.

And those of you who have fled, come back and make a new start. Don't be discouraged because of fancied slights. The rougher the going, the better you'll feel when you've reached the top. Take it from Grandma who is still swinging a mean scrub when it comes to paint buckets.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1939-1940

After the 1938-39 season schedule, Dallas Williams slowed the pace of his program. His "slowing down," however, was not completely due to need for a recuperation period. It was in 1939-40 that the new Academic Laboratory School (later named Evans Academic Center) and auditorium were built. That year Williams had to contend with moving from Old Main to the new theatre. The auditorium was to house the theatrical productions for the next seven years until the Department decided to return to Old Main.

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<sup>1</sup>"First Summer Theatre Production in College Auditorium Tonight," College Star, June 30, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Florene Beckham, "Backstage," College Star, August 11, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Dorothy Voitle, "'College Players Are Snobs...'," College Star, Jan. 18, 1939, p. 2.

Mr. Williams apparently set high goals and even though many of them were never realized, they were admirable. He had planned in the previous year to have his Experimental group use representative plays selected from such movements as: the Free Theatre in France, the Irish Free Theatre, Expressionism, and Naturalism in Russia.<sup>1</sup> Though he did not follow this pattern, his desire to have his students knowledgeable about the new theatre movements must have carried over to the classroom. Experimental theatre had to continue in the same manner, however: students selecting a play that they could handle as inexperienced dramatists.

Though hopes were high to do Our Town by Thornton Wilder, scripts never arrived and the production was postponed indefinitely.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, the first production was performed well into the season. The annual Jamboree produced Fashion by Anna Cora Mowatt. The show was presented in the girls' gym on December 16 and was directed by Mr. Williams.<sup>3</sup>

Later that year, Noel Coward's one-act, Family Album, though not shown on campus, was taken to Abilene for the Texas Intercollegiate Dramatic Festival March 14 to 16.<sup>4</sup> The judge that year was F. L. Winship, Director of Speech Activities in Interscholastic League. Of eleven plays performed, Family Album was one of the two receiving "superior" rating. The judge praised them highly:

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<sup>1</sup>"Several One-Act Plays are to be Presented Soon," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"College Theatre Production Postponed Indefinitely," College Star, Oct. 4, 1939, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Fashion, poster, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"Theatre to Take Play to Abilene," College Star, Mar. 6, 1940, p. 1.

I didn't notice a single person who over-acted or a single person who under-acted. I saw a definite cooperation among the cast to do one thing--present a play. The excellent balance, movement, diction, character contrast, and emotional transitions revealed to me a strong director. Your play was good.<sup>1</sup>

Again, Experimental Theatre conducted an original one-act play festival on April 12. Marie Rouquette and In Her Own Way were the only two originals directed that year.<sup>2</sup> Marie Rouquette was also performed over KMAC radio in San Antonio either May 3 or 18.<sup>3</sup>

The next show was a one-act directed by Williams. Hands Across the Sea by Noel Coward was presented on May 2 and 4 in the style of "intimate" theatre, whereby actors play in the center of an area, with a close audience on two, three or four sides. Williams was the first to experiment with this type of staging on the Southwest campus. The play was presented once for a public showing and again for the Men's Faculty Club.<sup>4</sup>

The only major production that year was also the first college play to be presented in the new auditorium. Spring Dance by Philip Barry was performed on May 23 and 24. All of the technical work had to be done in Old Main and carried down to the new theatre. The auditorium was so large that audiences were asked to sit in the middle sections of both the lower floor and the balcony.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"'Family Album' Receives Superior Rank at Abilene," College Star, Mar. 20, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Marie Rouquette and In Her Own Way, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"'Marie Rouquette' to be Produced Over Air," College Star, April 24, 1940, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>"Players Present One-Act Comedy," College Star, May 15, 1940, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"College Theatre to Present Play May 23 and 24," College Star, May 22, 1940, p. 1.

Emelyn Williams' Night Must Fall, performed on July 25 and 26, was apparently a successful production. One critic said the performance had an " . . . almost professional understanding and precision;"<sup>1</sup> another said it was one of the three or four best plays in the last five years and the best acting seen in several years.<sup>2</sup>

Several professional companies appeared on campus during the 1939-40 year. Miss Eilssa Landi, stage, screen and radio personality, came to lecture on stage technique on October 31.<sup>3</sup> The Coffey-Miller Players from Chicago performed --So to Bed on February 15 and The Kings Dilemma on February 16.<sup>4</sup> (This was the first company to perform a play on the new stage.) On July 20, character actress Ruth Chorpenning performed several comic and dramatic scenes.<sup>5</sup>

Academic courses were almost exactly the same as the previous year with one addition: a course called "Forensic and College Theatre Activities" (87). This class dealt with such varied topics as acting, lighting, make-up, scenery construction, costuming, directing and practice in all speech events. (C., 1939-40, pp. 73-76.)

The Department appeared to be growing rapidly. In 1933-34, there

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<sup>1</sup>Corene Jacks, "Second Presentation of Theatre Production Scheduled Tonight," College Star, July 26, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Patrick Champion, "Cast, Crew Commended for Excellent Performance," College Star, Aug. 2, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Landi to Appear on College Stage as Series First," College Star, Oct. 25, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Chicago Players to be Presented on Arts Program," College Star, Feb. 7, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Character Artist will be Presented Here Saturday," College Star, July 19, 1940, p. 1.

were 163 students taking speech courses. (Both speech and drama were in the Speech Department.) By 1939, 484 students were taking speech courses. Students could even get a master of arts degree if they combined speech with another area such as education.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1940-1941

If Dallas Williams' 1939-40 theatrical season was a limited one, the 1940-41 season was even more limited though it may be that records are not as complete as for the previous year. Some of the most interesting productions, however, were performed during the 1940-41 school term.

The first presentation was four Experimental Theatre one-acts performed on October 9: Why I am a Bachelor by David Piniski, The Dollar by Conrad Seiger, The Rehearsal by Christopher Morley, and The Medicine Show by Stuart Walker. None of these productions used scenery. (Scenery here may have meant actual set-constructed pieces as opposed to properties such as furniture.) Consequently, lighting was an important medium.<sup>2</sup> Williams' next show, Stage Door by Edna Ferber and George S. Kaufman, was presented on homecoming weekend (November 15 and 16) in the ALS auditorium.<sup>3</sup> The next production was the Edith Hamilton translation of Euripides' Trojan Women, presented by Williams on February 27. Costumes

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<sup>1</sup>"Figures Show Increase in Speech Department," College Star, Oct. 4, 1939, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>"Cast for First Four Productions Announced Friday," College Star, Oct. 2, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Carl C. Hendersen, Jr., "College Theatre Will Present Major Production as Homecoming Attraction," College Star, Nov. 8, 1940, p. 4.

and sets were executed by the acting and costume classes,<sup>1</sup> with careful research to insure that they would be historically correct. There was musical accompaniment, but records are not clear on what type.<sup>2</sup>

The rest of the season was marked by a bill of two one-acts, the original one-act play contest and a bill called "Cavalcade of Drama." The first of these was Sunday Costs Five Pesos by Josephine Niggli and Happy Journey by Thornton Wilder.<sup>3</sup> The playwriting contest deadline was set for May 1, but it is doubtful that any of these original plays were staged.<sup>4</sup> The last presentations, performed on May 8 and 9, were scenes as opposed to one-acts. The idea was to show some of the different types of historical plays. The Maiden's Tomb, a Japanese play by Kiyotsugu, A Merry Play by John Heywood, The Merry Wives of Windsor by Shakespeare, and Anna Christie by Eugene O'Neill were the plays from which the scenes were derived. Again, the costume class designed and executed costumes and the acting class was responsible for the sets. The History of Theatre class was concerned with any research that would be needed to produce the scenes. Together, the scenes were entitled "Cavalcade of Drama."<sup>5</sup>

Little is mentioned on new equipment with the exception of a new

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<sup>1</sup>"College Dramatic Group to Present Play in ALS," College Star, Feb. 26, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"College Theatre Presents Play on ALS Stage," College Star, Mar. 5, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players Sponsor Contest for Playwrights," College Star, Mar. 19, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"One Act Plays Scheduled for ALS on Friday Night," College Star, Mar. 26, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"College Theatre to Give Program on May 8 and 9," College Star, April 30, 1941, p. 4.

portable light board.<sup>1</sup> Since theatrical materials had to be transported from Old Main to the ALS auditorium and back again, the new control panel must have been useful. Unfortunately, there is no information as to the type of light board it was.

There were only two professional performances that year. Miss Cornelia Otis Skinner acted out several dramatic monologues on February 18,<sup>2</sup> and on June 20, the Ben Greet Players presented a show, though records fail to give its title.<sup>3</sup>

Because Dallas Williams went to Louisiana State University to teach in their summer session, there were no summer productions; nor was he to return the next year. He had been encouraged to work on a doctoral degree, but was rather reluctant to leave Southwest Texas.<sup>4</sup> He did go on, however, and after receiving his doctorate, moved to the University of Nebraska. When the author of this paper wrote Mr. Williams to obtain more information on his career at Southwest Texas, it was learned that he had passed away on August 1, 1971. With this letter came the statement that his death was a great loss to the Drama Department.<sup>5</sup> When Dr. Seabury was informed, he wrote back:

Thank you for your letter of May 3, and I mean for all of it even though one part of it brought sad news and, as a matter of fact, a

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1941, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup>Ben Hoppe, "Cornelia Otis Skinner to Appear in ALS Auditorium Tuesday Night," College Star, Feb. 12, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Ben Greet Players Present Opening Allied Arts Program Here Tonight," College Star, June 20, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Hugh F. Seabury, personal letter.

<sup>5</sup>Patricia Overton, Theatrical Secretary, University of Nebraska, personal letter, n. d.



shock. I trust that I expressed to you earlier, as I believe I did, my great respect for Dr. Dallas Williams as Director of Plays. The respect held for him at the University of Nebraska supports, I believe, my faith and belief in him as a Director of Theatre.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly Dr. Williams was influential at Southwest Texas.

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<sup>1</sup>Hugh F. Seabury, personal letter, May 10, 1972.

## CHAPTER V

### THE WAR YEARS

#### 1941-1942

In 1941, Mr. Don Streeter came to Southwest Texas to become the new theatre director, while Dr. Seabury remained as head of the Department. Although Streeter was with the Department for only a short period of time, he was essential to the continued growth of the theatre program. As a director, he placed considerable emphasis on organization. For example, Mr. Streeter's tryout sessions and his rehearsals were always according to schedule:

Before tryouts, I set up a complete schedule of everything to be done, from tryouts, to readings, to blocking rehearsals, to business rehearsals, to line rehearsals, to dress rehearsals, and performances. I set up a sixty hour production schedule for a major, 3-act play. I distributed that schedule before we had our tryouts, and told any student that he was responsible for being present at all times, and if he felt that he couldn't do it he should withdraw at that moment. I went to other faculty people on the campus to say, "This is my schedule. I will stick to it. If students say I have called for more than is listed here, you will know that they are pulling your leg." And then I did it. Now, there were many times that my productions did not contain brilliant, [sic] jewel-like sequences. But they surely ran smoothy [sic] from beginning to end. Usually I never used a prompter. We were so well drilled.

Time of rehearsal was limited to two hours per rehearsal, except for the final rehearsals when we were doing dress rehearsals and complete runs. Even then, we limited to three hours. We started at seven even if I was on the set reading all parts. We stopped at nine, and the students could count on it. Boyfriends could come and pick up the girls at that time if they wished. Or we could go swimming, or dancing. But mostly, the dormitories could count on what we were doing,

and they could check on the girls. That was in the day before student freedom became popular!<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Streeter's first production in 1941 was Lawrence Riley's Personal Appearance. Approximately 1,500 students, faculty and townspeople viewed the show on October 30 and 31. There were reportedly one hundred and ninety-two outbreaks of laughter and the College newspaper stated that the show was a success because one hundred and fifty outbreaks makes a "hit."<sup>2</sup> Students began construction on scenery in Old Main, then moved to the ALS auditorium. Streeter designed the set,<sup>3</sup> using a flat-system which was quite complete, as opposed to a fragmentary setting, and lighting had to be rather specialized for some of the scenes.<sup>4</sup> Streeter made use of both a carpenter and a lighting technician to assist crew members in the two areas.<sup>5</sup> Though Streeter used a flat-system for this show, he preferred the fragmentary type of scenery:

I used profile settings. I suggested to our prospective high school teachers that they need not be content with the drapes on their stage alone. They could build wains coting-like [sic] flats, insert the door frames in them, and put it all in the front of curtains--making a half way point between the already hung stage curtains and the full box set.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Donald C. Streeter, personal letter, April 19, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Jane Webb, "College Theatre Scores Hit With First Production," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Rehearsals Begin on Production Set for Homecoming," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Personal Appearance, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Personal Appearance, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Donald C. Streeter, personal letter.

Streeter posted the cast members and rehearsed for one week before announcing the parts they were to play.<sup>1</sup>

On December 19, the College Players Jamboree included the melodrama, He Ain't Done Right By Nell by Wilbur Braun, which Mr. Streeter had directed in about two weeks.<sup>2</sup> Between each scene, small vaudeville acts were performed.<sup>3</sup> On March 25, the melodrama had been re-rehearsed and presented again for the second semester Jamboree.<sup>4</sup>

On February 19 and 20, Mr. Streeter supervised three student-directed one-acts: The Purple Door Knob by Walter Prichard Eaton, Op-O'-Me-Thumb by Frederick Fern and Richard Pryce, and Objections Overruled by William Ellis.<sup>5</sup> Set designs were apparently quite nice for student-directed shows. Fragmentary scenery, for example, consisted of large flats resembling door knobs, while another setting had a two-dimensional cartoon effect.<sup>6</sup> Admission was one twenty-five cent defense stamp for adults and one ten cent stamp for children and students. No blanket tax was accepted since the object was to support the defense program.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Rehearsals Begin on Production Set for Homecoming," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Streeter Gives Theatre Schedule," College Star, Nov. 12, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"College Players Plan Jamboree," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"College Players Present Revised Jamboree Program," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>The Purple Door Knob, Op-O'-Me-Thumb, Objections Overruled, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>The Purple Door Knob, Op-O'-Me-Thumb, Objections Overruled, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>"Dates Set for Student Directed One Act Plays," College Star, Feb. 4, 1942, p. 1.

Ladies in Retirement by Edward Percy and Reginald Denham was presented on April 30 and May 1 in the ALS auditorium. As was the usual practice, the play was double-cast.<sup>1</sup> Final assignment to a cast was not made until dress rehearsal, and until that time, actors alternated with both casts rehearsing together at all times.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Streeter was convinced that the concept of the double cast was best for college theatre:

I used a double cast. This way there was never any problem about whether a part was covered for a rehearsal. Two people were cast in the part and one of them could be relied upon to be there always. During rehearsals they alternated entrances. This meant that those on stage never quite knew who was going to come on in that role next, but they soon learned that it made little difference. They just played with the person who was there. The other actors were expected to be sitting beside me in the audience when counterparts were on the set. That way we could quietly talk about what needed to be done, and they could "see themselves" in the part.<sup>3</sup>

Fragmentary sets<sup>4</sup> were designed and executed by the Play Production class and costumes were rented from Van Horn's in Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup> Rental of costumes was the usual practice during the time Streeter was director of theatre:

We rented our costumes. I told these prospective teachers that they had a number of choices: to make the costumes and develop a wardrobe, but they might never use the costumes again; to rent the costumes would cost a good bit, but they had no storage problems, and it was an easier thing to do than design and make them.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ladies in Retirement, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Play Try Outs Set for Monday," College Star, March 11, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Donald C. Streeter, personal letter.

<sup>4</sup>Ladies In Retirement, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Crew Work in Progress for Spring Production," College Star, April 22, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>Donald C. Streeter, personal letter.

A concert by the College orchestra preceded the show; there was "overwhelming applause" by the audience for actors who were "made for the parts."<sup>1</sup>

The College Players remained active in the 1941-42 year with a special presentation for the Community Defense Program, consisting of readings and short plays or skits,<sup>2</sup> and the organization of an original one-act play contest.<sup>3</sup>

In the summer, Yes and No by Kenneth Horne was presented each semester. Again, it was double-cast, with the first cast performing on July 2 and 3, and the second August 4 and 5.<sup>4</sup> The show was done in the intimate style of theatre, seating only one hundred persons. Mr. Streeter had several reasons for using this theatre style:

Try intimate theatre, or theatre-in-the-round, as we called it in those early days. So we did the first play there done in that style. I moved everything back and set bleacher-like arrangements around the stage down in Evans Auditorium. The audience sat up on the stage, and the play was performed in front of them. I remember an intermission of that play 'Yes and No.' There was a tray with about ten dozen cookies on it--used in a scene of the play. We had a couple of the crew pass those cookies among the audience. We had a splendid time with that, and the audience loved it.<sup>5</sup>

One professional show was presented through the Allied Arts program. Soo Young, a Chinese actress, starred in a monodrama entitled Out From The Inner Apartments on April 20.

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<sup>1</sup>Marjorie Helen Boaz, "College Players Delight Audience with Drama," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Notice," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Streeter Calls for Original Plays," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Yes and No, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Donald C. Streeter, personal letter.

1942-1943

Never was Southwest Texas theatre affected by World War II so much as during the 1942-43 year. On September 23, 1942, Don Streeter was called into the armed services. He regretted having to leave:

I am very reluctant to leave the school when every indication seems to be that it is to be an educationally and spiritually profitable year.<sup>1</sup>

Glenn Hughes' Collegiate Explosions was presented on November 12 and 13, with Dr. Seabury directing. There were only forty-two people in the audience the first night, and this sharp decline indicates that the war may have also affected audience attendance. Students were only able to rehearse for two weeks, and the College reviewer seemed to think the play was on the "high school side."<sup>2</sup> As director of both speech and drama, Dr. Seabury had to rely on advanced students:

World War II did certainly have an effect on our program. However, Dr. Williams did not then have a Doctorate and Dr. Donald Streeter replaced him briefly but military service forced Mr. Streeter as he was then to depart from the college. The fact is that I then attempted to do the whole program while Mr. Streeter was on leave to the Maritime Service. This resulted in several of the advanced students being given prominence in directing most of the extra-class programs and, if I remember correctly, teaching one or two of the courses. At the same time, plans were in the making for re-doing the second floor of the Main Building for theatre activities until the theatre activities were moved to classrooms and to the large auditorium in the Laboratory School. By January, 1943, I received a Commission in the United States Air Force and was ordered to report immediately to military service beginning at Miami Beach, Florida. I hastefully departed and even so reported late to Miami Beach.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Streeter Leaves Today to Take Maritime Post," College Star, Sept. 23, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ben Hoppe, "College Theatre Production Slated for Second Performance Tonight," College Star, Nov. 13, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Hugh F. Seabury, personal letter.

When Dr. Seabury left for his new post, Don Streeter came back for three weeks to take the courses Dr. Seabury had to abandon.<sup>1</sup> Streeter was not there long enough, however, to direct a production.

In the February 20 Jamboree, a student, along with Dr. (Deacon) L. N. Wright of the English Department, directed the melodrama A Play For Working Girls or The Perils of Purity.<sup>2</sup> (Dr. Wright took over the sponsorship of College Players for several years.)

On May 19 and 20, Dr. Wright directed and students designed and built the set for the last show of the season, The Nut Farm by John C. Brownell.<sup>3</sup>

Academically, "Costumes and Make-up" (137) became "Play Production and Directing" (137). (C., 1942-43, p. 77.) Although nominally the courses remained the same, several must have been discontinued when Streeter and Seabury had to leave.

Although he took a leave of absence, Dr. Seabury never returned to Southwest Texas. He had intended to return to San Marcos, but was offered a position in the Air University in Alabama. He discussed his situation with Dr. John Flowers (the new College president), and both agreed that Seabury had a greater responsibility at the time at the Air University. While recruiting teachers from the University of Iowa to teach Air R.O.T.C. officers, Seabury became interested in that university's Speech Department and has been there ever since.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Receives Call," College Star, Jan. 13, 1943.

<sup>2</sup>"Jamboree," College Star, Feb. 18, 1943, p. 4

<sup>3</sup>"College Theatre to Give Comedy May 19 and 20," College Star, May 5, 1943, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Hugh F. Seabury, personal letter.



1943-1944

In 1943, Dr. P. Merville Larsen became chairman of the Department. Like Seabury, he had to direct both speech and drama activities and, also like Seabury, he relied a great deal on students to help him with the dramatics. In early October, Dr. Larsen brought speech and drama students together to make plans for the coming year.<sup>1</sup> College Players organized a one-act play contest for the different clubs on campus. The drama group was not allowed to enter a play but could direct the others. No two casts could produce the same show, no student could serve more than one cast and each group was responsible for a production staff. All plays had to be comedies. (This rule may have been made to combat the low morale brought on by the war.) Men were scarce so one more rule was made:

The boys may organize a group and give a play by themselves or they may offer their services and await themselves to the girls to use in their plays.<sup>2</sup>

Dorm groups, social groups and literary organizations submitted eight one-act plays. All were presented to judges and three plays were selected to enter a final, public presentation: Ladies Alone and Star Struck by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements, and The Twelve Pound Look by James Barrie. There are only two male characters in all three of these shows. Over eighty-one students were involved in the one-acts,<sup>3</sup> and in this way, College Players were able to keep the theatre alive during those crucial years.

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<sup>1</sup>"Forensic, Dramatic Plans to be Made at Meeting Tonight," College Star, October 6, 1943, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"College Players Plan One-Act Play Contest," College Star, Sept. 29, 1943, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Allie Evans Production Takes First in One-act Play Contest," College Star, Dec. 1, 1943, p. 1.

On April 28 and 29, a male speech student directed an all-girl cast in Brief Music by Emmet Lavery. The show was double-cast to offer more women the opportunity to act. Although there were few men, crews were large. Furniture, property, lighting, costume, program, publicity, house, sound and stage crews were used to produce the show.<sup>1</sup> The review was in the form of comments from students and faculty members who saw the play; all were favorable.<sup>2</sup>

Under Dr. Larsen's supervision, three student-directed one-acts were presented, probably in July: For the Love of Michael by Glenn Hughes, Tooth and Shave by Josephine Niggli and The Night Club Girl by Pauline Phelps and Marion Short.<sup>3</sup>

The same drama courses were offered that had been available the previous year with the exception of "The Development of Theatre" (233), a history course, which was offered on demand. (C., 1943-44, p. 83.)

#### 1944-1945

Although Larsen was still director of speech and drama activities, he had some assistance in the 1944-45 year. Mr. Hayes, an assistant professor in Social Science and Speech and supervisor of the College High School, was able to help in the speech area. Mr. Hayes stayed on until 1947 in the Speech Department. Dr. Seabury and Mr. Streeter were still officially on leave.

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<sup>1</sup>Brief Music, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Brief Music is Given Friday and Saturday Night," College Star, May 3, 1944, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Three One-Act Plays Have Tryouts Today," College Star, June 14, 1944, p. 1.

There were few productions that year. Beginning in November, the College Players held their second one-act play contest.<sup>1</sup> The only production of the long term was Cry Havoc by Allen R. Kenward. Directed by Dr. Larsen, the show was presented by an all-girl cast and rehearsals were held nightly for one month.<sup>2</sup> On April 16, the show was performed for a capacity crowd.<sup>3</sup> The fact that it was a war play and that it was the only production offered that year may have influenced the attendance of the audience. The show was considered by the College critic to be one of the best performed by Southwest Texas students in a long time.

In the summer, on August 7, Dr. Larsen directed six men and six women in George Kelly's The Torchbearers.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Wright reviewed the show, saying that the weather was hot but the audience fairly large and the sets were well-executed. He added that the actors were adequate and they showed promise.<sup>5</sup>

#### 1945-1946

In the fall of 1945, Miss Lola Walker temporarily took over the chairmanship of the Department. Don Streeter returned that spring. The

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<sup>1</sup>"Rules Are Given for One-Act Plays," College Star, Nov. 1, 1944, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Cry Havoc to be Presented as Year's Major Production," College Star, April 11, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'Cry Havoc' Plays to Capacity Crowds," College Star, April 18, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"The Torchbearers is Play to be Presented by Summer Students," College Star, June 27, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Deacon" Wright, "College Players Present Creditable Performance," College Star, Aug. 22, 1945, p. 3.

College Players organization remained active. Again, they sponsored the one-act play contest, presenting eight plays on December 5 and 6.<sup>1</sup> For the College Players' Jamboree, a student-directed, student-written melodrama, And Now I Know What Mother Meant, was performed on March 23.<sup>2</sup>

The only major production that year was performed on May 2 and 3. Mr. Streeter directed Hagar Wilde and Dale Eunson's Guest In The House, making use of his traditional double cast. The College reviewer was rather severe, saying that poor acoustics, the rattling of programs, bad audience response and the lack of spontaneity gave a feeling that "wavered between praise and indifference."<sup>3</sup>

For the summer season, Streeter announced that a bill of one-act plays would be presented at Riverside Recreational Park and that one major production would be performed in the "intimate" style of theatre.<sup>4</sup> On June 14, The Murders of Miriam by Walter Kerr, and Feet First were presented in the park; however, no major production was performed that summer.<sup>5</sup>

One professional presentation, The Golden Apple by Lady Gregory, was brought to the campus on October 23 by the Clare Tree Major Children's Theatre group from New York.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"College Players Will Sponsor One-Act Play Contest December 5 & 6," College Star, Nov. 28, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Annual Jamboree is Set for March 23," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Sam Boenig, "Drama Critic Wavers Between Praise and Indifference on Theatre Effort," incomplete clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"Activities of College Players Announced by Director Streeter," College Star, May 22, 1946, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Bill Allert, "College Theatre Provides Two Dramatic Offerings Thursday," College Star, June 14, 1946, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>"'The Golden Apple' Will be Given in ALS Auditorium October 23," College Star, Oct. 10, 1945, p. 1.

The ALS auditorium was never an ideal working space for theatrical presentations:

We had strips and some spots behind the proscenium sic but no beams. So I bought six spotlights, if I recall, and I personally crawled out along the steel girders, and hung precariously from those steel beams out over the seats, and attached the spotlights to the beams, ran the cables back along the beams and in through the wall and down to the controls. I was shaking every minute! But, we got some beam lights, and we used them to our great satisfaction.<sup>1</sup>

Under Streeter's direction, plans were made to remodel the Old Main auditorium into a little theatre.

Yes, the theatre on the top floor of Old Main building was designed by me, drawn by the architect, built under his supervision, and argued loudly by the architect and me. I wanted beam lights out in the ceiling. He told me I didn't know what I was talking about. He said modern theatre practice called for powerful follow-spots to be installed in the projection room at the rear of the theatre, so that there would not be anything disfiguring the ceiling of the auditorium. I yelled at him that he was nuts. He screamed at me that I didn't know what I was talking about, that as an architect he was expected to know, and that he did know. I stomped at him and said !\*!.\*<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Streeter left Southwest Texas to return to the University of Iowa and complete his Ph.D., feeling certain that he would be leaving the theatre world for good. He later became chairman of the Memphis State University Speech and Drama Department; produced an annual Shakespeare festival; supervised a children's theatre; and was stage director for seven grand opera presentations, coaching the chorus and principals during the period of time they were training for the opera.<sup>3</sup>

After he left his position at Memphis, Streeter joined the staff of the Speech Department at the University of Houston. He rarely deals with

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<sup>1</sup>Donald C. Streeter, personal letter.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

drama, but judges one-act plays at times and has initiated a reader's theatre group at the University.<sup>1</sup>

Though Streeter has remained at the University of Houston to this day, he fondly remembers his years at Southwest Texas:

When you come to think of it, my part in the development of the program at San Marcos was so very small. I was there for such a short time - only a year and a half, and that time was split into two terms. Yet my attachment for that place is stronger than for any other place in my forty years of teaching experience.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER VI

JAMES G. BARTON

### 1946-1947

In 1946, Dr. Elton Abernathy assumed the chairmanship of the Department and has remained chairman to this day. Miss Lola Walker stayed on with the faculty for one more year and, in the summer of 1947, Mr. James Barton arrived to become director of theatre, a position he still holds. Dr. Abernathy and Mr. Barton have, for twenty-five years, seen Departmental growth both in extracurricular and academic activities.

In the fall of 1946, Dr. Abernathy, Miss Walker and graduate assistant, Jo Bennett (formerly a drama student but in the English Department in 1947) cast The Male Animal by James Thurber and Elliott Nugent. Mrs. Bennett directed the show, which was presented on October 25, while Dr. Abernathy and Miss Walker assisted. The audience response was excellent and the campus critic quite favorable.<sup>1</sup>

The College Players hosted their annual one-act play contest on February 13 and 14. Only three plays were named in the newspaper (probably the three that went into final competition): They're None of Them Perfect by Sophie Kerr, Polly Put the Kettle On by Peggy Fernway and Don't Tell a Soul by James Peach.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Critic Tosses Mainly Flowers for 'Male Animal' Performance," College Star, Oct. 30, 1946, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"One-Act Plays, Contest Director Named," College Star, Feb. 5, 1947, p. 1.

In March, Miss Walker began rehearsals for Lillian Hellman's Little Foxes.<sup>1</sup> She selected the show on the basis of its possibilities in set, costumes and characterization and the opportunity it would offer student designers and actors.<sup>2</sup> On April 29, 1947,<sup>3</sup> The Little Foxes was viewed by a "moderate-sized" audience in what was now called Evans Auditorium. The College reviewer seemed to feel that some places were rather rough, that the "prompter had a busy night," that the wallpaper was too modern and the furniture did not suit the period, but that all was fine because the audience responded nicely.<sup>4</sup> The criticism on the mixture of styles was well-taken for a production photograph reveals 1940 wallpaper and furniture, crinoline period costumes for the women and tuxedos<sup>5</sup> for men. None of these are in keeping with the early 1900s.

In past years, members of the Speech Department had assisted with the annual water pageants in Sewell Park (the College recreational park). Beginning in 1947, however, the Department became more involved, building sets, presenting scenes and skits and directing the several water events. Dr. Abernathy was largely responsible for much of the directing that year.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Little Foxes by Lillian Hellman Casting Mar. 13 in ALS Aud.," College Star, Mar. 12, 1947, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"'Little Foxes' to be Presented at Evans Auditorium Tonite," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Little Foxes, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"College Theatre's Presentation of 'Foxes' Rough in Spots but Generally Pleasing," College Star, May 7, 1947, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Little Foxes, photograph, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>"Summer Water Pageant Scheduled for July 8," College Star, June 11, 1947, p. 1.



In the summer, Mrs. Bennett began rehearsal on three one-act plays: The Doctor Decides by Fred Eastman, Punk by Henry Clapp Smith and Triumph in Ashes by Paul S. McCoy. When Mr. Barton came into the Department the second summer term, he took over the final directing of the plays with Mrs. Bennett assisting. The shows were presented on August 13 in Sewell Park.<sup>1</sup>

In that same year, plans were made to continue Don Streeter's work on the Little Theatre. Dr. Abernathy made this statement in the College newspaper:

Located on the second floor of Main, where a number of old timers will remember attending Chapel, the "Little Theatre," with a seating capacity of 200, will be ready for use by September.

It will have the most modern equipment available, including up-to-date dressing and costume rooms, and will put us along with the top schools in the country in this line of work. . . .

Evans Auditorium will be used for the college productions while the "Little Theatre" will serve as a workshop for dramatic classes and for the presentation of one-acts and experimental plays.<sup>2</sup>

Drama courses remained the same with the exception of "Acting" (75) which developed from the Oral Interpretation course. (C., 1946-47, p. 126.)

#### 1947-1948

The fall of 1947 was the start of a tremendous theatrical year. This semester marked the actual beginning of Mr. James Barton's twenty-five years of service to College theatre.

The first production of the year was Thornton Wilder's Our Town. Under Mr. Barton's direction and Mrs. Bennett's assistance, the show was performed on November 5, 6, and 7. Technical work was divided into such

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<sup>1</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, May 1, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>"Speech Department to Get New Equipment and Facilities When Renovation Completed," College Star, July 16, 1947, p. 1.

areas as stage managing, prompting, lighting, ushering, costumes, house management, properties, sound effects and publicity. The scenery was built by members of Mr. Barton's Stagecraft class.<sup>1</sup> One of the reasons for selecting Our Town was that the play required very little scenery and, since both Evans Auditorium and the Little Theatre were being remodeled, space was scarce.<sup>2</sup> Set pieces consisted of door frames and furniture against a flat cyclorama, flooded with lights. Some of the costumes were secured through efforts of students who went to the townspeople to gather early twentieth century clothing from special collections.<sup>3</sup> (The theatre had very few costumes since up to this time, they had usually been rented or borrowed.) The show was quite successful. Dr. Abernathy knew, he said, that he had "hired the right man" after he saw the production of Our Town.<sup>4</sup> The College critic was also pleased with Barton's directing: "Without reservations . . . it was the best and smoothest performance seen on the local boards since the days of "Duke" Lippman's regime in the early thirties."<sup>5</sup>

On December 16, three bills of student-directed one-acts, under the general title of "Experimental Theatre" were performed by freshmen and directed by advanced students: All Gunned Up by Harry Gribble, Night Club by Katherine Bush and Courting of Marie Jenvrin by Gwen Dingwood.

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<sup>1</sup>Our Town, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Cricket's Plague Players in 'Our Town' Production," Oct. 29, 1947, incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Cricket's Plague Players," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Elton Abernathy, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, July 3, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>"'Our Town' Evokes High Praise," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

The shows were rehearsed under Mrs. Bennett's supervision.<sup>1</sup>

In March, Mrs. Bennett directed Junior Miss by Jerome Chodorv and Joseph Fields for the freshman play. Stagecraft students, under Mr. Barton's supervision, were again responsible for the sets.<sup>2</sup>

On May 15, 16 and 17, the most elaborate production of the year, Maxwell Anderson's Elizabeth the Queen, was performed in the Little Theatre. Mr. Barton directed with a student assistant, while Mrs. Bennett supervised the costumes.<sup>3</sup> Over sixty costumes had to be either built or renovated. One hundred yards of material were obtained and seventy of those yards had to be dyed. Costumers were quite resourceful, using old draperies for material and shoes for the bases of leatherette boots.<sup>4</sup> Sets were designed by members of the Stagecraft class.<sup>5</sup> Properties such as helmets, swords and halberds had to be designed and built for the show.<sup>6</sup> On May 7, a special performance was played to high school students from the San Marcos area.<sup>7</sup> The College reviewer labeled the show "amateurish" because it lacked smoothness. He felt that the initial show of the year, Our Town, fared much

<sup>1</sup>All Gummed Up, Night Club, Courting of Marie Jenvrin, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Junior Miss, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth the Queen, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"Costumes Readied by 'Queen' Crew," College Star, April 20, 1948, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Elizabeth the Queen, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Elizabeth the Queen, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>"'Elizabeth the Queen' Presentation Will Continue Through Saturday," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

better but that Anderson's work was a "watered-down" version of Shakespeare and asked that the next production be a Shakespearean presentation.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer, Mr. Barton helped direct the annual water pageant, where a student-directed, student-written melodrama, The Trials of Lucinda Littlefield by Margaret Tanner, was one of the main attractions.<sup>2</sup> About 6,000 people were present on July 7 to observe and participate in the events.<sup>3</sup>

Late in the summer (August 11-13), Rose Franken's Claudia was presented by Barton.<sup>4</sup> The realistic box-set<sup>5</sup> was furnished, as was the usual practice, with pieces borrowed from one of the San Marcos furniture stores.<sup>6</sup>

As mentioned previously, both Evans Auditorium and the Little Theatre were being remodeled and re-equipped in the 1947-48 year. The College newspaper gives a rather complete statement on improvements in Evans:

Improved lighting, better acoustics, an enlarged stage and orchestra pit, and temperature control are among the improvements that will be noted by College students when Evans Auditorium is completed during the week of January 10. These improvements have been estimated to cost around \$32,000.

Indirect lighting has been installed, which is a great improvement over the old lighting system. The ceiling lights are enclosed in

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<sup>1</sup>"Drama Critic Describes 'Queen' as 'Good Amateur Performance'," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Rehearsals Begin in Preparation for 29th Water Pageant July 7," College Star, June 23, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Six Thousand Honor Dr. S. M. Sewell at Park Dedication," College Star, July 14, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Claudia, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Claudia, photograph, Speech-Drama production files. [A box-set represents an interior setting with three walls made of "flats," with the fourth wall left open so the audience can view the actor.]

<sup>6</sup>Claudia, program, Speech-Drama production files.

pre-cast plastic molds weighing 410 pounds, but are securely attached to the ceiling with the use of a safety wire.

Also included in the ceilings are three spot light openings, one of the latest features of professional theaters in the East. These ceiling spot lights are capable of bringing out all important features on the stage. The best lighting effects possible are now available through the use of three spot lights instead of one. The main advantage is the possibility of featuring several objects on the stage at the same time, or having several lighting effects on the stage at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

By the summer of 1948, the Little Theatre was near completion. New rigging and lighting instruments were obtained and a \$2,700 light board, designed by Mr. Barton, was installed in a combination lighting and ticket booth at the rear of the auditorium.<sup>2</sup> This was an auto-transformer board with eight 4,000 watt master dimmers, subdivided into four 2,000 watt dimmers and twelve 1,000 watt dimmers.<sup>3</sup> On the fourth floor of Old Main, a new workshop was constructed for designing, painting, construction and a costume work area.<sup>4</sup>

Students were enthusiastic about the success of the 1947-48 year and attributed it largely to Barton:

With his favorite phrase "All right people, we got a show," and "Pick up your cues, people" still ringing in our ears, we are aware that our first year of full dramatic production is coming to a close. It's been a successful year in which we saw excellent performances of "Our Town," "Junior Miss," "Elizabeth the Queen," and a series of one acts; a year of invaluable technical changes: the completion of the Little Theatre, a new control panel (just arrived and to be installed) and many other

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<sup>1</sup>"Work To Finish On Auditorium by Next Week," College Star, Jan. 7, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Our Town, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>James Barton, private interview.

<sup>4</sup>Our Town, program, Speech-Drama production files.

significant changes in the field of dramatics.

A very large portion of this do we owe to Mr. Barton.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Barton also made his statement on College theatre:

There are only two kinds of plays, good ones and bad ones. People are no longer interested in whether a play is put on by professional or amateur actors. But they demand that it be a good play--or they'll go to the movies instead.<sup>2</sup>

### 1948-1949

The first show of the 1948-49 season was Maxwell Anderson's Both Your Houses, presented October 26-29.<sup>3</sup> In directing, Mr. Barton placed emphasis on the interpretation of lines and motivation because, in this play, a great deal relied on dialogue as opposed to action.<sup>4</sup> The scenery was designed in angles, with a small office area to the right and a conference room set on a diagonal to the left. Walls were designated by a flat-system. Set pieces consisted of office furniture and equipment: desks, tables, file cabinet, water cooler.<sup>5</sup> The campus reviewer was favorable, saying that the audience seemed responsive and the one-unit set kept the play moving smoothly since there were no changes. His only criticism was the failure of some actors to remember their lines.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Barton Largely Responsible for College Drama Success," College Star, July 21, 1948, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>"Famous Broadway Play Will Be Presented," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Both Your Houses, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"Preliminary Details Finished on 'Both Your Houses' Show," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Both Your Houses, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>"Players Performances Get Plaudits Criticism," College Star, Oct. 27, 1948, p. 1.

In December, seven one-acts were offered by the Directing, Acting and Oral Interpretation classes: on December 9 and 10, The Happy Journey by Thornton Wilder, and Mr. F. by Percival Wilde; on December 13 and 14, Confessional by Wilde, A Sunny Morning by Serafin and Joquin Quintero, and Balcony Scene by Donald Elser; on December 16 and 17 (presented as a Christmas program), Dust of the Road by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, and Thornton Wilder's The Long Christmas Dinner. All designing, construction, directing and acting were handled by students under the supervision of Mr. Barton.<sup>1</sup> On December 11, the first bill was toured for a performance at McClosky Hospital in Temple, Texas.<sup>2</sup> These plays were performed in the "horseshoe" fashion, with the audience on three sides. This style is important to note for, from the time Barton first began to train student-directors, he has retained the theory that intimate staging is the best training experience for the drama student: the director must constantly be aware of the actors' relationship to the audience.<sup>3</sup>

In March, one more important tradition began: children's theatre. With Rumplestiltskin as the founding play, children's theatre productions at Southwest Texas have been performed annually. Rumplestiltskin, directed by Mrs. Bennett, made special use of the visual elements. Lights were gelled in "eerie" blues, greens and reds. The set, designed and constructed by Barton's Stagecraft class, was basic, requiring few changes from scene to

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<sup>1</sup>The Happy Journey, Mr. F., Confessional, A Sunny Morning, Balcony Scene, Dust of the Road, The Long Christmas Dinner, programs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Dramas Chosen; Practice Starts On Short Plays," College Star, Dec. 1, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, May 18, 1972.

scene.<sup>1</sup> It consisted of a flat-system resembling the inside of a Gothic castle: a rather crude, two-dimensional, cartoon-effect. Costumes were a mixture between Renaissance and Medieval dress.<sup>2</sup> Children from San Marcos, Staples, Kyle, Luling and Wimberley, Texas came to view the performances the week of March 14.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that the show was toured, but records are not clear as to when or where.<sup>4</sup>

On May 9, 10 and 12, Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew was staged by Barton as the final show of the long term.<sup>5</sup> This production marked the first full-length presentation of Shakespeare in the history of Southwest Texas theatre. Over forty new costumes were designed and built under Mrs. Bennett's supervision,<sup>6</sup> in the Renaissance style.<sup>7</sup> Sets consisted mainly of two arched doorways left and right of the stage, with an open window set in each arch. The canopy that once covered the throne in Elizabeth the Queen, covered "Kate's" bed in Taming of the Shrew. Sets, on the whole, were quite simple.<sup>8</sup> The College critic was favorable for the most part, criticizing only in two areas: actors' line memorization and a "pair of vulcanized

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<sup>1</sup>Susan Eccles, "Review Gives 'Rumplestiltskin' Cast Credit for Excellent Performances," College Star, March 16, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Rumplestiltskin, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Eccles, "Review Gives Cast Credit," p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'Rumplestiltskin' May Take the Road According to Play's Director, Bennett," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Taming of the Shrew, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Mozelle Krause, "Shrew Costumes Present Many Difficulties," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Taming of the Shrew, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.



rubber hip boots," which he felt did not belong on a Shakespearean character: "It is doubtful that the Bard intended that Petruchio ride horseback in the water."<sup>1</sup>

On June 30 and July 1, a student-directed production of Moliere's The Doctor in Spite of Himself was performed,<sup>2</sup> though records neither give information on the performance nor offer a review.

On August 17 and 18, Mr. Barton's Production class presented three one-act plays by Eugene O'Neill: Where the Cross Is Made, Ile and Rope. (Mr. Barton felt that directing an O'Neill play would be excellent training for drama students.) Again, the entire bill came under the heading of Experimental Theatre.<sup>3</sup>

One professional production was staged on the campus that year. The Touring Players, Inc., from New York, presented Emlyn Williams' The Corn Is Green on April 12.<sup>4</sup>

One drama course, "Stagecraft" (133) was changed in number only to "Stagecraft" (65). (C., 1948-49, p. 121.)

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<sup>1</sup>Les Bock, "First Nighters Get Glimpse of 'Taming of the Shrew,'" incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Three Act Comedy To Be Presented by College Players," College Star, June 22, 1949, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Where the Cross Is Made, Ile, Rope, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"New Yorkers To Present 'Corn Is Green' on April 12," College Star, April 6, 1949, p. 1.

1949-1950

The first production of the 1949-50 season was Norma Krasna's Dear Ruth, directed by Mr. Barton and staged on November 1-4.<sup>1</sup> Sets consisted of a flat-system, with arched entrances, a window "nook," and furniture contemporary to the 1940s.<sup>2</sup> The review was quite favorable with the exception of one statement about actors forgetting lines. Five hundred persons attended in three nights and one special showing was performed for the San Marcos Baptist Academy students.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after Dear Ruth had closed, three student-directed one-acts were presented. G. Martinez-Sierra's The Cradle Song, Oliphant Downs' The Maker of Dreams and Ron Lucke's The Golden Key were performed on November 7, 8 and 9. The last show, The Golden Key, was written by an advanced drama student. The three plays were performed by apprentice actors as a project to gain points for College Players.<sup>4</sup>

James Norris' Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp was performed on January 16-19 for the annual children's theatre production.<sup>5</sup> Thirty costumes had to be constructed with satin materials, sequins and plumes.<sup>6</sup> Capes, hats, tunics, cummerbunds, nightshirts, turbans, harem pants and

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<sup>1</sup> Dear Ruth, production folder, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup> Dear Ruth, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup> Suzi Eccles, "'Dear Ruth' Players Rate Reviewers Raves," College Star, Nov. 2, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> "One-Act Plays Make Final Run Wednesday," College Star, Nov. 9, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Aladdin, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup> "Theatre Group Begins Work on Aladdin," College Star, Nov. 30, 1949, p. 1.

pointed shoes<sup>1</sup> were designed and executed by the students.<sup>2</sup> Scenery consisted of a large tree that bore both gold and silver fruit, a "twenty-ton" boulder that opened and closed and a castle that appeared and disappeared.<sup>3</sup> One interior scene was constructed with a flat-system resembling adobe walls with two entranceways to either side and a large window in the rear. The make-up crew had to contend with slanted eyes, beards, moustaches and body make-up.<sup>4</sup> Aladdin was so difficult, technically, that students had to work for almost two months on costumes, properties and scenery.<sup>5</sup>

In February and March, the English and Speech Departments came together to produce a festival of works by George Bernard Shaw. Students from the English Club presented readings from Caesar and Cleopatra;<sup>6</sup> the Allied Arts series presented the Touring Players in a full-length version of the same play on March 16; coffees and lectures were held for students and professors to discuss the show;<sup>7</sup> and the Speech Department produced St. Joan. In preparation for the St. Joan production, cast members were instructed in French pronunciation by Dr. Lloyd Read, chairman of the Foreign Language Department, and Nicole Bernheim, a foreign exchange student. Dr.

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<sup>1</sup>Aladdin, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Aladdin, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Magician Needed to Make Stage Sets for Aladdin," College Star, Dec. 14, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Aladdin, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Theatre Group Begins Work on 'Aladdin,'" College Star, Nov. 30, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"English, Speech Department Gives G. B. Shaw Festival," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>"Two Plays, Coffees, Talks, Highlight GBS Hill Festival," College Star, Mar. 15, 1950, p. 1.

Read and Mrs. Paul Zedler (speech therapist specialist) compiled a phonetic transcription alphabet for the French words in the play.<sup>1</sup> Costumes were researched and constructed to accurately represent fifteenth-century French dress. Sets were a basic flat-system with two large arched doorways on either side and an arched window in the center, filled with a tapestry. With minor alterations, the set was changed to several different scenes, one of which was accomplished by opening the back flats and playing against a lighted cyclorama. Set pieces, such as benches and thrones, were researched and meticulously constructed.<sup>2</sup> Armor was made of vulcanized fiber board, melted in hot water and bent into shape, then painted silver to appear metallic.<sup>3</sup> The College reviewer was most favorable, feeling only that the play started slowly and needed cutting. Otherwise, it was an excellent production and was well-received by the audience.<sup>4</sup>

On June 29 and 30, four student-directed one-acts were produced under the supervision of Mr. Barton and an advanced drama student: The Monkey's Paw by Jacob and Louis Parker; Mooncalf Mugford by Duffield and Leary; Will-O'-the-Wisp by Doris Halman and Tooth or Shave by Josephine Niggli. The plays were presented by the Production class.<sup>5</sup>

On August 15-17, Barton staged Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors in the Little Theatre on a low summer budget:

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<sup>1</sup>Virginia Acheson, "'St. Joan' Cast Gets Language Experts Tips," College Star, Mar. 1, 1950, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>St. Joan, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"'St. Joan' Gets Experts Tips," p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Dora Guerrero, "Hill Theatre Triumphs Monday in First Performance of Shaw's St. Joan," College Star, Mar. 22, 1950, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>The Monkey's Paw, Mooncalf Mugford, Will-O'-the-Wisp, Tooth or Shave, program, Speech-Drama production files.

It may be of interest to teachers of drama who must contend with low budgets and have problems of presenting royalty and non-royalty plays, that by constructing standard size scenery which can be adapted to any setting and by making costumes that can be used over, we have been able to produce this play for \$50.00.<sup>1</sup>

Drama courses remained the same with the exception of a new description for "Oral Interpretation" (19). In order to incorporate drama into the course, it was changed to "Fundamentals of Oral Reading and Dramatic Interpretation." (C., 1949-50, p. 98.)

### 1950-1951

The first show of the 1950 season was a rather elaborate staging of Lynn Riggs' Green Grow the Lilacs on October 20-25. Using certain musical numbers from Oklahoma! (the musical version of Green Grow the Lilacs by Rodgers and Hammerstein), singers and dancers were accompanied by the College orchestra. Anton Bek, orchestra conductor, Ira Bowles, choral director, and Merle Dulin, choreographer, were the faculty members who worked closely with Mr. Barton to produce the show.<sup>2</sup> Costumes were colorful, using prints and plaids. Men were in traditional blue jeans and cowboy hats, shirts and boots, while women were in ankle-length, full-skirted (sometimes ruffled) dresses. Sets were, for the most part, fragmentary. Two colorful backdrops were used, and for the several scenes that required interior settings, fragmentary flat-systems were set up. One house-unit was equipped with the traditional railed front porch. Because the sets demanded that an audience picture scenes in several areas of the stage, lighting was

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<sup>1</sup>Comedy of Errors, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Green Grow the Lilacs, program, Speech-Drama production files.

an important factor.<sup>1</sup> The College reviewer was quite favorable, stating that all aspects of the show (acting, singing and dance) came together successfully.<sup>2</sup>

The second show of the season was Robert E. Sherwood's There Shall Be No Night, performed on December 13-15, directed by James Barton.<sup>3</sup> The main set was a flat-system with intricate stenciling for wallpaper, floor-length curtained windows, a fireplace and a large arched entrance to a corridor, just adjacent to center stage. A fragmentary flat-system was used for the office interior. Costumes were in keeping with World War II dress: soldiers' uniforms and 1940s fashions.<sup>4</sup> On January 17, a command performance, requested by President John Flowers, was presented for the American Association of Colleges for Teachers' Education Convention.<sup>5</sup>

The next play was Charlotte Chorpenning's adaption of Sleeping Beauty for the third annual children's theatre production. Mrs. Bennett directed and students were in charge of all technical areas: costumes, sets, lighting and properties. From March 12 to March 17, children from San Marcos and the surrounding towns were bussed to the Little Theatre to see the performances.<sup>6</sup> Sets consisted of a flat-system resembling the

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<sup>1</sup>Green Grow the Lilacs, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Ron Lucke, "'Lilacs' Play Portrays Frontier Life," College Star, Oct. 25, 1950, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>There Shall Be No Night, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>There Shall Be No Night, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"'No Night' Command Performance," College Star, Jan. 10, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Sleeping Beauty, program, Speech-Drama production files.

interior of a castle with immense, arched entranceways, and one backdrop was flown in to represent the depths of a forest.<sup>1</sup>

On April 25-26 and on May 2-3, four student-directed one-acts were presented by the Play Production class: Beulah Barnstead's The Diabolical Circle, Paul Green's Last of the Loweries, Christopher Fry's Thor, with Angels and Russ Vliet's Farewell the Laurel.<sup>2</sup> (Russ Vliet, a drama student at Southwest Texas in the early 1950s, became a professional playwright.)

That summer, the drama division of the Speech Department was active in two events: the water pageant and a melodrama production. On July 5 and 6, the Mysteries of Color water pageant, directed by Mr. Barton,<sup>3</sup> was presented with dances, synchronized swimmers and colorful water floats.<sup>4</sup> On August 15-17, Bill Johnson's melodrama Dirty Work at the Crossroads, directed by an advanced drama student, was presented at Sewell Park.<sup>5</sup>

Two professional presentations visited the campus that year: The Virginia Barter Theatre Company, presenting Tennessee Williams' Glass Menagerie on November 8,<sup>6</sup> and The Touring Players, who presented James

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<sup>1</sup>Sleeping Beauty, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Student-Directed Plays to Run April 25-26, May 2-3," College Star, April 18, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Annual Water Pageant Planned July 5-6," College Star, June 20, 1951, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"Fifty Swimmers to Appear in Water Pageant," College Star, June 27, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Aug. 15-16-17 Probuction [sic] Dates 'Dirty Work at the Crossroads,'" College Star, Aug. 8, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"Virginia Barter Theatre Presents 'Glass Menagerie'," College Star, Nov. 1, 1950, p. 1.

Barrie's The Old Lady Shows Her Medals, Ellen Violett's The Lottery and George Bernard Shaw's Man of Destiny on March 27.<sup>1</sup>

Drama courses remained the same with the exception of the addition of "Problems in Dramatics" (275) which was described as a course to give "supervised experience to qualified people in all the problems encountered by the high school director of dramatics." (C., 1950-51, pp. 100-101.)

### 1951-1952

Once again, Evans Field was used as a pageant ground when, on November 9, A Parade of Years, written by Dr. Wright and co-directed by Wright and Barton, was presented by "hundreds" of students and faculty members. Fourteen scenes by fraternities and sororities were performed on open-air stages built by the Speech Department. The theme was the fifty-year history of Southwest Texas State Teachers College.<sup>2</sup>

On December 6, 7 and 10, Ruth Gordon's Over Twenty-One was presented by freshman actors. Advanced students designed and constructed the set,<sup>3</sup> which consisted of a simple box-set. The campus critic gave a favorable review and the show played to full houses all three performances.<sup>4</sup>

The next performance was the annual children's production: Prince Fairyfoot, by Geraldine Brain. Directed by Mrs. Bennett and staged on February 23-29,<sup>5</sup> the show was an elaborate undertaking. All but three cast

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<sup>1</sup>"Touring Players to be Here March 27," College Star, May 14, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Historical Pageant Promises Pathos, Mirth," College Star, Oct. 10, 1951, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Over Twenty-One, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Over Twenty-One, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Prince Fairyfoot, program, Speech-Drama production files.



members had to have huge, long and pointed feet. Fantasy-like sets were designed and constructed by Mr. Barton's Stagecraft and Production classes.<sup>1</sup> The show played to over 3,000 children, with one "command" performance for the Speech and Hearing Clinic students.<sup>2</sup>

On March 4 and 5, during Religious Emphasis week, the College Players presented Charles Kennedy's The Terrible Meek.<sup>3</sup> The presentation of a religious play was to become an integral part of the annual week-long events.

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, the next major production, was presented by Mr. Barton some time in April.<sup>4</sup> The setting was a modified Elizabethan stage with an "inner above" and "inner below," and apart from basic furniture pieces, actors moved on a bare stage. Much use was made of lighting; for example: a single spotlight placed on the dead lovers at the end of the show.<sup>5</sup>

On May 13 and 14, the annual presentation of student-directed one-acts was produced: Josephine Niggli's Sunday Costs Five Pesos and James Barrie's The Old Lady Shows Her Medals on May 13, and Verne Powers' Fog on the Valley, Tennessee Williams' This Property Is Condemned, and Sacred Ground on May 14.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Prince Fairyfoot, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"'Fairyfoot' to Show for 3000 Children," College Star, Feb. 27, 1952, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Speakers, Drama, Conferences on R.E.W.," College Star, Feb. 13, 1952, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Romeo and Juliet, production folder, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Romeo and Juliet, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>"Drama Group Plans, 1-Acts for May 13-14," College Star, May 7, 1952, p. 1.

On July 1 and 2, Barton directed Jubilee, the annual water pageant. The 1900s, 1920s and 1950s were featured as the theme, and costumes, skits and water floats made it a gala affair.<sup>1</sup> Featured at the presentation was a student-directed revival of the melodrama, Dirty Work at the Crossroads by Bill Johnson. Dr. Abernathy and Mr. Barton added their talents by serving as masters of ceremony.<sup>2</sup>

Two professional theatre companies were sponsored by the Allied Arts program that year: The London Company with a production of Shakespeare's The Tempest on April 9, and The Touring Players with a production of Thornton Wilder's Skin of Our Teeth on April 17.<sup>3</sup>

One drama course, "Creative Dramatics for Children" (157), was added. In this course, students were instructed in children's theatre activities and worked with children in a creative dramatics workshop. (C., 1951-52, p. 25.)

### 1952-1953

In 1952, Mrs. Bennett left the Department and Miss Glenda James, a former student, became the new children's theatre director and costumer.

The first production of the year was John Van Druten's I Remember Mama, presented on November 11-13 and directed by Mr. Barton. In the program, a statement was made on Barton's approach to the set:

You that saw "Romeo and Juliet" will recognize the traditional Elizabethan staging used in this modern play. The continuity is

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<sup>1</sup>"'Jubilee' to Feature Three Eras," College Star, June 19, 1952, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Pedagog, 1952 (pages unnumbered).

<sup>3</sup>"Drama Department to Reach Peak at College with April Plays," College Star, Dec. 12, 1951, p. 1.

established by using a permanent setting with simple properties to make the various areas of the stage become different places.<sup>1</sup>

On January 5-9, The Wizard of Oz by Elizabeth F. Goodspeed was presented for the annual children's show.<sup>2</sup> Directed by Miss James, the production played to approximately 4,000 children from San Marcos and the surrounding towns, requiring the cast to play two matinees a day.<sup>3</sup> Costumes were rather difficult since they were to dress such characters as a scarecrow, a tin-man, a lion, a dog and a wizard. Sets included two backdrops and several flat-systems, representing exterior and interior scenes.<sup>4</sup>

In February, the College Players presented Paul Nagy's Judas Iscariot for Religious Emphasis Week. Under Miss James' direction, the show was staged on February 12 and 13.<sup>5</sup>

On March 24-26, Ferenc Molnar's Liliom was staged by Mr. Barton.<sup>6</sup> Sets were rather complex. Flats, backdrops and platforms were shifted to become the exterior of a house, an amusement park, a photography shop, a bridge, and "heaven." Costumes were in the early 1900 period.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I Remember Mama, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Children's Theatre Completes Casting for Wizard of Oz," College Star, Dec. 5, 1952, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"'Wizard of Oz' Holds Attention of 4,000 Grade School Kids," College Star, Jan. 9, 1953, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Wizard of Oz, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Speech Dept. Presents Play February 11," College Star, Feb. 6, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Liliom, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Liliom, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

The one-act play festival that year was presented some time in May. Tennessee Williams' The Case of the Crushed Petunias, John Millington Synge's Riders to the Sea, Robert Audrey's God Bless Texas, and Noel Coward's Fumed Oak were directed by students from the production class.<sup>1</sup>

After Russ Vliet, former drama student and playwright, graduated from Southwest Texas, he brought one of his scripts to Barton to consider for production. Barton accepted and, on July 7 and 8, High Intent in Arms was presented in the quad, just outside Old Main and billed as a premiere performance.<sup>2</sup>

On August 1, another bill of student-directed one-acts was performed, but there is no record of titles.<sup>3</sup>

One drama course, "Voice and Dramatic Interpretation" (19), became "Speaking and Reading" (149). (C., 1952-53, p. 109.)

#### 1953-1954

The first show of the 1953-54 year was George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion, performed on November 7-12 and directed by Mr. Barton.<sup>4</sup> Sets were so large and cumbersome that some changes took as long as three minutes.<sup>5</sup> The play was up-dated to the 1950s, so costumes were contemporary to the times.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Speech Students to Direct Four One-Act Plays in May," College Star, April 24, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>High Intent in Arms, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Students Present One-Act Plays," College Star, July 31, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Exes Honored at First Performance of Pygmalion," College Star, Nov. 7, 1953, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>"Backstage Work Important in Staging of 'Pygmalion'," College Star, Oct. 24, 1953, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>Pygmalion, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

Next were two shows (one following about two months after the other) that are scantily reported on in the records, save for the fact that both were directed by Miss James. The first presentation, Night Must Fall by Emlyn Williams, was performed as the freshman play on December 14 to 16.<sup>1</sup> The second show was a children's production of Hansel and Gretel by Lilian and Robert Masters, performed on February 15-19.<sup>2</sup>

For Religious Emphasis Week, a senior drama student directed Barabas, Son of the Master by John H. Hanger. The show was produced twice (February 26 and 27) in the Little Theatre.<sup>3</sup>

The Robinson Jeffers' adaptation of Euripides' Medea was the next production on campus. Under Barton's direction, Miss Pat McGinnis, who later became a professional actress, played the leading role. Twenty new costumes<sup>4</sup> were researched and designed to represent the Grecian period.<sup>5</sup> The set was the columned facade of a Grecian home, accompanied by a series of risers and an enormous set of wooden doors in the center. Behind all this was a backdrop, painted to represent the sea.<sup>6</sup> Construction,

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1954, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup>"Little Theatre to Present 'Hansel and Gretel' Feb. 15-19," College Star, Feb. 6, 1954, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Pedagog, 1954, p. 183.

<sup>4</sup>"Tryouts for 'Medea' Follow Two Successful Productions," College Star, Feb. 27, 1954, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"Speech Dept. to Present 'Medea' April 20-22," College Star, April 10, 1954, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>Medea, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

lighting, properties and costumes were handled by the new Introduction to Theatre class.<sup>1</sup>

On May 12, the student-directed one-act play festival was presented by the Production class. The plays were: The Doctor from Dunmore, Anton Chekhov's The Boor and Tennessee Williams' The Long Goodbye.<sup>2</sup>

Though it was performed in the summer, the next show was the most elaborate production of the 1953-54 year. For the first time in several years, the Speech, Music and Physical Education Departments came together to present a musical comedy. Finian's Rainbow by Harburg, Saily and Lane, was presented on June 30 and July 1 and 2. Mr. Barton, the staging director, and Mr. Ira Bowles, the music director, presented the show to the accompaniment of two pianos.<sup>3</sup> Sets consisted of a series of platforms, a large tree draped with Spanish moss against a lighted cyclorama, and a forest-scene backdrop.<sup>4</sup> One special lighting effect was the appearance of a rainbow at the end of the show.<sup>5</sup>

Drama courses were somewhat different from the previous year:

- (1) "Introduction to Theatre Practice" (18)--drama appreciation, play analysis, acting, stagecraft, directing and production.
- (2) "Acting" (75) added the stipulation that all class members were to participate in College productions.

<sup>1</sup>"Speech Dept. to Present 'Medea'," p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>The Boor, The Long Goodbye, The Doctor from Dunmore, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Finian's Rainbow, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Finian's Rainbow, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 6, 1972.

- (3) "Stagecraft" (65) changed in number only to "Stagecraft" (110).  
(C., 1953-54, p. 32.)

1954-1955

On October 18-21, Finian's Rainbow was revived for the first production in the fall. Sets were held on stage for the October performance.<sup>1</sup>

Two children's theatre productions were staged that year by Miss James. The first, presented on November 15-19, was Charlotte Chorpenning's adaptation of The Emperor's New Clothes,<sup>2</sup> and the second was Glenn Hughes' The Magic Apple, presented on April 4-8.<sup>3</sup>

On March 1-4, a revival of Thornton Wilder's Our Town was performed. Mr. Barton felt the play had become an American classic which would be as interesting to the 1955 audience as it was to those who saw it in 1947. Again, the show was played on a bare stage with basic furniture pieces arranged to represent the different scenes.<sup>4</sup>

The student-directed one-act play festival, for the 1954-55 year, was held on May 11 and 12.<sup>5</sup> Records, however, do not list the play titles.

One professional production of Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock was presented by the Dublin Players from Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Finian's Rainbow, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Rehearsals Begin Children's Theatre," College Star, Oct. 29, 1954, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Director Announces Cast for Second Children's Theatre," College Star, Mar. 18, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Little Theatre to Present 'Our Town' March 1-4," College Star, Feb. 18, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"Speech Classes to Present One-Acts," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Pedagog, 1956, p. 51.

An important course, "Directing Speech Activities" (279), was added in the summer of 1955. Students were instructed in speech and drama activities for one week, following which they instructed high school youngsters in a workshop situation for two more weeks. A bill of one-acts was directed by those students enrolled in the course who were specializing in drama. The first year of the workshop, the bill was presented August 5. To this day, the High School Workshop offers instruction in speech activities to students from various areas of Texas.

### 1955-1956

In 1955, Miss James left Southwest Texas and Julia Grassmuck joined the Speech staff as costumer and children's theatre director.

The first show of the 1955-56 season was Elliott Nugent and James Thurber's The Male Animal, directed by Mr. Barton and staged on November 14-18 in the Little Theatre. Costumes contemporary to the "Roosevelt" years in the 1940s, were designed and executed by Miss Grassmuck, and sets were designed and constructed by the Stagecraft class.<sup>1</sup> Scenery consisted of a realistic box-set.<sup>2</sup>

On February 13-18, Miss Grassmuck directed an adaptation of Cinderella.<sup>3</sup> Sets took on a two-dimensional effect. Windows, shelves, doors, apples, a windmill and trees were painted on flats and backdrops. A pumpkin coach, a cottage exterior and interior, a castle interior and a forest were all presented in this "flat" effect, demanding that the children

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<sup>1</sup>The Male Animal, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>The Male Animal, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Cast Chosen for Cinderella," incomplete clipping, Speech-Drama production files.



use their imaginations to add dimension to the design.<sup>1</sup> As they frequently did, children sent back crayola-drawn pictures and letters. One picture reveals each stepsister yelling "You get to work" while Cinderella replies with an "oh,oh,oh."<sup>2</sup> The children's letters were a bit more explicit:

Dear College Players,

Thank you for inviting us to your play. I think it was very nice. The best part was when the two sisters tried on the glass slipper. And when the fat one tried it on when they told her to smile she tried to smile and the way she made faces. I enjoyed it very much.<sup>3</sup>

and,

Dear College Players,

Thank you for inviting us to your play. I liked all the play but the part that I liked best, was when the stepsister slapped the Knight. And I liked the other part too, when the Knight tickled on the Stepsister.<sup>4</sup>

The next show of the season was Maxwell Anderson's Winterset, presented on April 3-7, and directed by Mr. Barton. The set, adapted from a student design, was so large that construction had to take place on the stage, rather than in the workshop.<sup>5</sup> For example, one unit was built to represent a bridge and was suspended over the entire length of the stage.<sup>6</sup> The College reviewer was favorable, except to say that the show bordered on melodrama at times.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cinderella, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Cinderella, child's drawing, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Cinderella, child's personal letter, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>"Setting Construction Underway for 'Winterset' Presentation," College Star, Mar. 15, 1956, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"'Winterset' Scheduled for SWTSC," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Robin Remington, "Winterset Got Better as Week Got Longer," College Star, April 12, 1956, p. 1.

Annie Get Your Gun, music and lyrics by Irving Berlin and story by Herbert and Dorothy Field, was presented as the second annual musical production. With James Barton as director, Ruth Williams, choral director and Anton Bek, orchestra conductor, faculty members worked closely together to present the musical on May 9-12.<sup>1</sup> On June 6-8, the show was revived for summer audiences.<sup>2</sup>

At some time during the year, the annual production of student-directed one-acts was presented. There is, however, no definite date or list of play titles.

On August 3, the High School Workshop one-acts were presented and one of the plays, In the Good Old Days, was written and directed by a College drama student, Paul Black.<sup>3</sup>

In 1955, the College catalog announced that Speech majors should have twenty-four hours in speech courses, twelve of which must be advanced. (C., 1955-56, p. 116.)

#### 1956-1957

In 1956, Mr. Willard Booth was added to the Speech staff as director, technical director and scene designer.

The first production of the season was Jean Giraudoux's The Madwoman of Chaillot, presented on November 6-10 by Mr. Barton. With Mrs. Julia Collier (formerly Miss Grassmuck) in charge of costumes and Mr. Booth

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<sup>1</sup>"Musical Comedy Opens May 9 for Four Day Run in Theatre," College Star, May 3, 1956, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Annie Get Your Gun, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Drama and Speech Festival Set for August 3-4 in Little Theatre," College Star, Aug. 2, 1956, p. 1.

supervising sets,<sup>1</sup> the technical aspects of the show helped set the mood of the play. Sets consisted of a sidewalk cafe against a background lighted with reds, oranges and yellows; the Countess's cellar with "cold" blues and grays and a collection of misfit furniture. Costumes were designed from eighteenth century French dress.<sup>2</sup> The reviewer felt that The Madwoman of Chaillot was a "provocative" production, but that the satire in the play was too sophisticated for college audiences.<sup>3</sup>

The next show was G. Martinez-Sierra's Cradle Song, presented as the freshman-sophomore play. Directed by Mr. Booth and costumed by Mrs. Collier, the show was staged on December 13-19.<sup>4</sup> Simple alterations were made on a basic set to represent scenes in the show.<sup>5</sup> The design was taken from photographs of authentic Spanish missions.<sup>6</sup>

Charlotte Chorpenning's adaptation of Jack and the Beanstalk was staged by Mrs. Collier on February 6, 7, 8 and 11, with a rope entwined with other ropes to represent the beanstalk with vines. Costumes were basically Renaissance in design. The play was presented twice daily for a total of approximately 1,500 children.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Madwoman of Chaillot, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Fall Drama Production to Run Nov. 6-10 in Little Theatre," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"'Madwoman' is Provocative but Over Audience Level," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Cradle Song, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Cradle Song, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>"New Play Opens Tonight," College Star, Dec. 13, 1956, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup>"2500 Children Will See 'Jack and the Beanstalk'," College Star, Feb. 7, 1957, p. 1.

On March 19-23, the Speech, Music and Physical Education Departments collaborated on a production of Song of Norway, music and lyrics by Robert Wright and George Forrest, and the book by Milton Lazarus. The show was almost entirely staffed by faculty members: James Barton, director; Anton Bek, conductor; Betty C. Goida, choral director; Willard Booth, set designer and technical director; Clara Gamble, choreographer and director of movement; and Julia Collier, costume designer and director of construction. Forty-eight students worked on a very complicated setting.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Booth designed a series of periaktoi, which are a group of triangular units, made to turn different ways to produce three individual scenes.<sup>2</sup> At times, units would be placed on either side of the stage, representing various house exteriors. Costumes consisted of ballet tutus, peasant dresses, ballroom gowns and tuxedos.<sup>3</sup> Seventy costumes were either rebuilt or constructed on a budget of \$120.<sup>4</sup> The review was favorable on all accounts.<sup>5</sup>

John Patrick's The Teahouse of the August Moon was presented on May 6-10, co-directed by Mr. Barton and Mr. Booth.<sup>6</sup> Very little information is available on the different settings, but the "Teahouse" scene consisted of a two-dimensional teahouse facade flown down to a group of platforms.

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<sup>1</sup>Song of Norway, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>James G. Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, May 2, 1972.

<sup>3</sup>Song of Norway, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Wilma Baldwin, "Broadway Spirit Felt in 'Song of Norway,'" College Star, March 7, 1957, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>"'Song of Norway' Pageant of Music, Dance, Drama," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Teahouse of the August Moon, program, Speech-Drama production files.

Behind it was a backdrop of steep, rugged cliffs. Costumes consisted of kimonos, "pyjama" pants and World War II uniforms. (Kimonos and uniforms were authentic.)<sup>1</sup>

The Production class presented five one-acts on May 20 and 21,<sup>2</sup> and the High School Workshop one-acts were performed on August 2.<sup>3</sup>

### 1957-1958

In 1957, Mrs. Collier left Southwest Texas and Gresdna Galloway joined the staff as the new costumer and children's theatre director. She did not, however, direct a children's show that year as Robin Short's adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's Red Shoes was directed by Mr. Barton. Miss Gamble choreographed the dances, Mr. Booth designed and constructed the scenery and Miss Galloway designed and executed the costumes for the November 4-8 performances.<sup>4</sup>

On December 11-14, Inherit the Wind, by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, was staged by Willard Booth.<sup>5</sup> Sets were stylized, with cut-out buildings raised on a platform against a lighted cyclorama. The "court-room" scene was played in front of the stage on the auditorium floor.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Teahouse of the August Moon, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Drama Students Direct Five Plays," College Star, May 9, 1957, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Speech-Drama Workshop Will Have Final Curtain," College Star, Aug. 2, 1957, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Barton Lists 'Red Shoes' Double Cast," College Star, Oct. 18, 1957, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Inherit the Wind, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Inherit the Wind, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

On February 27 through March 4, George Bernard Shaw's Androcles and the Lion was presented for Religious Emphasis Week, under Mr. Barton's direction.<sup>1</sup> Booth's set design consisted of large, square and rectangular units, painted to represent a stylized version of stone, with a large step unit leading to the main entranceway in the center of the stage. Costumes were researched and designed by Miss Galloway to resemble the ancient Roman dress.<sup>2</sup>

In early April, rehearsals began on Rodger's and Hammerstein's Carousel. Again, faculty members from the Speech, Music and Physical Education Departments worked together to produce the show: Mr. Barton acted as director, Mr. Ira Bowles as choral director, Mr. Anton Bek as conductor, and Miss Clara Gamble as choreographer. The show was presented on May 7-10.<sup>3</sup> Although on opening night the Little Theatre was filled to capacity, the College reviewer was skeptical of some aspects of the performance, stating that the first act went badly and the orchestra was rather "high-schoolish."<sup>4</sup> Such ill-will was stimulated by the critique that another student wrote a reply, stating that the critic has the prerogative to voice his opinions but that the reviewer for Carousel had forgotten to mention the tremendous effort that must be put forth to present such a

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<sup>1</sup>"Cast to be Picked for Spring Play," College Star, Jan. 17, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Androcles and the Lion, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Carousel, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Connie Carpenter, "Musical Boasts Full House for Opening Performance," College Star, May 16, 1958, pp. 2 and 6.

large-scale production.<sup>1</sup> On June 3-5, Carousel was revived for the benefit of summer audiences.<sup>2</sup>

Acting and Directing classes collaborated to present the annual one-act play festival on May 14-15. One play title is mentioned: Icarus, My Soul, written by Albert Huffstickler, an advanced drama student.<sup>3</sup>

The annual High School Workshop one-acts were presented on August 1, 1958.<sup>4</sup>

It was in the 1957-58 year that the Shakespeare Society, founding drama organization on the Southwest Texas Campus, became "Delta Sigma Delta," a new sorority.<sup>5</sup>

#### 1958-1959

The 1958-59 year was the most active theatrical season thus far. The first production was John Millington Synge's Playboy of the Western World, performed on October 28 through November 1, and directed by Mr. Booth.<sup>6</sup> One photograph is available in the speech and drama production files to reveal stylistic scenery. Costumes were contemporary to 1958.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ralph Parr, "Student Comments on Musical Review," College Star, May 16, 1958, pp. 2 and 6.

<sup>2</sup>"Barton Sets Extra Run," College Star, May 16, 1958, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>"Students Initial Play in Slate of One-Acts," College Star, May 2, 1958, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>"Speech, Drama Workshop to End Tonight, Saturday," College Star, Aug. 1, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1958 (pages unnumbered).

<sup>6</sup>Playboy of the Western World, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Playboy of the Western World, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

The second presentation of the year was a bill of two one-acts: Sarafin and Joaquin Quintero's A Sunny Morning and Christopher Fry's A Phoenix too Frequent. Under Mr. Barton's direction, the show was toured for a performance at the State Fair in Dallas on October 16, then brought back to Southwest Texas for performances on November 18-21. Miss Galloway performed in both shows.<sup>1</sup> When in Dallas, the cast performed in the Margo Jones theatre-in-the-round,<sup>2</sup> and then returned to San Marcos to perform in that same style.<sup>3</sup> For these two shows, a giant unit, often called the "eggcrate," was suspended above the playing area in the Little Theatre. It was a series of wooden cubicles, designed to hold lighting instruments for arena theatre productions.<sup>4</sup> The sets consisted simply of two platforms, placed on top of one another in a stair-step fashion to represent the entrance to a tomb in A Phoenix too Frequent, and a solid, rectangular unit to represent the bench in A Sunny Morning. The only other units were four squared corner blocks, used to designate the playing area. Costumes were researched and meticulously detailed to look authentic, even at close proximity.<sup>5</sup>

The annual children's show was an adaptation of James Thurber's Mary Moons, directed by Gresdna Galloway. The show was viewed by over 3,000

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<sup>1</sup>A Sunny Morning, A Phoenix too Frequent, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"SWT Dramatists Give Plays at Dallas Fair," College Star, Oct. 24, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>A Sunny Morning, A Phoenix too Frequent, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"Speech Teacher Plays Hillite's Leading Lady," College Star, Nov. 14, 1958, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>A Sunny Morning, A Phoenix too Frequent, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.



youngsters on February 29 through March 6.<sup>1</sup> With a little adjustment, the walls of a castle became the interior of a castle room and a canopy, designed to hang over the king's throne, was adjusted to hang over the princess' bed. Costumes were designed from the medieval period.<sup>2</sup>

The next show of the season was important to theatre at Southwest Texas. Mr. Barton and Mr. Ramsey Yelvington came together as director and playwright to produce the first Yelvington play to be done at Southwest Texas: Cocklebur, presented on April 13-16 and April 18. Cocklebur, according to Yelvington was:

. . . a tragic love story. More than that, it encompasses a universal hunger, a kind of frustrated, aimless running after something indefinable, manifested in a type that we think of as typically Texas, but a type that can be around the world.<sup>3</sup>

Scenery was complex, with a great deal depending on lighting effects. In one scene, two men in World War II uniforms were silhouetted with a crucifix between them, against a lighted cyclorama. In another scene, two men sit in a boat with hanging limbs from a cypress tree silhouetted across the top. Upon a simple series of platforms, stage pieces were moved about to create the different acting areas.<sup>4</sup> Mordecai Gorelik, renowned scene designer, was a guest on the Southwest Texas campus during the Fine Arts Festival and viewed a performance of Cocklebur. Generally, he was impressed, but most upset with one technical aspect: the mixture of stylized

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<sup>1</sup>"Youngsters to View Children's Production," College Star, Feb. 27, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Many Moons, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Play to Open Fine Arts Festival," College Star, April 10, 1959, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Cocklebur, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

and realistic set pieces.<sup>1</sup> (Today, this mixing of styles in scene design is more common.) Costumes were contemporary "Texas Dress."<sup>2</sup> The show was reviewed by John Bustin, critic for the Austin American newspaper, who referred to Yelvington as a "Hill Country Tennessee Williams."<sup>3</sup> His comments on Cocklebur were favorable:

Under Barton's directional hand, the production has insight as well as pace, form as well as freedom, and though the play is leisurely in its telling and often rather static in its attention to poetic dialogue rather than movement, the director sees to it that the grip on the spectators is never lessened.<sup>4</sup>

The Production class one-acts were presented on May 14 and 15. One of the plays, Just Some Ideas, was authored by Lynette Souder, advanced drama student.<sup>5</sup>

That summer, Mr. Barton directed and produced Ramsey Yelvington's Cloud of Witnesses, or The Drama of the Alamo (as it was commonly called) in the State Historical Theatre at the San Jose Mission in San Antonio, Texas.<sup>6</sup> Actors from four different colleges were brought together to perform the play and thirteen high school and college students were cast as "extras."<sup>7</sup> Willard Booth, from Southwest Texas, and Ivan Rider, from

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<sup>1</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 6, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Cocklebur, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>John Bustin, "Cocklebur Rare Creation--Bustin," College Star, April 17, 1959, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>"Dates Set for Drama Productions," College Star, May 1, 1959, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>Mr. Paul Baker, chairman of the Drama Department at Baylor University, was the founding director of the show when it was presented earlier at Baylor and at San Jose.

<sup>7</sup>"Practice Begins Saturday for 'A Cloud of Witnesses'," College Star, June 12, 1959, p. 1.

Baylor, assisted Mr. Barton in the directing; and Miss Gamble, from the Physical Education Department at Southwest Texas, was the movement director.<sup>1</sup> Actors began work in the Little Theatre for a two-week period, then moved to San Antonio. The move was a spectacular affair: costumed actors marched in parade-form around the San Marcos square, then moved on to a second parade in New Braunfels, Texas, then on to San Antonio.<sup>2</sup> During the run of the show, cast and crew members were invited to the Happy Shahan Ranch in Uvalde, Texas for a barbecue dinner to honor the success The Drama of the Alamo had "enjoyed." The company received the "key to the city" and visited with John Wayne on the Shahan Ranch, where he was filming The Alamo.<sup>3</sup>

The outdoor theatre, built for the production, had a hard-packed earthen platform that wrapped around the audience on three sides for the stage. In the center was a skeletal facade of the Alamo that held two rows of actors, each in a cubicle, one row on top of the other. The rest of the set consisted of more facades to resemble the interior of the fort. Costumes were researched, not only from the nineteenth century dress but from various pictures of the Alamo heroes.<sup>4</sup> Technically, the show was complicated, incorporating gunshots, flares and a roving red spotlight to give the audience the feeling of being in the center of the battle of the Alamo. Sponsored by the San Antonio Conservation Society, all actors (with the

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<sup>1</sup>Drama of the Alamo, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"'Cloud' Cast to Move to San Antonio," College Star, June 26, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Director Barton and Cast Visit Movie Star Wayne," College Star, July 24, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Drama of the Alamo, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

exception of extras) were given salaries and board. The Drama of the Alamo gained such acclaim that people from all over the United States and several foreign countries attended the performances.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Barton was directing in San Antonio during the late afternoons and evenings and assisting Dr. Abernathy with the High School Workshop in the mornings, traveling from one city to the other each day for three weeks.<sup>2</sup> After the Workshop one-acts were presented on August 24, however, he devoted himself to the show in San Antonio.<sup>3</sup> This gave Mr. Barton approximately one week of rest before the 1959-60 season began.

#### 1959-1960

On October 30 and November 2-6, Willard Booth presented The Diary of Anne Frank by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett.<sup>4</sup> The scenery was a simultaneous setting, consisting of large flats cut to slant, then level off, resembling the outline of an attic roof. Costumes were in keeping with the 1940s.<sup>5</sup> The review was entirely favorable.<sup>6</sup>

The next show was Jean Anouilh's Antigone, translated by Lewis Galantieri and adapted for reader's theatre by Miss Galloway for

<sup>1</sup>Drama of the Alamo, brochure, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 6, 1972.

<sup>3</sup>"Drama-Speech Workshop Hears Visiting Lectures," College Star, July 24, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'Diary' Cast Changes, Crew Begins Scenery," College Star, Oct. 2, 1959, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Diary of Anne Frank, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Martha and George Pearson, "'Diary' Cast Draws Reviewer's Approval," College Star, Oct. 31, 1959, p. 4.

performances on December 9-12.<sup>1</sup> The set was a simple arrangement of triangular platforms, placed on top of one another to give a stair-step effect. Stools and music stands were the only stage pieces. Men were dressed in tuxedos and women in evening gowns, patterned after ancient Grecian dress. Small pools of light illuminated individual characters as they spoke.<sup>2</sup> The reviewer felt that the style and quality of the production made it a most "effective" performance.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after Antigone had closed, Miss Galloway began work on the twelfth annual children's production, Stuart Walker's Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil. Approximately 3,000 children from fifteen schools<sup>4</sup> saw the show on March 7-11, and on March 17-19, the play was toured to the Children's Theatre Regional Conference in Abilene, Texas.<sup>5</sup> A special prologue was written to explain certain technical aspects of the theatre and some of the words in the script that children might not have understood. A child was planted in the audience to ask the correct questions.<sup>6</sup> Sets were stylized and fragmentary. Costumes were designed from the medieval period.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Antigone, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Antigone, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Martha Pearson, "Staged Reading Very Effective," College Star, Dec. 11, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'Six Who Pass' to Start Monday," College Star, Mar. 4, 1960, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"'Six Who Pass' Cast for Kid's Production," College Star, Feb. 5, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, May 2, 1972.

<sup>7</sup>Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

Russ Vliet returned to Southwest Texas in 1960 to offer his play Rocksprings for a possible production on campus and the show was presented on May 2-7 by Mr. Barton.<sup>1</sup> Four Texas critics, Rual Askew of the Dallas Morning News, Gynter Quill of the Waco Tribune-Herald, John Bustin of the Austin American and Bill Redell of the San Antonio Express, came together for a critique session after one of the performances. Their main criticism was directed toward the playwright for what they considered the vague manner in which he related one character to another.<sup>2</sup>

The Directing class one-acts were presented some time that spring, but records are not precise on production dates.

Early in March, Mr. Barton began casting for his second presentation of The Drama of the Alamo.<sup>3</sup> Sixty cast members (twenty of whom were from Southwest Texas), began work in the San Jose Mission on June 1 for performances on July 1-31. The play had gained such a reputation that magazines such as Holiday, Redbook and Life had printed articles on the showing in San Antonio.<sup>4</sup> Every campus newspaper printed that summer carried an article or ad on the production.

The High School Workshop one-acts were presented on July 29.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rocksprings, program, Speech-Drama production files. [Russ Vliet had studied playwriting at Yale University and had then begun to write professionally. Rocksprings had won the 1960 Fred Ballard Award from the University of Nebraska.]

<sup>2</sup>"Critique Highlights Rocksprings Debut," College Star, May 6, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Drama of the Alamo to be Staged Again," College Star, Mar. 4, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Barton Again Directs 'Cloud of Witnesses'," Summer News (edition of the College Star), June 10, 1960, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>"High School Plays Here Open to Public Today," Summer News (edition of the College Star), July 29, 1960, p. 1.

In October, the San Marcos fire chief announced that Old Main was a fire trap; that open stairwells gave a fire a free path to travel quickly through the building.<sup>1</sup> In November, it was announced that the next building on campus would be a new Speech and Drama center with a theatre seating 500 people.<sup>2</sup> The building was not realized, however, until the fall of 1971, twelve years later.

### 1960-1961

In 1960, Mr. Booth left Southwest Texas and Mr. Harold Tedford replaced him as scene designer and director.

On November 3-5 and 7-9, Thornton Wilder's Skin of Our Teeth was presented by Mr. Barton.<sup>3</sup> The sets were stylized, showing slanted walls and window frames, curtains painted around the windows and carnival booths placed at strange angles, resembling a cartoon picture.<sup>4</sup> The College reviewer was most complimentary, saying that Barton had "done it again" and had proved that the "theatre is not dead."<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note that a Mrs. Ringland, grandmother of one of the cast members, saw Skin of Our Teeth and had a program autographed by the company and sent to Thornton Wilder, a personal friend. Later on, Mr. Wilder wrote back to Mr. Barton and the cast, congratulating them on the "high quality of the production."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Linda Spurier, "Old Main Fire Trap Fire Chief Asserts," College Star, Oct. 2, 1959, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ken Armke, "Busy Drama Department Has Ups and Downs," College Star, Nov. 13, 1959, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Skin of Our Teeth, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Skin of Our Teeth, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Janice Clayton, "'Skin of Our Teeth' Proves Theatre Not Dead," College Star, Nov. 5, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"'Skin' Cast, Crew Receive Thanks," College Star, Nov. 18, 1960, p. 6.

On December 6-10, Miss Galloway presented Patricia Moyes' translation of Jean Anouilh's Time Remembered.<sup>1</sup> The playing areas were on three separate levels: in the center of the auditorium with the audience on three sides, on a platform in front of the stage, and on the stage itself. Costumes were both contemporary and Victorian in design.<sup>2</sup>

On March 14-18, Mr. Barton presented Ketti Fring's adaptation of the Thomas Wolf novel, Look Homeward Angel.<sup>3</sup> The main playing space consisted of a series of platforms in front of three immense facades of the town buildings against a lighted cyclorama.<sup>4</sup>

On May 1-5, Rumplestiltskin was presented as the annual children's theatre production. The student who played the princess in the show had seen Rumplestiltskin as a child, when it had been presented at Southwest Texas thirteen years before.<sup>5</sup>

One-acts that year were presented by the Production class on May 12,<sup>6</sup> and by the High School Workshop students on August 4.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Time Remembered, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Time Remembered, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Look Homeward Angel, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Look Homeward Angel, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Second Time Around," College Star, May 5, 1961, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>"One Acts Slated by Little Theatre," College Star, May 5, 1961, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>"Workshop, Special Classes Highlight Second Semester," College Star, July 21, 1961, p. 1.



Again, The Drama of the Alamo was presented in the San Jose Mission for its third summer run.<sup>1</sup>

Two professional presentations were on campus in the 1960-61 year. The Cleveland Playhouse Touring Theatre performed George Bernard Shaw's Candida on November 16, and Christopher Marlowe's The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus on November 17.<sup>2</sup> During the Fine Arts Festival, Paul Baker, renowned Texas college theatre director, lectured on the "creative mind."<sup>3</sup>

#### 1961-1962

In 1961, Mr. Ramsey Yelvington was added to the staff as special lecturer. In later years, he became a permanent member of the Speech staff and has remained at Southwest Texas to this day.

The first show of the year, Emlyn Williams' The Corn Is Green, was presented by Gresdna Galloway on October 23-25 and 27-28.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Ruth Lehmann, wife of the chairman of the German Linguistics Department at the University of Texas, recorded the entire show in Welsh dialect so actors could listen to the tape for correct accent.<sup>5</sup> The simultaneous setting and the costumes were staunch and conservative in color and design, depicting the Victorian era.<sup>6</sup> The College critic was particularly pleased with

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<sup>1</sup>Jimmy Kercheville, "'Alamo' Starts Slow but is Polished Play," College Star, Aug. 18, 1961, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>"Shaw, Marlowe Productions Scheduled Here Nov. 16-17," College Star, Nov. 5, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Jo Ann Burruss, "Paul Baker Defines Creative Art Mind," College Star, April 14, 1961, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>The Corn Is Green, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Play Cast Getting Aid for Linguistics," College Star, Oct. 13, 1961, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>The Corn Is Green, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

the manner in which cast members handled the Welsh dialect, but skeptical about the show's failure to build in certain spots. There were capacity crowds for each performance.<sup>1</sup>

The next show of the year was the premiere of Ramsey Yelvington's World by the Tail, directed by James Barton and presented on December 4-9. In the production program, Mr. Yelvington defended his play as a tragical work. His concepts in this area were important for Yelvington often dealt with the tragedy script:

The question will be raised, is it a tragedy? It is. In my view it is. Even by Aristotelian standards it comes fairly close. But tragedy for us cannot derive from the ancient Greeks without being anomalous--excepting where we touch as humans. The concept must arise from our own culture, and that in turn derives from the Christian ethic. Jake's tragedy is therefore every man's tragedy who misses the Way. In the folk saying from which the title is taken--and which he repeats in his own variation--Jake Gallagher's got the world by the tail and he can't let go. The tragedy lies in the self-knowledge--his and our's--that he could let go, but doesn't.<sup>2</sup>

World by the Tail was Yelvington's view of the big business man who tries to find escape by weekend jaunts to his deer lease:

I get so sick of these men who rush down to the country to get a deer and then rush right back to the city. They don't have the feel of the outdoors. They shoot deer that have been handfed all year.<sup>3</sup>

Yelvington's characters do not escape for human relations become as strained as ever and the play ends tragically. The setting was a simple, roofless cabin, equipped with bunk beds, a small wood-burning stove, a shelf of staple food products and the all-important telephone that represents a constant contact between the city and the outdoors. Behind the cabin windows,

<sup>1</sup>Linda Spurrier, "'Corn Is Green' Nears Close as Knowles Shines in Lead," College Star, Oct. 27, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>World by the Tail, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Ramsey Yelvington as quoted by Linda Spurrier, mimeographed news release, Speech-Drama production files, n.d.

large, three-dimensional trees were silhouetted against a lighted cyclo-rama. Costumes were contemporary and meticulously designed by Miss Galloway to compliment each character and the mood of the play.<sup>1</sup> Gynter Quill, critic for the Waco Tribune-Herald, said that World by the Tail was one of Yelvington's most "provocative" dramas and that his gift for character stood out more in this script than any of his previous plays.<sup>2</sup>

On March 5-10, Mr. Barton presented Richard Sheridan's The Rivals. Five faculty members assisted with costumes, sets, movement, dialect and music. Ramsey Yelvington took on the character of "Sir Anthony Absolute."<sup>3</sup> The sets consisted of elaborate backdrops with things such as candles, curtains, a wig (with wig stand), trees and buildings painted on the backdrops in perspective. In front of these was open space with only a few furniture pieces. Costumes were researched to emulate Restoration style.<sup>4</sup> The College critic felt that the first portion of the production was rather slow but that it picked up after the intermission.<sup>5</sup>

Noah, a fantasy by Andre Obey, was presented by Miss Galloway some time in April as the annual children's show. Special music was arranged for the show by Ainslee Cox, music instructor, and Clara Gamble choreographed the dance numbers.<sup>6</sup> Scenery consisted of a "look-out" unit, made with several crudely-railed landings and covered with burlap. Platforms were turned

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<sup>1</sup>World by the Tail, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Gynter Quill, "A Provocative Creation," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>The Rivals, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>The Rivals, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Bruce Roach, "All's Well that Ends Well," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Carolyn Eubanks, "Crew to Launch Burlap Ark in Children's Theatre Play," College Star, April 27, 1962, p. 1.

on their sides and joined together to form the bow of the ark. In this manner, the stage became the ark itself. Behind the bow was a ground row of two-dimensional ocean waves or mountains. At the end of the show, a rainbow was created by an arrangement of lights shown against the cyclorama. Costume designs included Biblical dress and "animal" wear.<sup>1</sup>

Instead of the traditional one-acts, the directing class worked together on one student-written play, The Reprisal by Larry Woods. The play was presented on May 9, 1962.<sup>2</sup>

The fourth and final Barton-directed season at San Jose Mission in San Antonio opened on July 10 with Drama of the Alamo. The campus critic who complimented the lighting, acting, staging and general polish of the performance, had only one criticism: he had trouble hearing lines at times.<sup>3</sup> After the close of Drama of the Alamo, Barton continued the summer program at the mission theatre with the premiere of San Jose Story by Ethel Harris and Frank Duane. The play, based upon events during the winter of 1777 at Mission San Jose, dealt with the threatened closing of the mission, design and construction of the famous "rose window," and the return of the mission Indians to pagan rites. One of the highlights of the play was the nightly performance of authentic Deer Dancers who had been brought in from Sonora, Mexico.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Noah, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"Student Play on Schedule for Theatre," College Star, May 4, 1962, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Bruce Roach, "Precision, Smoothness Mark Drama," College Star, July 13, 1962, p. 1. [Because The Drama of the Alamo was staged in an outdoor theatre, performances often suffered from the sounds of cars, airplanes, trains and the local tavern across the street that featured a Country and Western band every Saturday night.]

<sup>4</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, May 1, 1972.

Ninety students gathered at Southwest Texas for the annual High School Workshop and one-acts were presented on August 3.<sup>1</sup>

1962-1963

In 1962, Gresdna Galloway took a leave of absence to continue doctoral work and Beverly Whitaker joined the staff as the new costumer and children's theatre director.

The first show of the year was the Miles Malleson translation of Moliere's The Misanthrope, directed by Mr. Tedford and presented on October 22-27. A faculty staff worked in such areas as dialect, movement, costumes, sets, background music and special set decorations.<sup>2</sup> Sets were stylized with a color scheme of blue-greys and whites to compliment costumes. The show was staged on the floor of the theatre with a large entranceway from the stage, and the audience seated on the other three sides. Special furniture pieces were made to reflect the style and to be functional in intimate theatre.<sup>3</sup>

The next production of the year was not until January 7-12. The Will to Win, another Yelvington premiere, was directed by James Barton.<sup>4</sup> Waco's Tribune-Herald critic, Gynter Quill, felt that the play was interesting but not Yelvington's best work.<sup>5</sup> Austin American critic, John Bustin, felt the play's symbolism was "murkey" and "hard to penetrate" at

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<sup>1</sup>"High Schoolers on Hill for Workshop," College Star, July 27, 1962, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>The Misanthrope, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>The Misanthrope, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>The Will to Win, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Pedagog, 1963 (pages unnumbered).

times but that it also "illuminated some lucidly conceived truths."<sup>1</sup> Will to Win, he said, "isn't the sort of fare that could be served up on anybody's stage."<sup>2</sup>

In the month of March, two tragedies were presented within a week of one another. On March 11-16, Mr. Barton directed Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman.<sup>3</sup> Using the original Jo Melziner design as a basis for his set, Mr. Tedford wanted the audience to feel as if the world were "closing in" on the small house. Dark shades of greens and blues carried out the somber mood. Behind the house was a backdrop, depicting "tall grotesque, dark buildings which seem ready to fall on the house."<sup>4</sup> The second show was Phillip Vellacott's translation of Euripides' The Trojan Women, presented on March 23 in readers theatre style, directed by Beverly Whitaker. Miss Whitaker explained her approach:

In our Readers' Theatre presentation of "The Trojan Women," a number of theatrical effects are employed—music, area lighting, and suggestions of both costumes and scenery. However, no action is staged, and characterizations are only suggested by the readers. Hence, there is a greater demand on the imagination of the members of the audience. Each member is a participant, and the extent of his response depends in part on his capacity to feel the situations and re-create them imaginatively.<sup>5</sup>

Reviewing the tragedies together, the College critic stated that "together

<sup>1</sup>John Bustin, "New Yelvington Play is Interesting Venture," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Death of a Salesman, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Death of a Salesman, mimeographed fact sheet, Speech-Drama production files, n. d.

<sup>5</sup>Trojan Women, program, Speech-Drama production files.

or apart, the productions had all the integrity and artful substance that wears the cheerless face of tragedy honestly."<sup>1</sup>

Soon after Trojan Women was performed, Miss Whitaker began work on Conrad Seiler's The Clown Who Ran Away. Sets were simply designed but difficult to maneuver. At the clown's beckoning, a car, tree, lamp post and doll's shop came into view. Performance dates were April 29 through May 3.<sup>2</sup>

Eight one-acts were presented by the Directing class on May 9-10: Feathertop by Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Spineless Drudge, Tiger at the Gates by Christopher Fry, The Apollo of Bellac by Jean Giraudoux, The Sandbox by Edward Albee, The Chairs by Eugene Ionesco, Impromptu by Ted Mosel and The Choir by Ramsey Yelvington.<sup>3</sup>

Seventy-five students enrolled for the Speech and Drama Workshop that year. One-acts were presented on August 2.<sup>4</sup>

Two professional presentations were performed on campus that year: on March 18, The Cleveland Playhouse presented Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest, and on October 31, Basil Rathbone, famed British actor, performed some selections from Shakespeare's poetry and plays.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Tragedy Honestly Portrayed," College Star, March 29, 1963, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>The Clown Who Ran Away, mimeographed fact sheet, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"Eight Plays Are Staged," College Star, May 10, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"75 High School Students Enroll for Speech Workshop," College Star, July 19, 1963, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>"Basil Rathbone First Slated in Annual Allied Arts Series," College Star, Oct. 19, 1962.

Two courses were added to the drama curriculum:

- (1) "Theatre Design" (110)--lighting, scenery, costumes, properties and make-up design and the styles of staging.
  - (2) "Play Structure" (143)--a prerequisite to the "Directing" (137) class. Students studied play structure and staging techniques.
- (C., 1962-63, p. 134.)

#### 1963-1964

In 1963, Mr. Dwain Herndon came into the Department as a second set designer and as technical director of theatre. Dr. Abernathy took a leave of absence in the middle of the year to take a position in Argentina and Mr. Barton became acting chairman of the Department.

The first show of the 1963-64 season was George Bernard Shaw's Heartbreak House, directed by Harold Tedford, costumed by Beverly Whitaker, designed by Dwain Herndon, and presented on October 21-26.<sup>1</sup> The scenery consisted of an interior setting of an upper-class, early 1900s home. Costumes were designed from the vogue of the 1900s, and materials were carefully selected to represent fashionable wear.<sup>2</sup>

Go, Fly a Kite!, a premiere performance on the Southwest Texas campus, was presented on November 4-5, directed by Ramsey Yelvington, the playwright, with Dwain Herndon as technical director. On November 2, the show was toured to Austin, Texas for a performance at the Southwest Theatre Conference, held at the University of Texas;<sup>3</sup> and on December 20, scenes

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<sup>1</sup>Heartbreak House, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Heartbreak House, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Go, Fly a Kite!, program, Speech-Drama production files.



from the show were televised on KLRN, the educational television channel.<sup>1</sup> The play was an autobiographical account, according to Yelvington, of an aging playwright.<sup>2</sup>

On December 9-14, Mr. Barton presented Archibald MacLeish's J.B., designed by Mr. Herndon and costumed by Miss Whitaker.<sup>3</sup> Dr. William H. Crook, formerly president of the San Marcos Baptist Academy, spoke to the cast on the theology of the Book of Job, since J.B. is a modern interpretation of that work. "Job dramatizes the experiences of the human race," Dr. Crook said.<sup>4</sup> From there he made step-by-step comparisons between MacLeish's play and the book in the Bible. The setting was simultaneous, consisting of a series of burlap-covered platforms. To the rear of the stage was large, heavy netting, suspended in peaks to represent the tops of circus tents. A long, winding step unit led to a railed landing where "Mr. Zeus" was to portray his role of God. Suspended above all this was a large model of the molecular structure, representing the globe, itself.<sup>5</sup> The College reviewer recognized a confused and opinionated audience (J.B. was a rather controversial play), but also recognized an excellent performance.<sup>6</sup>

On March 9-14, one of the most elaborate shows ever produced at Southwest Texas was presented by James Barton: Shakespeare's King Lear.

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<sup>1</sup>Brochure announcing the 1963-64 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Go, Fly a Kite!, unsigned letter, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>J.B., program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"MacLeish's 'J.B.' to Open Monday Evening in Theatre," College Star, Dec. 6, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>J.B., photographs, Speech Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Linda Duffield, "Varied but Definite Opinions Formed on 'J.B.'," College Star, Dec. 13, 1963, p. 2.

Faculty staff included: Harold Tedford, set design; Dwain Herndon, properties; Beverly Whitaker, costumes; Ramsey Yelvington, acting coach; and Clara Gamble, movement director. There were four student assistant-directors.<sup>1</sup> Tickets sold out for every performance (over 1,200 local people and over three hundred out-of-town people viewed the performances), and the play was held over on March 21-24.<sup>2</sup> Over one hundred students worked on the show in some capacity.<sup>3</sup> The simultaneous setting, consisting of a series of burlap-covered platforms, was dressed with banners, set pieces, or left bare, to represent the several scenes. To the rear of the stage was a tall platform entranceway that served both for entrances and as a level. Costumes were Gothic in design, and over five hundred yards of material had to be procured for the royalty, peasants, court pages and soldiers' wear. Properties included crowns, swords, helmets and head-pieces.<sup>4</sup> Helmets were constructed of fiberglass, covered with cloth, coated with resin and sprayed silver.<sup>5</sup> The critics were most favorable. Waco Tribune-Herald critic, Gynter Quill, felt that Barton had given a "clarity" to the play.<sup>6</sup> Bill Redell of the San Antonio Express called Barton an

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<sup>1</sup>King Lear, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Bill Reddel, "SWTS Extends Run of Shakespeare Drama," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"'King Lear' Production Set with Ross in Title Role," College Star, Dec. 13, 1963, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>King Lear, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"'King Lear' Costumes, Props Being Readied," College Star, Feb. 28, 1964, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>"Sweet Smell of Success Crowns San Antonio, San Marcos Productions," Tribune Herald (Waco, Texas), March 15, 1964, p. 5.

"expert director" and the show a "superb production."<sup>1</sup> John Bustin of the Austin American said:

Around these parts, playgoers have for some time taken for granted the fact that the University of Texas drama department has pretty well cornered the Regional market on Shakespeare through the handsomely done annual offerings of B. Iden Payne. But now along comes James G. Barton's Southwest Texas State College Players to prove that, they too, can put on a Shakespeare show with notable style and polish.

. . . Barton has cut incisively to the heart of the tragedy, grasped its inner power and projected it, through his cast, onto a stage vibrantly alive with well-drawn characters as well as theatrical pageantry.<sup>2</sup>

James Thurber's A Thurber Carnival was set up as a tentative production on April 8-10,<sup>3</sup> but the extra run of King Lear left no rehearsal time and the show was cancelled.

On May 4-8, Miss Whitaker presented Elizabeth F. Godspeed's version of The Wizard of Oz, with Mr. Herndon as set designer and Mr. Tedford as costume designer. Special music was added to the show, and dancing was directed by a student choreographer.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 3,000 children viewed the performances.<sup>5</sup>

On May 14-15, the Directing class one-acts were performed, but titles are not revealed in the records.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Redell, "SWTS Extends Run."

<sup>2</sup>John Bustin, "Showworld," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Brochure announcing the 1963-64 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Wizard of Oz, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"3,000 Kids Come See 'The Wizard'," College Star, May 8, 1964, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Brochure announcing the 1963-64 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

Ninety high school students attended the Speech and Drama summer Workshop and one-acts were presented on August 7.<sup>1</sup>

That summer, Barton, Herndon and Whitaker co-directed Bells are Ringing (book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolf Green and music by Jule Styne) at the Peninsula Playhouse in New Braunfels, Texas. The music director, choreographer and accompanists were from outside the Southwest campus, but several cast members were campus students. The show was presented some time in June of 1964.<sup>2</sup>

There were several professional presentations on campus that year. On October 28, the San Antonio Symphony, with a group of professional singers and actors, presented Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's Three-Penny Opera.<sup>3</sup> On February 19 and 20, the Cleveland Playhouse presented The Rivalry by Norman Corwin and Drums Under the Window by Sean O'Casey.<sup>4</sup> As an event in the Fine Arts festival, a panel discussion was held on the drama critic and criticism, led by Gynter Quill on March 9.<sup>5</sup> Russ Vliet returned to Southwest Texas to hold a special playwriting seminar for interested students.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Speech Workshop Draws 90 Students," College Star, Aug. 7, 1964, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Bells Are Ringing, program belonging to Mr. and Mrs. James Barton.

<sup>3</sup>"Symphony to Give Musical: 'Three Penny Opera' Due," College Star, Oct. 25, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Brochure announcing the 1963-64 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Fine Arts Festival Begins Monday with 'King Lear'," College Star, Mar. 6, 1964, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>"Vliet Visits Here Today," College Star, June 26, 1964, p. 1.

In 1963, only one course was added to the drama curriculum: "Playwriting" (129), designed for study of play structure, dialogue and writing mechanics. The course could be repeated for credit. (C., 1963-64, p. 142.)

### 1964-1965

In 1964-65, Mr. Barton remained as acting chairman of the Speech Department and Miss Doty (formerly Miss Galloway) returned to the staff.

The first show of the season was Henrick Ibsen's A Doll's House, presented by Harold Tedford on October 21-27. Sets were designed by Dwain Herndon and costumes by Miss Doty.<sup>1</sup> The scenery consisted of a realistic box-set. Costumes were designed from the Victorian period, using such things as capes, bustle dresses, knickers and top hats.<sup>2</sup>

On November 5-7, Miss Whitaker presented her adaptation of a collection of Mark Twain's works (letters, speeches, short stories, diaries, newspaper articles and novels), entitled An Evening with Mark Twain.<sup>3</sup> On March 17, a taped version of the show was presented on KLRN, an educational television channel.<sup>4</sup> The show also toured to Wimberly, Waco and Austin, Texas.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A Doll's House, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>A Doll's House, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Brochure announcing the 1964-65 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"An Evening with Mark Twain," Instructional Television Newsletter, March, 1965.

<sup>5</sup>An Evening with Mark Twain, mimeographed fact sheet, Speech-Drama production files.

On December 7-12, an adaptation of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland was presented by Miss Doty.<sup>1</sup> Records are very incomplete for this production with the exception of the College review which criticized the lack of development in the actors.<sup>2</sup>

On March 8-13, Miss Doty presented Shakespeare's Twelfth Night with a faculty staff in charge of sets, costumes, movement and background music.<sup>3</sup> Costumes were designed after the high Renaissance period,<sup>4</sup> with lighter colors for the brighter, more flamboyant characters, and darker colors for the more conservative characters.<sup>5</sup> A series of ten curved levels was used in the simultaneous scenery.<sup>6</sup>

On April 16 through May 1, Ramsey Yelvington's One was presented on the Southwest Texas campus, and on May 7-8 was premiered at the Globe Theatre in Odessa, Texas.<sup>7</sup> In the center of the stage was a large water tank drum, with one smaller drum to either side. As the protagonist remained within the tank because the water was too far from the rim for him to reach it, his life and philosophies flashed before him in the forms of

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<sup>1</sup>Brochure announcing the 1964-65 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>"'Alice' in Never Never Land," College Star, Dec. 11, 1964, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Twelfth Night, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>"Twelfth Night," Southwest Texas Newsletter, Feb. 24, 1965, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>"Comedy Run Set at SWT," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>Twelfth Night, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Brochure for the 1964-65 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

projected slides, masked characters and allegorical figures such as a thorn tree or a rock. At the end of the play, a green light comes on in the center of the tank and the protagonist is revealed, drowned at the bottom.<sup>1</sup> Two projectors and several new curtain panels were bought to produce the show.<sup>2</sup>

On May 11-13, the Directing class presented eight original one-acts: A Quiet Revolution of Love by David Jarrott; Procession by Sylvia Hueter; Even Oaks Have Acorns by Pat Fogal; The Sign, by Diana Vela; The Hot Sun Extinguished by Margaret Luedeke; A Little Brandy When Cool Weather Comes by Mike Fry; and 1199 Bluejay by Dr. William I. Gordon (Southwest Texas debate instructor).<sup>3</sup>

The production date for the High School Summer Workshop is not recorded for 1965.

Miss Julie Haydon, renowned American actress, presented two programs entitled "Dialogue Remembered" and "George Jean Nathan--the Playwright, the Critic, the Actor," on December 3-4.<sup>4</sup>

The only changes made in the drama courses in 1965 were in their numbers:

- (1) "Introduction to Theatre" (18) became 1350.
- (2) "Acting" (75) became 2350.
- (3) "Stagecraft" (110) became 3350.
- (4) "Playwriting" (129) became 3355.

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<sup>1</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 6, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>"One," Southwest Texas Newsletter, April 22, 1965, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>"One-Acts," Southwest Texas Newsletter, May 1965, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Brochure for 1964-65 Southwest Texas theatrical season, Speech-Drama production files.

- (5) "Directing" (137) became 3360.
- (6) "Creative Dramatics for Children" (157) became 3370.
- (7) "Directing Speech Activities" (279) became 4320.
- (8) "The Development of Theatre" (233) became 4350.
- (9) "Advanced Directing" (237) became 4355.
- (10) "Problems in Theatre" (175) became 4360. (C., 1964-65, pp. 146-47.)

In 1964, the Texas Education Agency moved drama from language arts to fine arts and established teaching fields in both speech and drama, along with an all-level speech and drama field for teacher certification. Though Southwest Texas students were allowed to specialize in an area of speech or drama or a combination of both, the Department remained under the "Speech" title and all courses were listed as "speech," rather than speech and/or drama.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1965-1966

There was a major turn-over in faculty in 1965. Mr. Barton remained acting chairman of the Department. Harold Tedford, Gresdna Doty, Beverly Whitaker and Dwain Herndon left Southwest Texas and Janice Courtney, Moses Goldberg, Susan Revzan and Jules Rodney Baughn joined the staff. Miss Revzan was the new costumer, Mr. Baughn the set designer and Mr. Goldberg Children's theatre director.

The first show of the year was presented on October 26-30 by Miss Jan Courtney: The Flies by Jean Paul Sartre.<sup>2</sup> Miss Courtney made an effort

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<sup>1</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, May 2, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>"'The Flies' Runs Through Saturday," College Star, Oct. 29, 1965, p. 3.



to cast new drama students in the production but was admonished for this by the College critic, who felt some actors were too immature to play some of the very difficult roles.<sup>1</sup> A reply to that review followed one week later, stating that The Flies may not have been an outstanding production but that the previous week's reviewer lacked a necessary knowledge of the theatre.<sup>2</sup>

The next production was Vosco Call's William Tell, directed for children's theatre by Moses Goldberg for performances on December 6-11.<sup>3</sup> The atmosphere of the play was derived from the 1291 Swiss culture. Costumes were in greens, browns and greys. William Tell wore a fur vest to represent the "fleece" of the hunter. Austrian soldiers were in silver helmets and shields.<sup>4</sup> Sets included a painted backdrop, revolving scenery and a mechanism whereby the "apple" appeared to be shot off the head of William Tell's son. A fire in the show was accomplished with lighting.<sup>5</sup>

On May 7-12, Federico Garcia Lorca's Doña Rosita was presented by Mr. Yelvington.<sup>6</sup> The scenery consisted of one elaborate setting with five different areas, connected with step units, to represent a wealthy Spanish home. In the center of the stage was a gazebo, surrounded by a fern-covered

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<sup>1</sup>Ross Sheppard, "Nothing...Nothing!," College Star, Nov. 5, 1965, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Pat Sommerfield, "'Flies' Defended," College Star, Nov. 12, 1965, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>"Play Tryouts Set," College Star, Oct. 22, 1965, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>"Authenticity to be Featured in 'William Tell' Production," College Star, Nov. 19, 1965, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup>"Authenticity to be Featured," p. 12.

<sup>6</sup>"Director Yelvington Names Play Cast," College Star, Feb. 4, 1966, p. 3.

courtyard. Behind the entire set was a large projection of a rose that changed colors to correspond to the aging of Dona Rosita. A curtain of transparent strips of red silk and black lace was made, behind which, colorful Spanish dancers appeared.<sup>1</sup>

On April 25-30, Mr. Goldberg presented Harold Pinter's The Birthday Party in the intimate theatre style.<sup>2</sup> Goldberg felt that rehearsing a Pinter play was like working with an iceberg:

Rehearsals now being conducted for this play can be compared to an iceberg. For many elements of feeling are absurd, and this makes it difficult for actors in rehearsal. In normal plays, you try to discover the motives of characters, but in this play, action seems to have no motivation. You have to construct it.<sup>3</sup>

The review was most favorable on all production aspects (acting, staging, direction), but not too certain about the merits of Pinter's play.<sup>4</sup>

Ten Directing class one-acts were presented on May 9, 11 and 13 with assistance from the Design and Acting classes.<sup>5</sup> One title mentioned was Korea, written by Ramsey Yelvington and directed by Yelvington's daughter, Harriet Smith.<sup>6</sup>

For the first time in the nineteen years James Barton had been at Southwest Texas, he did not direct a show in the long term. His duties as

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Zamora, "Drama Production Previews Monday," College Star, Mar. 4, 1966, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>"Six Students Cast for Spring Drama, 'The Birthday Party'," College Star, Mar. 18, 1966, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>"'Party' Rehearsals Likened to Iceberg," College Star, April 1, 1966, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Jan Albrecht, "Pinter? The Actors--Yes!," College Star, April 29, 1966, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>"One-Act Plays Presented," College Star, May 6, 1966, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>"Drama Fest Cast Picked," College Star, April 22, 1966, p. 4.

acting chairman of the Department did not allow time for directing. However, at the request of the manager of the defunct summer stock Peninsula Playhouse in New Braunfels, Texas, he contracted for the Department to take the theatre over for the summer. The program was funded by the University and two plays were presented. Mr. Barton, with Ramsey Yelvington's assistance, produced Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet by up-dating it to the 1830s in San Antonio, Texas, with the "Capulets" becoming the "Veramendis." The sets, designed by Mr. Baughn,<sup>1</sup> consisted of the traditional balcony, and two units representing the Veramendi and Montague houses.<sup>2</sup> Costumes, designed and executed by Mrs. J. R. Baughn,<sup>3</sup> were in the 1830s Spanish and "western" styles.<sup>4</sup> The College reviewer was quite favorable<sup>5</sup> but the Austin American critic, John Bustin, felt that the show needed polish, particularly with some of the supporting actors. He did comment, however, on the workability of the up-dated style.<sup>6</sup>

The second show of the summer stock bill was Frank Loesser's Guys and Dolls, directed by Mr. Baughn with John Belisle, music instructor, as musical director, and Mrs. Baughn as costumer. Mr. and Mrs. Baughn designed the sets and costumes in bright colors, with lines in black to represent the

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<sup>1</sup>Romeo and Juliet, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Romeo and Juliet, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Romeo and Juliet, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Romeo and Juliet, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>Roger Nuhn, "SWT Version of 'Romeo & Juliet' Comes Out as Excellent Theatre," incomplete clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>John Bustin, "'Romeo' Updated, Still Shakespeare," incomplete newspaper clipping, Speech-Drama production files.

comic strip effect.<sup>1</sup> The College reviewer called the show "entertaining and almost professional."<sup>2</sup>

Romeo and Juliet played July 8-24, and Guys and Dolls July 29 through August 15.<sup>3</sup>

The drama curriculum remained the same except that "Advanced Directing" (4355) was changed to "Advanced Directing" (4365). (C., 1965-66, p. 153.)

### 1966-1967

In the 1966-67 year, Dr. Elton Abernathy returned from leave to re-assume chairmanship of the Department. The only change in drama instructors was the addition of Dr. Darrel Baergan, the first Ph.D. in the drama division since Monroe Lippman in 1935.<sup>4</sup> Baergan was to gain a reputation at Southwest Texas as an experimental theatre director.

The year began with a fanciful production of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, directed by Mr. Goldberg and presented on September 19-24.<sup>5</sup> One thousand dollars was spent on sets and costumes.<sup>6</sup> Sets consisted of a "dream" woods with fine netting over branches of trees to give a hazy effect. Sturdy, colorful toadstools were arranged in

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<sup>1</sup>Guys and Dolls, photograph, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>Anita Fox, "'Guys' Rolls 7," College Star, August 12, 1966, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Romeo and Juliet, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Baergan and Mr. Barton first met when the former played the role of Colonel Davy Crockett in The Drama of the Alamo in 1959.

<sup>5</sup>"Play Tryouts Slated to Begin Monday for First Production," College Star, Sept. 16, 1966, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>"'Dream' Has Fairyland Touches," College Star, Oct. 28, 1966, p. 1.

several areas of the stage.<sup>1</sup> The play was updated to the baroque era, so costumes were designed from that period.<sup>2</sup> A new attendance record was achieved at Southwest Texas: over 5,000 people viewed the show.<sup>3</sup>

On December 5-6, 9-10 and 12-13, Dr. Baergan presented George Bernard Shaw's Androcles and the Lion, using a montage of ideas. Gladiators in the show were dressed, not only in parts of traditional ancient Roman wear, but in football helmets and padding.<sup>4</sup> Movie projections were shown against a white background, and a 1920 silent movie effect was accomplished when actors moved across the stage in a jerky manner in front of a strobe light.<sup>5</sup> Scenery, shaped in a "U" and curved around the audience on two sides, was designed to emulate a cartoon effect.<sup>6</sup> The College reviewer's main comment was derived from his skepticism of the farcical style in which the production was presented.<sup>7</sup>

The Visit by Friedrich Duerrematt, was presented by Mr. Barton on March 13-15, 17-18 and 20. Large unit sets were placed on wagons so scenery could be moved swiftly.<sup>8</sup> Behind the entire set were projections of

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<sup>1</sup>"Fall Drama Production Draws Sell-Out Crowds," College Star, Oct. 28, 1966, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>"'Dream' Has Touches," p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Shakespeare's Play Continues Run to Set Attendance Records," College Star, Nov. 4, 1966, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"'Androcles' to Open Here December 5," College Star, Nov. 18, 1966, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>John Smith, "Satire Falls Short," College Star, Dec. 9, 1966, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>"'Androcles' to Open," p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Smith, "Satire Falls Short," p. 2.

<sup>8</sup>"Barton Announces Cast for 'Festival,'" College Star, Feb. 10, 1967, p. 1.

such things as a cathedral, a red spider web, indiscriminate "scribblings" and a panther, all representing Duerrematt's ideas found throughout the play.<sup>1</sup> Costumes were varied: some were procured from Goodwill stores while others were constructed from Vogue patterns.<sup>2</sup> For the first time in Southwest Texas theatre history, a faculty member (Dr. Baergan) was exclusively in charge of lighting.<sup>3</sup> Though the show suffered from some technical difficulties with projections the first night, the College critic gave a favorable review.<sup>4</sup>

On April 24-27, Sean O'Casey's The Silver Tassie was presented by Mr. Yelvington. An advanced student designed the set,<sup>5</sup> making use of two playing areas: the stage proper and the floor area in front of the stage, set on platforms. Scenes were as varied as a ballroom, a hospital, a living room and a battlefield.<sup>6</sup> The review was complimentary to the actors and to the "bitter-sweet-memories left to the audience."<sup>7</sup>

The Directing class one-acts that year were presented in April and included six original plays from Mr. Yelvington's Playwriting class: Five Daisies and a Rose by Cheryl Highly; The Only Woman Bass Singer by Sheila Hargett; The Best Laid Plan by Karen Reid; Leave the Dying to the Old by

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<sup>1</sup>Jan Albrecht, "'The Visit' Found Frightening, Haunting," College Star, Mar. 17, 1967, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>"Barton Announces Cast," p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Albrecht, "'Visit' Found Haunting," p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>The Silver Tassie, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>The Silver Tassie, photographs, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Jan Albrecht, "'Tassie' Mixes Moods," College Star, April 28, 1967, p. 2.

Elizabeth Herring; and Wheelchair and Grace by Michael Neman. Five Daisies and a Rose had previously received an award at the Texas Inter-collegiate Press Association.<sup>1</sup>

On August 4, the fifteenth annual High School Workshop one-acts were presented in the Little Theatre.<sup>2</sup>

There were several professional productions presented that year. On December 7-8, The National Players did Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice and Aristophanes' The Birds.<sup>3</sup> On March 13-17, the Touring Repertory directors, Ronald Ibbs and Maureen Halligan (founders of the Dublin Players) conducted a theatre workshop.<sup>4</sup> On April 17, Hans Conried played in the Broadway production of Generation by William Goodhart. In June, the Kaleidoscope Players did a readers' theatre production of collected works by Lewis Carroll, entitled The Other Side of the Looking Glass.<sup>6</sup>

In the spring of 1966, Mr. Barton submitted a new curriculum plan in accordance with the action taken by the Texas Education Agency's State Board of Examiners in the fall of 1964.<sup>7</sup> The plan established both speech and drama courses and a new classification of speech-drama courses.<sup>8</sup> In the

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<sup>1</sup>"Student Efforts Highlight One-Act Play Festival," College Star, April 28, 1967, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"15th Annual Workshop Set for Monday," College Star, July 21, 1967, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Plays to be Performed," College Star, Dec. 2, 1966, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"Theatre Workshop Will Begin March 13," College Star, Mar. 10, 1967, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>College Star, April 14, 1967, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>"'Kaleidoscope' to Appear," College Star, June 23, 1967, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>The Standards for Teacher Education in Texas, Bulletin 651, The Texas Education Agency.

<sup>8</sup>"Memorandum to the Dean of the College," 1967, Speech-Drama files.

fall of 1966, upon approval of this plan by the Board of Regents, a drama major and minor, and a drama teaching field for certification were established. Courses remained the same in name description and number, but were designated drama courses. The two drama degree plans included:

- (1) "Introduction to Theatre" (1350), "Acting" (2350), "Stagecraft" (2355), "History of the Theatre" (2360), "Costumes" (3345), "Design" (3350), "Playwriting" (3355), "Play Analysis and Methods" (3360) and "Directing" (4365) for a drama major.
- (2) "Introduction to Theatre" (1350), "Acting" (2350), "Stagecraft" (2355), "Costumes" (3345), "Design" (3350), "Play Analysis and Methods" (3360) and "Directing" (4365) for an all-level speech and drama major. (C., 1967, pp. 206-210.)

#### 1967-1968

In 1967, Susan Revzan, Rodney Baughn and Moses Goldberg left Southwest Texas and Joanna Helming (director and lighting designer), Frederick March (set designer), Dorothy Davidek (costumer), Billy Bob Brumbalow (director) and Sandra Norton (children's theatre director) joined the staff. Another addition to the Department's faculty was Dr. Lester Schilling, a speech professor who was instrumental in the further development of a readers' theatre program at Southwest Texas.

The first production of the year was a presentation of Christopher Marlowe's The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, staged by Dr. Baergan on October 23-28.<sup>1</sup> Rehearsals began with a "brainstorming" session between members of the cast and Dr. Baergan to gather ideas on a new, experimental style. The show was then produced with several innovative ideas such as:

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<sup>1</sup>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, program, Speech-Drama production files.



the presentation of three "Fausti" (the man, his ego and his alter-ego); a thirty-two member chorus (from which was extracted all of the other characters in the play) presented as the demons of hell playing a gigantic "joke" on Faustus; a gutted piano which produced eerie sounds when the strings were plucked by hand; the sound of a heartbeat produced when the soundboard was beat with a padded drumstick; slides and films shown against a scrim<sup>1</sup> at various intervals;<sup>2</sup> and a constant flow of action for eighty minutes without intermission. The College reviewer was most favorable, saying that the production, though experimental, was in keeping with the medieval style.<sup>3</sup> In August of that same year, Faustus was revived and adapted for presentation in two churches in San Antonio and Austin.<sup>4</sup>

The second production of the year was Aad Gireidamus' Two Pails of Water, presented on December 4-10 by Miss Norton for the annual children's show.<sup>5</sup> The set design consisted of three skeletal houses in bright, pastel colors. Costumes were also in pastels, in exaggerated fanciful designs.<sup>6</sup> Though children's theatre was not his "paper cup of Kool-Aid," Mr. Yelvington reviewed the show, saying that both casts (the show was double-cast) were individual but good, and that the jerky, puppet-like movements of the actors worked quite well.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A scrim is a thinly-woven drop, visible when lights are on the front, but invisible when lit from behind.

<sup>2</sup>Anita Fox, Curt Bryan, "'Faustus'--Creates a Dream," College Star, Oct. 13, 1967, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>College Star, August 26, 1968, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>"New Kiddie Play is Double Cast," College Star, Nov. 3, 1967, p.5.

<sup>6</sup>Two Pails of Water, 35mm. slides, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Ramsey Yelvington, "Yelvington Views 'Two Pails of Water'," College Star, Dec. 8, 1967, p. 2.

On December 20, speech and drama students, under Dr. Schilling's direction, performed a readers' theatre presentation of e. e. cummings' Santa Claus in the Southwest Texas student center.<sup>1</sup>

In February, the entire drama division began work on a trilogy of full-length plays by Ramsey Yelvington: Women and Oxen, A Cloud of Witnesses (The Drama of the Alamo) and Shadow of an Eagle. One hundred and fifty students tried out for the shows, but even so, many students were cast in all three plays to complete the cast of characters needed for the three productions.<sup>2</sup> The Department received a \$1,500 grant from the Texas Fine Arts Commission in recognition of the "creative artistic and historical significance" of the presentations.<sup>3</sup> The San Marcos Baptist Academy Glade Outdoor Theatre was constructed for the productions which were technically very difficult. Authentic props such as plows, wagon wheels, bellows and anvils were borrowed from townspeople.<sup>4</sup> A cabin, a blacksmith's shop and the traditional skeletal facade of the Alamo were among the large units that had to be constructed.<sup>5</sup> In Women and Oxen, a covered wagon, pulled by a team of live oxen ("Lum" and "Abner"), was driven down the side of a hill.<sup>6</sup> New light boards with silicone rectifier

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<sup>1</sup>"'Santa' Tryouts Called for Monday," College Star, Dec. 8, 1967, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>"Texian Trilogy Cast Complete Monday," College Star, Feb. 9, 1968, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Jan Wood, "Trilogy Will Bring Texas Heroes to Life," College Star, Feb. 16, 1968, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"'Trilogy' Sends SOS," College Star, Mar. 1, 1968, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Women and Oxen, Cloud of Witnesses, A Shadow of an Eagle, 35 mm. slides, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>"Needed: an Audience," College Star, June 28, 1968, p. 2.

dimmers controlled the large spotlights at the top of telephone poles.

Over 190 hours were put in on lighting alone.<sup>1</sup> The three plays were presented consecutively on April 8-13, 18-20, 25-27 and May 2-4, 9-11.<sup>2</sup>

That summer, Women and Oxen was revived and productions began on June 20.<sup>3</sup>

Of the ten one-act plays presented by the Directing class, nine were originals: Dinner at Six and Cottonwood Bridge by Lewis Cleckler; Six and Riot by Janet Carroll; Herbie and Ethel, Jamie, and The Accountant by Michael Nehman; One Hundred Bottles of Beer on the Wall by Becky King; A Twinge of Conscience by Linda Watterson; An Ending by Sharon Holiday; The Tin Soldier by Ken Vest; and Trials of A. W. Winflow by Vernon Carroll. The only play presented that was not an original was Ludwig Holberg's The Changed Bridegroom.<sup>4</sup>

The High School Summer Workshop one-acts were presented on August 2, 1968.<sup>5</sup>

Several professional presentations were on campus that year. In November, the Little Orchestra Society from New York presented the opera, Curlew River by Benjamin Britten.<sup>6</sup> On March 19, Jean Racine's Phaedra was presented by the Touring Classics division of the American Theatre Productions, Inc.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Anita Fox, "Trilogy's Light Crew Remains Undaunted by Hot Wires, Rain," College Star, May 10, 1968, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>"'Trilogy' Will Bring Heroes to Life," p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Fox, "Needed: An Audience," p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>"One-Act Casts Announced," College Star, April 19, 1968, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Workshop Held Here," College Star, Aug. 26, 1968, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>College Star, Nov. 10, 1967, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>"'Phaedra' Coming Here Soon," College Star, Mar. 8, 1968, p. 1.

In 1967, three courses were added to the drama curriculum:

- (1) "Theatre History" (2362)--a second semester of the history class.
- (2) "Teaching Speech and Drama in the High School" (4310).
- (3) "Children's Theatre" (4370). (C., 1967-68, p. 209.)

#### 1968-1969

There were three changes in the drama staff in 1968: Miss Lenaya Clark replaced Miss Norton in children's theatre and Mr. Bob Nelms was added to the staff to work in both speech and drama. Mr. Tom Fudge replaced Miss Clark at mid-year in children's theatre.

The first play that year was an experimental version of Our Town, directed by Dr. Baergan and produced October 21-26. As in the last Baergan-directed show, several innovative ideas were used: a scrim for projections and the hazy effect needed in the graveyard scene; the updating of the show to cover a span of years from 1956 to 1968; the division of the "Stage Manager" role into a fourteen member chorus, representing the townspeople.<sup>1</sup> The College review was complimentary on all accounts.<sup>2</sup>

On December 12, a revised version of The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus was presented in the Globe Theatre in Odessa, Texas.<sup>3</sup> Cast and crew members traveled to Odessa, set up and rehearsed on December 11, and returned to San Marcos on December 14.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cathy Tomlinson, "'Our Town' Updated," College Star, Sep. 20, 1968, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Zamora, "'Our Town' Gels on First Night," College Star, Oct. 25, 1968, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Zamora, "'Doctor Faustus' Returns," College Star, Dec. 13, 1968, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>"'Faustus' to Appear in Replica of Globe," College Star, Oct. 4, 1968, p. 3.

In November, Miss Clark held tryouts for Arthur Fauquez' Reynard the Fox. Students not only read for the parts but participated in animal improvisations.<sup>1</sup> After the show was cast, actors were to write two or three pages of information on the animals they were to portray. The set consisted of a two-level area, one representing a forest and the other, the area of the forest by a stream (with actual running water). Costumes were designed from pictures of the animals, though attention was not necessarily paid to their natural colors.<sup>2</sup> Sets, direction and acting were all praised highly by the College reviewer.<sup>3</sup>

On March 3-8, Miss Joanna Helming presented Brendan Behan's The Hostage.<sup>4</sup> The one-unit set was an arrangement of platforms in a sculptural design<sup>5</sup> by an advanced drama student.<sup>6</sup> The review mentioned the fact that the rather controversial play offended some of the audience members, and that it was not a perfect opening performance, but that the show was entertaining "for those who stayed."<sup>7</sup>

On April 21-26, Murray Schisgal's Luv was presented by Mr. Billy Bob Brumbalow.<sup>8</sup> The set was basically a sturdily-built simulation of a

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Zamora, "Play Practice Underway," College Star, Nov. 8, 1968, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Reynard the Fox, 35 mm. slides, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Zamora, "'Reynard' Hits with Kids," College Star, Dec. 6, 1968, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>The Hostage, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>5</sup>The Hostage, 35 mm. slides, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>The Hostage, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>7</sup>Eilse Donaldson, Joe Houde, "'Hostage' Opening Proves Enjoyable," College Star, Mar. 7, 1969, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>"Absurd, Funny 'Luv' Prepares for Opening," College Star, April 4, 1969, p. 6.

New York bridge.<sup>1</sup> Costumes and lighting were designed by advanced drama students, and the show was reviewed favorably on all accounts (setting, costumes, lighting, acting and direction). The production, the critic said, "captured the verve and madcap quality of a good farce."<sup>2</sup>

With the exception of The Room by Harold Pinter, Interview (from America Hurrah!) by Jean-Claude van Itallie, and Waiting for the Bus by Ramon Delgado, all of the Directing class one-acts were Southwest Texas originals: A Bird in the Hand by Carol Feray; Whatever Happened to Grandma by Judy Smith; The Circle Game by Eilse Donaldson; Hang On, I'm Coming by Danny Spear; The Vulture by Janet Carroll; The Thirty-Six-Year-Old Boy by Donna Olivarie; Charlie by Jeannine Janecek; Papa, You're Beautiful by Susan Brooks; From Little Oaks by Vernon Carroll; and Questions by Joe Houde. The plays were presented on different days from April 30-May 9.<sup>3</sup>

The High School Workshop one-act plays were presented on August 15, 1969.<sup>4</sup>

There were two Broadway shows on campus that fall: Imogene Coca and King Donovan in You Know I Can't Hear You When The Water's Running on November 13, and Jeanie Carson and Biff McGuire in Abe Burrows'

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<sup>1</sup>Luv, 35 mm. slides, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>2</sup>George Spelvin, "'Luv' Fast-Paced Fun," College Star, April 25, 1969, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>"One-Act Plays to End Casting," College Star, April 4, 1969, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>College Star, Aug. 15, 1969, p. 2.

Cactus Flower on November 19.<sup>1</sup> On February 21, a staged reading was presented of The World of Gunter Grass.<sup>2</sup>

A few changes were made in the drama curriculum that year:

- (1) "Acting II" (2365) was added.
- (2) "Stagecraft II" (2335) was added.
- (3) "Play Production and Analysis" (3360) was changed to 4375.
- (4) "Advanced Playwriting" (4380) was added.
- (5) "Readers' Theatre" (4330) was added. (C., 1968-69, pp. 239-241.)

#### 1969-1970

On October 27-31, another Ramsey Yelvington premiere was presented by Mr. Barton: Montezuma Alley, a play about the problems of the Texas Latin-American people. Though Mr. Yelvington felt he could not really understand those problems as well as the Latin people could, he was fascinated by their culture and by "the amalgamation of the races."<sup>3</sup> The review was on the positive side:

In the same manner as a story book, Ramsey Yelvington's Montezuma Alley unfolded a colorful kaleidoscopic picture of the Mexican American way of life to the very responsive audience Monday night in the Little Theatre.<sup>4</sup>

In November, Mr. Fudge and a company of children's theatre actors presented Crossroads and toured it to various elementary schools in the

<sup>1</sup>"Broadway Hits Due at Evans," College Star, Nov. 8, 1968, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>"'Grass' Works to be Staged in Auditorium," College Star, Feb. 21, 1969, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>"Director Still Searching for Cast as Montezuma Alley Develops," College Star, Sep. 19, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Mike Ross, "Play Accurately Shows Mexican-American Life," College Star, Oct. 31, 1969, p. 7.

city.<sup>1</sup> The show was sponsored by the drama division and the San Marcos Association for Childhood Education.<sup>2</sup>

On December 2-6, Moliere's The Miser was presented by Miss Helming,<sup>3</sup> and critiqued favorably by the College critic. The actors and direction apparently worked well in keeping the audience's attention and the show provided the crowds with "riotous" entertainment and "chuckles."<sup>4</sup>

On March 2-6, Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot was presented by Mr. Brumbalow.<sup>5</sup> Brumbalow had researched the philosophical play thoroughly before he began rehearsals in February.<sup>6</sup> Waiting for Godot is a difficult play to understand, however, and the actors, themselves, could not explain it when they were interviewed in late February.<sup>7</sup> The show was played in an intimate arena theatre style. Chalky dirt covered the floor, a tree was made with natural branches and plexiglass; a discarded toilet and a log completed the set.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Play Auditions Continue for 'The Crossroads'," College Star, Oct. 17, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>"ACE, Drama Co-Sponsor 'Crossroads!'," College Star, Nov. 14, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>"Miser Cast Found," College Star, Nov. 7, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Mike Ross, "Riotous French Comedy Merits Praise, Chuckles," College Star, Dec. 5, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Waiting for Godot, program, Speech-Drama production files.

<sup>6</sup>"'Waiting for Godot' Cast, Rehearsals Begin," University Star, Feb. 6, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>Tracey Lane, "'We're Basically Waiting' for Godot, he he, ho, ho....," University Star, Feb. 20, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 6, 1972.



On March 16-20, Mr. Fudge presented a very colorful version of Pippi Longstockings.<sup>1</sup> Make-up for the show was quite creative, according to the College reviewer, and costumes were "psychedelic" in colors and designs. One problem the production faced was lack of rehearsal space since Waiting for Godot did not finish its run until March 6. The show did not suffer from the handicap, however, and performances for the children went on schedule.<sup>2</sup>

On April 20-25, Dr. Baergan presented an "experimental, original, mixed-media musical based on major social themes": Quack, written by Dr. Baergan and the members of his cast.<sup>3</sup> The set consisted of such things as gas pumps, steering wheels and fluorescent ladders. Two overhead projectors were used for a psychedelic light show.<sup>4</sup> The costumes were the modern dress of young people and many of the scenes and songs were written by young people. After students had worked for a month on the production, Dr. Baergan made this statement: "The company formed it, nursed it, spanked it, encouraged it, and presents it."<sup>5</sup>

So many students were signing up for the Directing courses that two classes had to be offered in 1969-70. The first bill of one-acts was on December 9, 11, 15, and 17. Twelve plays, one of which was original,

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<sup>1</sup>"25 Actors Chosen for 'Pippi Longstockings'," University Star, Feb. 6, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Sandy Wesson, "Problems Make 'Pippi' Worthwhile Entertainment," University Star, Mar. 13, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>"New Approach for Drama, Speech," University Star, April 10, 1970, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Darla Jean Ogg, "'Quack' Makes Social Comment," University Star, April 17, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>"'Quack' Rates Raves as Original Multi-Media," University Star, April 24, 1970, p. 5.

were presented. None of the titles of the plays was recorded except for the original play, Where Have All the People Gone? by Ron Troutman.<sup>1</sup> The second bill of one-acts was presented from April 28-May 8. Three plays, all Southwest Texas drama-student originals were recorded: John Dillinger Died for You by Bill Black; Mr. Balloon Man by Ron Troutman; and Devil's Backbone by Twain Tharp. Eleven other plays were produced.<sup>2</sup>

The High School Speech-Drama Workshop one-acts were presented on August 2.<sup>3</sup>

That summer, Mr. Barton and several Southwest Texas students worked in the repertory company at the Globe Theatre in Odessa, Texas. Mr. Barton directed Hamlet for their Shakespearean Festival and taught courses in drama, offered in Odessa by the Southwest Texas Speech and Drama Department. Some of the students played major roles while others were apprenticed to the company. One toured England with the Festival's Hamlet company.<sup>4</sup>

Academically, courses remained the same. The student B.A. major in drama could choose to specialize in directing, acting, playwriting, design and technical theatre, history and criticism, creative dramatics and children's theatre.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Students Direct One-Acts," College Star, Nov. 14, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>"Fourteen Casts Announced for One-Act Play Festival," University Star, April 10, 1970, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Elton Abernathy, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, July 16, 1972.

<sup>4</sup>James Barton, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, June 6, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

On December 9, at 10:00 A. M., Dr. Abernathy and Mr. Barton "broke the soil" for the new Speech and Drama complex that was to be completed by the summer of 1971.<sup>1</sup>

### 1970-1971

In the fall of 1970, Miss Helming and Mr. Brumbalow left the drama staff, and Dr. J. Peter Coulson, Mr. David G. Flemming and Mr. James Nelson Harrell joined the faculty. Dr. Coulson became the director of the new drama master of arts degree program; Mr. Flemming was involved in scenic and lighting design and technical theatre; and Mr. Harrell became the Department's first full-time acting coach.

The first show of the season was a production of Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones, directed by Dr. Baergan. Again, Baergan used the chorus idea, whereby actors, covered with foliage and hidden in the shadows of the "woods," moved about silently as a living forest, constantly aware of a superior position over "Emperor Jones." Lighting was essential for focusing the right moments and leaving other moments in the shadows. When the "Emperor" reflected on past experiences, his pre-recorded voice sounded over a loud speaker in the theatre. The College critic was highly complimentary of the technical accomplishments and over-all effect of the show, but felt that there was a lack of "effective acting."<sup>2</sup> The show was presented on October 5-9.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Soil Broken for Complex," College Star, Dec. 12, 1969, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Derek Aldridge, "Ghosts Haunt Emperor Jones," University Star, Oct. 9, 1970, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>"Director Casts 'Emperor Jones'," University Star, Sept. 4, 1970, p. 5.

In early October, Dr. Coulson cast his first production at Southwest Texas: Hadrian VII by Peter Luke. This was the first non-professional production of Hadrian VII in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Presented in a "horseshoe" style on November 9-14, the sophisticated play was greeted by a rather small audience on the first night. The campus critic praised the production on its style and versatility, but criticized it on the number of blackouts and the voice levels of the actors. Mr. Harrell, who played "Hadrian VII" was complimented on his characterization.<sup>2</sup>

In December, Mr. Fudge toured a bill of two short children's shows: Pity the Poor Cranberry by drama student Mike Holman, and Out of the Storm, a "gay nineties" comedy. Again, the bill was toured to the various San Marcos elementary schools and to the Community Library in Kyle, Texas for performances. Pity the Poor Cranberry was performed by members of the children's theatre class and Out of the Storm by College Players members.<sup>3</sup>

On March 29-April 2, Miss Anna Marie Brooks presented the first creative thesis production at Southwest Texas, under the new master's program: William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure.<sup>4</sup> Miss Brooks' version of the play was praised by the College critic as being a "fresh, imaginative production." The only criticism was one "unconvincing" actress.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Tryouts of Peter Luke's 'Hadrian VII' Set this Week," University Star, Oct. 9, 1970, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Allen Turner, "'Hadrian' Shows Style, Versatility," University Star, Nov. 13, 1970, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>"'Poor Cranberry' in Theatre," University Star, Dec. 4, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>University Star, April 2, 1971, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>"'Measure' Proves Fresh, Imaginative Production," University Star, April 9, 1971, p. 4.

On February 22-23, Mr. Fudge presented a musical version of Old King Cole. The music was written by the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Mr. Fudge.<sup>1</sup> The Sinfonians also provided a small orchestra, consisting of the flute, clarinet, French horn, tuba, piano and percussion. The set was designed so that costumed musicians sat in the balcony of the king's castle above the action of the play.<sup>2</sup>

There were several professional presentations on campus that year as a part of the annual Fine Arts Festival. On November 12 and 16, Dr. Paul Baker, chairman of the Drama and Speech Department at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, and director of the Dallas Theatre Center, conducted a workshop on "Creativity." During the period of November 16-18, professional actor Howard Lucas presented Lovers, Kings, Madmen and Magicians, scenes from Shakespeare's plays. In the week of November 13-19, Mr. Don Becque conducted a workshop on theatre movement.<sup>3</sup> On March 9, the Allied Arts series presented Hal Hester, Danny Apolinar and Donald Driver's Your Own Thing,<sup>4</sup> a musical comedy based on Shakespeare's Twelfth Night.

One bill of Directing class one-acts was presented in the spring, but production dates and play titles were not publicized.

The High School Speech-Drama Workshop one-acts were performed on July 31.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pedagog, 1970, pp. 58-59.

<sup>2</sup>Allen Turner, "'King Cole' Finds Music," University Star, Feb. 12, 1971, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>"Fine Arts Festival," University Star, Nov. 13, 1970, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>University Star, Mar. 5, 1971, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Elton Abernathy, private interview, San Marcos, Texas, July 6, 1972.

In 1970, the name of the Department was changed to the Speech and Drama Department, and the master of arts degree program was announced.

Drama courses in the master of arts program were as follows:

5300 Problems in Speech and Drama Research. . . . An examination of problems and research techniques in speech and drama. . . .  
 . . . . .

. . . 5360 Problems in Theatre. . . . Designed to give supervised experience to qualified advanced students in theatre history, playwriting, directing, acting, technical or other theatre problems.

5337 Studies in Theories and Techniques of Acting. . . . A study of the theories of acting with practical application designed to further the development of the student's acting ability and to prepare him to teach acting.

5349 Studies in Advanced Technical Theatre Production Techniques. . . . The study of advanced contemporary staging, construction, and lighting techniques with attention given to the use and operation of theatre equipment.

5350 Readers Theatre Techniques. . . . A study of methods in script development and production techniques for Readers Theatre.

5357 Advanced Theatre Design. . . . The study of theatre design for the complete play, including scenery, costume, and lighting, with attention given to theatre architectural design.

5367 Studies in Dramatic Theory and Criticism. . . . The study of dramatic theory and criticism from Aristotle to the present.

5368 Studies in Theatre History and Literature I. . . . Studies in the history of the theatre and its literature from its beginning to the 18th century.

5369 Studies in Theatre History and Literature II. . . . Studies in the history of the theatre and its literature from the 18th Century to the present.

5370 Studies in Advanced Creative Dramatics for Children. . . . Studies of the methods of creative dramatics and their use in the classroom. Attention is given to creativity and creative teaching.

5377 Studies in Advanced Theatre Directing. . . . A study of problems and techniques of directing in the contemporary theatre.

5388 Seminar in Playwriting. . . . The study of advanced techniques of playwriting culminating in the writing of a full-length play worthy of production. . . .

. . . 5310 Teaching of Speech and Drama. . . . Emphasis is placed on well-developed speech and drama program for the grades and high school and consideration of methods and materials for the diagnosing and improving of speech and drama.

. . . 5320 Directing Speech and Drama Activities. . . . Designed to assist any teacher whether of speech and drama or some other subject, in directing the speech and drama activities. . . .

5699 Thesis. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Before the end of the 1970-71 year, several adjustments were made in the new program:

- (1) "Studies in Theatre Directing" (5377) became a course dealing with directing theories, rather than practical application.
- (2) "Seminar in Children's Theatre" (5371) was added.
- (3) "Studies in Theatre History and Literature I" (5368) was changed to a new course with the same number: "American Theatre and Drama," which traced the development of the American theatre from its beginnings to the present.
- (4) "Studies in Theatre History and Literature II" (5369), was changed to a new course with the same number: "Contemporary World Theatre and Drama," which focused on current trends in all aspects of world theatre.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bulletin of Southwest Texas State University: The Graduate School, 1971-1973, San Marcos, Texas, pp. 67-69.

<sup>2</sup>"Suggested Course Patterns for Graduate Drama Majors," mimeographed course sheet, Speech-Drama files.

## THE NEW SPEECH AND DRAMA CENTER

1971-1972

In the summer of 1971, the Speech and Drama Department moved from the Gothic structure of Old Main to a distinctively modern, circular building: the new Speech and Drama Center. Besides special areas (theatres, laboratories and seminar rooms), there are four classrooms and seventeen offices. Specialized areas which are used at least partially for theatre work, are as follows:

Five seminar rooms, one on the first floor (the Speech-Drama library) and four on the second floor.

One circular rehearsal space, under the main stage, which is used for Creative Dramatics classes and for some play rehearsals.

A conference room, directly behind the ticket office.

A voice and diction laboratory, equipped with recording materials and adjoined by three practice rooms.

A two-level shop area, which is equipped on the first floor with storage space, a dye vat and a washer and dryer. On the second floor, construction equipment (electrical saws, tools, paints and wood) is housed. The second level shop area includes a lockable "tool cage" and two immense doorways, providing a sound lock space between the main stage and the shop.

A costume shop, which includes cabinets, cutting tables, sewing machines, storage area and costume racks.

A design room, which is equipped with modern drafting tables, cabinets and an adjoining office for the design instructor.

A multi-media room, seating 110 persons, equipped with a motorized projection screen, a dimmer system for lighting facilities and a variety of equipment for multi-media presentations.



A "blue" room, seating 110 persons, equipped with a controlled lighting system and stereophonic sound. This area was designed for readers theatre and oral interpretation presentations.

A radio and television room, which is a large area designed for laboratory work in radio and television. The system in the room has facilities for transmitting television programs from educational and commercial channels into any classroom or theatre within the building.

The Studio Theatre is a space designed for central and flexible staging. Lighting instruments are hung on an equipment balcony rail, located on three sides of the stage area. Two parallel curtain tracks below provide a cyclorama, made up of black velour panels which can be opened for entrances at four-foot intervals. The cyclorama is completed at the fourth wall with a traveler, draw curtain and valance. The theatre is equipped with a Century Edkotron portable silicon rectifier (SCR) switchboard with four dimmer banks with two controls, providing for a two-scene pre-set. Sound for the Studio Theatre is handled through the unit in the Main Theatre. This area can seat from 150 to 200 people.

The Main Theatre is a multi-purpose staging area with a center, two side and one portable thrust stages. There is a continental seating capacity of 360 fixed seats and 125 movable armchairs with swivels for the thrust stage area. There are no support posts or walls, allowing an uninterrupted opening of eighty feet, using both side and main stages. Conversely, the opening may be closed to a forty-foot main stage proscenium by dropping in two portal tormentors. The main stage and side stages are equipped with act curtains which can be flown or drawn separately or together. To the rear of the stage is a curved, plaster cyclorama. Rope systems are used over the side stages for flying scenery. Other rope systems are around the entire gridiron for spotlines and other special purposes. The counterweight system for the main stage and the side stage act curtains, includes thirty sets of lines with five electric battens. The light board in the Main Theatre consists of a new Century electronic system with a bank of sixty dimmers, and a cross-connect panel capable of handling 300 circuits. The control console consists of sixty individual controllers, a proportional sub-master and scene fader. This system is completed with a ten-scene pre-set console.<sup>1</sup>

On October 30, 1971, the new Speech and Drama Center was dedicated at an official ceremony held in the Main Theatre. University President Billy M. Jones wrote the following in the dedication program:

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<sup>1</sup>Speech and Drama Building Fact Sheet, Material extracted from building specifications for publicity purposes, Speech-Drama files.

The dedication of the Speech-Drama Center at Southwest Texas State University marks a high point in the development of programs in the performing arts. It is not a new beginning, for there is a rich heritage of past accomplishments to which we all point with pride. Rather it is a fresh start in a setting so magnificent that we are encouraged to anticipate new goals and new heights from a department already recognized for its excellence.

A new facility alone will not guarantee the achievement of these ends, for any future recognition which comes to the department will still be measured by the performances of the creative people who make use of this Center. It is to them that the challenge is laid: "go tell it on the mountain" that the Speech and Drama Department will be unexcelled in performances and facilities. And may God reward your efforts with increasing success.<sup>1</sup>

That night, the premiere performance of Ramsey Yelvington's The Governors, directed by Mr. Barton, was presented. This event, along with the dedication of the building earlier in the day, marked the beginning of a new era in Southwest Texas speech and drama. For twenty-five years, Elton Abernathy and James Barton have worked together as Chairman of the Department and Director of Theatre respectively, to promote good educational theatre. The new facilities and the beginning graduate program are milestones in that pursuit. In an evaluation of the months of pressure and anticipative emotions the two men shared in planning the new building, Dr. Abernathy remarked in his speech, delivered at the dedication ceremonies:

The painful months between that day<sup>2</sup> and this are still too traumatic to recall in detail. There were the hours spent in Mr. Smith's [the building architect] office, the days hunched over drafting tables in the department, the nights squatting on Mr. Barton's living room floor. There were frantic phone calls back and forth to San Antonio. "Mr. Smith, won't there be any restrooms in the building?" "Mr. Barton, what do you mean you want a 58 foot fly loft? and what is a fly loft?" The plans were painfully roughed in, the engineers went into consultations, and a million details worked out. Finally there came a day when the bids came in. President Jones, Mr. Jordan, Mr.

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<sup>1</sup>"Dedication of the Speech-Drama Center," program, Speech-Drama files.

<sup>2</sup>"That day" was the day President McCrocklin announced to Dr. Abernathy that the new Speech-Drama Center was to be built.

Smith, and a host of builders looked on as Mr. Cates opened them. The lowest bid was some \$600,000.00 more than the amount of available money. Perhaps President Jones remembers all the wondrous things he had to do but somehow, some how, the extra money was provided.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Abernathy concluded his speech with this statement: "Professor J. G. Barton has been director of theatre at SWT, and my closest personal friend, for twenty-five years. He is a great artist and wonderful person."<sup>2</sup>

It is this mutual respect for one another that has made the twenty-five-year relationship between Elton Abernathy and James Barton so conducive to the betterment of the Department. To bring back to light the work of Lula Hines, G. H. Sholts, Hester King, J. W. Dunn, Monroe Lippman, Dallas Williams, Don Streeter, Hugh Seabury or, for that matter, James Barton and Elton Abernathy, would not be a sufficient end to this work. As in any historical account, after the past has been documented, philosophies are built on the future. The students and faculty who make up the Department today and in the years to come are now our greatest concern.

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<sup>1</sup>"Dedication of the Speech-Drama Center," program, Speech-Drama files.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

SOURCES CONSULTED  
(Listed in chronological order)

NEWSPAPERS

Southwest Texas State University  
(Normal Star, College Star, University Star)

Normal Star

"Curtain Club," Mar. 8, 1912.  
"Shakespeare Club Evening," Mar. 8, 1912.  
"The Senior Play," April 12, 1912.  
Mar. 19, 1912.  
"Entertainment," Mar. 22, 1913.  
"Curtain Call," Nov. 26, 1915.  
"German Club," Dec. 24, 1915.  
"Monday Night, May 15, Reserved for Senior Play," Feb. 28, 1916.  
"Shakespeare Tercentenary," April 28, 1916.  
"As You Like It," May 5, 1916.  
"Faculty Reception, Senior Play," June 25, 1919.  
"Passing of the Third Floor Back," Feb. 7, 1920.  
"Complete Program of the Homecoming Pageant," May 1, 1920.  
"Echoes of the Play 'Green Stockings'," May 22, 1920.  
"Final Pageant Schedules," May 22, 1920.  
"Last Call for Pageant," May 22, 1920.

- "R.F.D.C. Holds Regular Meetings," Nov. 13, 1920.
- "Normal Students Stage Pageant in San Antonio," Nov. 20, 1920.
- "Normal Teacher Directs Pageant," June 25, 1921.
- "Interesting Plays Directed by Mr. Sholts--The Casts," Aug. 22, 1921.
- "The Impressario Here Monday Night," Nov. 5, 1921.
- "Normal Girls Feature of Pageant Program," Nov. 12, 1921.
- "Christmas Pageant Tuesday Nite in Auditorium of Education Building,"  
Dec. 7, 1921.
- "Dramatic Classes in Vaudeville," Mar. 25, 1922.
- "Normal Stage a Reality," April 1, 1922.
- "Shakespeares to Give Three One-Act Plays," April 8, 1922.
- "American Legion Benefit Vaudeville," April 15, 1922.
- "The Gypsy Rover, June 2," May 27, 1922.
- "Gypsy Rover, Romantic Musical Comedy to be Put On by The Liberty Chorus  
for the Present Student Body," Jul. 1, 1922.
- "Summer Dramatics Get Active Next Week," Jul. 8, 1922.
- "Vaudeville in Auditorium Tonight and Tuesday Night," Jul. 15, 1922.
- "Tryouts for R.F.D.C. to be Held on Monday," Nov. 11, 1922.
- "Play to be Given at Normal for Benefit of Memorial Fund," May 12, 1923.
- "R.F.D.C. One Act Plays to Large House," May 12, 1923.
- "Senior Play Will be Presented on Friday June First," May 26, 1923.
- "R.F.D.C. Reorganizing for the Summer," June 23, 1923.
- "Senior Play, 'A Full House' Again Presented," June 30, 1923.
- "A Pair of Boots to be Given Monday Night," Jul. 14, 1923
- "Days of the Old South Revived by Play," Jul. 21, 1923.
- Aug. 11, 1923.

College Star

- "Dramatic Club Holds Annual Tryouts," Nov. 10, 1923.
- "'The Witching Hour' Monday Night at the Auditorium," Dec. 12, 1923.
- "'The Witching Hour' to be Presented Mon. Nite," Jan. 19, 1924.
- "'Paul Revere' to be Presented Monday Evening," Mar. 15, 1924.
- "YMCA to Present 'Too Many Crooks,'" April 5, 1924.
- "'Too Many Crooks' Proves Successful," April 12, 1924.
- "Commencement Play Scores Big Success," June 7, 1924.
- "Original One-Act Play is Presented in English 114," Jan. 28, 1925.
- "'The Cinderella Man' to be Given February 9," Feb. 4, 1925.
- "'Gypsy Rover' to be Presented on March 30," Mar. 25, 1925.
- "Mrs. King Has Large Class in Expression," Oct. 7, 1926.
- "Lyceum Number Proved Big Treat," Jan. 12, 1927.
- "Noted Dramatist to Address Student Body," Jan. 12, 1927.
- "'Five Night' Entertainment is Attended by Big Crowd," April 7, 1927.
- "Dramatic Club Presents 'The Brat' With Great Success," June 8, 1927.
- "August 18 Set as Date for Dramatic Club Plays," Aug. 10, 1927.
- "Dramatic Club to Hold Its Try-Out," Oct. 19, 1927.
- "The Play's the Fling," Feb. 15, 1928.
- "'Icebound' to be Staged Saturday Night," Mar. 7, 1928.
- "'Icebound' is Staged by Dramatics Club," Mar. 14, 1928.
- "Little Theatre of San Marcos to Make First Appearance," May 2, 1928.
- "College Theatre Presents Three-Act Comedy Drama," July 18, 1928.
- "'Tommy' a Great Play," July 25, 1928.
- "College Students Shocked at Death of Mrs. King," Oct. 17, 1928.

- "College Theatre Announces Season's Program of Plays," Oct. 24, 1928.
- Lewis, Ruth. "A Review of 25 Years of Dramatics in College," Nov. 7, 1928.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Twenty-five Years of Dramatics in Our College," Nov. 14, 1928.
- "'The Goose Hangs High' to be Given December 8 and 10," Dec. 5, 1928.
- "College Theatre Presents 'Goose Hangs High'," Dec. 12, 1928.
- "A Review of The Goose Hangs High," Dec. 12, 1928.
- "College Players Elect Five to Membership," Jan. 25, 1929.
- "College Players Have Enjoyable Luncheon," Feb. 6, 1929.
- "'The Show Off' to be Presented 23 & 25," Feb. 20, 1929.
- "'The Show Off' is Season's Hit," Feb. 27, 1929.
- "'Sun Up' Scores Big Hit at Lyceum Attraction," Mar. 13, 1929.
- "College Theatre to Present Medieval Play," July 4, 1929.
- "'Craig's Wife' is Theatre Climax," July 31, 1929.
- "College Players Elect Officers," Jan. 15, 1930.
- "First Three One-Act Plays Big Success," April 23, 1930.
- "New Play Selected for Presentation," April 23, 1930.
- "'Iz Zat So' on Saturday and Monday Night," Oct. 29, 1930.
- "The Old Curtain Succumbs R.I.P.," Nov. 5, 1930.
- "Purple Mask Promulgates New Eligibility Requirements," Nov. 12, 1930.
- "College Players to Present Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest'  
Dec. 11-12," Dec. 3, 1930.
- "College Players All Set for 'The Importance of Being Earnest,'" Dec. 10,  
1930.
- "Shakespeare Players to Present McBeth [sic] Here Feb. 17," Jan. 14, 1931.
- "One-Act Plays Saturday and Monday Night," Jan. 28, 1931.
- "The Why of 'Bee Says Yeah'," Jan. 28, 1931.
- "One-Act Plays Please Audience Saturday-Monday," Feb. 4, 1931.

- "'Journey's End' Main Auditorium February 26-27," Feb. 18, 1931.
- "The How of the Setting of 'Journey's End,'" Mar. 4, 1931.
- "College Theatre in 'The Youngest' Thursday, Friday," May 20, 1931.
- "Faculty Members on Absent-Leave or Vacationing," June 13, 1931.
- "V. L. Granville, Dramatic Reader Pleases Audience," June 27, 1931.
- "One-Act Play Try-Outs to Occur Saturday, Monday, Tuesday," July 18, 1931.
- "College Players Get Workout in 'Perfect Alibi,'" Nov. 9, 1932.
- "College Theatre to Present 'Children of the Moon' in Two Night Performances,"  
Jan. 25, 1933.
- "College Theatre Shows Marked Improvement, Yet Falls Short," Feb. 1, 1933.
- "Work on 'Holiday' Being Accelerated," May 17, 1933.
- "Philip Barry's 'Holiday' to be Presented Here two Nights," May 24, 1933.
- "College Theatre to Make Change," June 14, 1933.
- "Three One-Acts to be Theatre's Last Production," June 28, 1933.
- "One-Acts Presented to Large Audience," July 12, 1933.
- "Players to Present 'Romance Over Nice,'" Aug. 9, 1933.
- "College Director Has Many Successes," Oct. 17, 1934.
- "'Aren't We All' Cast is Now Well Into Rehearsals," Oct. 24, 1934.
- "'Aren't We All' Set Construction Nears Completion," Nov. 7, 1934.
- "College Theatre Has Successful Play Production," Nov. 21, 1934.
- "Monday and Tuesday, Dates for 'Double Door,'" Jan. 30, 1935.
- "The College Theatre 'Double Door' Proves Best of Year," Feb. 6, 1935.
- "Tryouts for College Play to be Monday," Mar. 6, 1935.
- "College Theatre Boasts Successful Shows," Aug. 15, 1935.
- "Two Performances of Religious Drama Scheduled Here," June 15, 1935.
- "Crowded House Greet Passion Play Here," June 12, 1935.
- "'The Rivals' Famous Sheridan Comedy Comes Here Friday," June 12, 1935.



- "'She Stoops to Conquer' Try-Outs Held by Lippman," June 12, 1935.
- "'This Thing Called Love' to be Staged Thursday, Friday," July 11, 1935.
- "College Theatre Boasts Successful Shows," Aug. 15, 1935.
- Sept. 22, 1937.
- "Try-Outs Started for First College Theatre Opening," Sept. 29, 1937.
- "Casting of Coming Theatre Production Nearing Completion," Oct. 20, 1937.
- "Hugh F. Seabury Talks to Men's Faculty Meeting," Oct. 20, 1937.
- "Little Symphony Will Play for Theatre Show," Oct. 20, 1937.
- "Set Construction for College Play Near Completion," Oct. 27, 1937.
- "'Accent on Youth' to be Presented Again Tonight," Nov. 19, 1937.
- "Dregs," Dec. 8, 1937.
- "'Twelve-Pound Look' Will be Second One Act," Dec. 8, 1937.
- "One-Act Play is Cast on Tuesday," Feb. 16, 1938.
- "Crew Completes Set for Magda," Feb. 23, 1938.
- "Drama Lecturer Favors Audience Education in U. S.," Feb. 23, 1938.
- McGhee. "'Magda' is Successful Production," Mar. 9, 1938.
- "One-Act Play to be Presented in Aud. Wednesday," Mar. 9, 1938.
- "Shakespearean Players Billed for Three Performances on College Stage this Week," Mar. 16, 1938.
- "Three One-Act Plays Scheduled for April," Mar. 23, 1938.
- "Shakespearean Review Featured in Lyceum Here," April 27, 1938.
- "Operetta Cast Works Nightly on Production," May 4, 1938.
- Adore, Tor E. "Operetta Review," May 18, 1938.
- "Purple Mask Banquet Held on Saturday," May 18, 1938.
- "More Than Acting Found in a Play," July 29, 1938.
- "College Theatre to Present Three Major Productions," Sept. 21, 1938.
- "Experimental Theatre Presents Two One-Act Plays Thursday," Oct. 12, 1938.

- "Theatre Presents One Act Plays," Oct. 14, 1938.
- "'First Lady' Actors Better Than Average," Nov. 14, 1938.
- "'First Lady' Will be Given Again Tonight for Homecomers," Nov. 18, 1938.
- Voitle, Dorthy. "'Drunkard' Cast, Others are Good; Wallace Wins," Dec. 14, 1938.
- Tanner, Kathleen. "Chautauqua Hill? We Have Never Heard of It!," Jan. 18, 1939.
- Voitle, Dorthy. "'College Players Are Snobs. . . ,'," Jan. 18, 1939.
- Voitle, Dorthy. "Experimental Theatre," Jan. 25, 1939.
- "Students Will Design Costumes for Play," Feb. 15, 1939.
- "Theatre Presents Plays in Assembly Thursday Morning," Feb. 15, 1939.
- "Try-Outs for Major Productions are Set for March 18 & 20," Feb. 15, 1939.
- "Assembly Plan for Thursday is One-Act Plays," Mar. 4, 1939.
- "Experimental Theatre has Discussion Series," Mar. 1, 1939.
- "'Mary of Scotland' Opens in Auditorium Tonight at 8:15," Mar. 3, 1939.
- "Local Thespians Take 'Miss Julie' to Baylor Fete," Mar. 22, 1939.
- "Dramatic Entry Praised Highly," Mar. 29, 1939.
- "Dramatists Submit Plays for Contest," Apr. 19, 1939.
- "Mary of Scotland will be Presented Here Next Week," Apr. 26, 1939.
- "Congratulations, Audience!," May 10, 1939.
- "Three Original One-Act Plays Finish Theatre Season Here in Main Auditorium," May 17, 1939.
- Vernon, Opal Frances. "Backstage," June 16, 1939.
- "First Summer Theatre Production in College Auditorium Tonight, June 30, 1939.
- July 14, 1939.
- Beckham, Forene. "Backstage," July 28, 1939.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Backstage," Aug. 11, 1939.

- "Final Presentation of 'Room Service' Scheduled Tonight," Aug. 18, 1939.
- "College Theatre Production Postponed Indefinitely," Oct. 4, 1939.
- "Figures Show Increase in Speech Department," Oct. 4, 1939.
- "Landi to Appear on College Stage as Series First," Oct. 24, 1939.
- "Chicago Players to be Presented on Arts Program," Feb. 7, 1940.
- "Theatre to Take Play to Abilene," Mar. 6, 1939.
- "'Family Album' Receives Superior Rank at Abilene," Mar. 20, 1940.
- "'Marie Rougette' to be Produced Over Air," Apr. 24, 1940.
- "Players Present One-Act Comedy," May 15, 1940.
- "College Theatre to Present Play May 23 and 24," May 22, 1940.
- "Character Artist will be Presented Here Saturday," July 19, 1940.
- Jacks, Corene. "Second Presentation of Theatre Production Scheduled Tonight," July 26, 1940.
- Champion, Patrick. "Cast, Crew Commended for Excellent Performance," Aug. 2, 1940.
- "Cast for First Four Productions Announced Friday," Oct. 2, 1940.
- Henderson, Carl C., Jr. "College Theatre Will Present Major Productions as Homecoming Attraction," Nov. 8, 1940.
- Hoppe, Ben. "Cornelia Otis Skinner to Appear in ALS Auditorium Tuesday Night," Feb. 12, 1941.
- "College Dramatic Group to Present Play in ALS," Feb. 26, 1941.
- "College Theatre Presents Play on ALS Stage," Mar. 5, 1941.
- "College Players Sponsor Contest for Playwrights," Mar. 19, 1941.
- "One Act Plays Scheduled for ALS on Friday Night," Mar. 26, 1941.
- "College Theatre to Give Program on May 8 and 9," Apr. 30, 1941.
- "Ben Greet Players Present Opening Allied Arts Program Here Tonight," June 20, 1941.
- "Streeter Gives Theatre Schedule," Nov. 12, 1941.
- "Dates Set for Student Directed One Act Plays," Feb. 4, 1942.

"Play Try Outs Set for Monday," Mar. 11, 1942.

"Crew Work in Progress for Spring Production," Apr. 22, 1942.

"Streeter Leaves Today to Take Maritime Post," Sept. 23, 1942.

Hoppe, Ben. "College Theatre Production Slated for Second Performance Tonight," November 13, 1942.

"Receives Call," Jan. 13, 1943.

"Jamboree," Feb. 18, 1943.

"College Theatre to Give Comedy May 19 and 20," May 5, 1943.

"College Players Plan One-Act Play Contest," Sept. 29, 1943.

"Forensic, Dramatic Plans to be Made at Meeting Tonight," Oct. 6, 1943.

"Allie Evans Production Takes First in One-Act Play Contest," Dec. 1, 1943.

"Brief Music is Given Friday and Saturday Night," May 3, 1944.

"Three One-Act Plays Have Tryouts Today," June 14, 1944.

"Rules are Given for One-Act Plays," Nov. 1, 1944.

"Cry Havoc to be Presented as Year's Major Production," Apr. 11, 1945.

"Cry Havoc Plays to Capacity Crowds," Apr. 18, 1945.

"The Torchbearers is Play to be Presented by Summer Students," June 27, 1945.

Wright, "Deacon." "College Players Present Creditable Performance,"  
Aug. 22, 1945.

"'The Golden Apple' will be Given in ALS Auditorium October 23," Oct. 10,  
1945.

"College Players Will Sponsor One-Act Play Contest December 5 & 6,"  
Nov. 28, 1945.

"Activities of College Players Announced by Director Streeter," May 22,  
1946.

Allert, Bill. "College Theatre Provides Two Dramatic Offerings Thursday,"  
June 14, 1946.

"Critic Tosses Mainly Flowers for 'Male Animal' Performance," Oct. 30, 1946.

"Little Foxes by Lillian Helman Casting March 13 in ALS Aud.," Mar. 12,  
1947.

"College Theatre's Presentation of 'Foxes' Rough in Spots but Generally Pleasing," May 7, 1947.

"Speech Department to Get New Equipment and Facilities when Renovation Completed," July 16, 1948.

"Work to Finish on Auditorium by Next Week," Jan. 7, 1948.

"Costumes Readied by 'Queen' Crew," April 20, 1948.

"Rehearsals Begin in Preparation for 29th Water Pageant July 7," June 23, 1948.

"Six Thousand Honor Dr. S. M. Sewell at Park Dedication," July 14, 1948.

"Barton Largely Responsible for College Drama Success," July 21, 1948.

"Players Performances Get Plaudits Criticism," Oct. 27, 1948.

"Drama Chosen, Practice Starts on Short Plays," Dec. 1, 1948.

Eccles, Susan. "Review Gives 'Rumplestiltskin' Cast Credit for Excellent Performances," Mar. 16, 1949.

"New Yorkers to Present 'Corn is Green' on April 12," Apr. 6, 1949.

"Three Act Comedy to be Presented by College Players," June 22, 1949.

Oct. 26, 1949.

Eccles, Suzi. "'Dear Ruth' Players Rate Reviewer's Raves," Nov. 2, 1949.

"One-Act Plays Make Final Run Wednesday," Nov. 9, 1949.

"Theatre Group Begins Work on Aladdin," Nov. 30, 1949.

"Magician Needed to Make Stage Sets for Aladdin," Dec. 14, 1949.

"Two Plays, Coffees, Talks, Highlight GBS Hill Festival," Mar. 15, 1950.

Acheson, Virginia. "St. Joan Cast Gets Language Experts Tips," Mar. 1, 1950.

Guerrero, Dona. "Hill Theatre Triumphs Monday in First Performance of Shaw's St. Joan," Mar. 22, 1950.

Lucke, Ron. "'Lilacs' Play Portrays Frontier Life," Oct. 25, 1950.

"Virginia Barter Theatre Presents 'Glass Menagerie,'" Nov. 1, 1950.

"'No Night' Command Performance," Jan. 10, 1951.

"Student-Directed Plays to Run April 25-26, May 2-3," Apr. 18, 1951.

- "Touring Players to be Here March 27," May 14, 1951.
- "Annual Water Pageant Planned July 5-6," June 20, 1951.
- "Fifty Swimmers to Appear in Water Pageant," June 27, 1951.
- "Aug. 15-16-17 Production Dates 'Dirty Work at the Crossroads'," Aug. 8, 1951.
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- "Drama Department to Reach Peak at College with April Plays," Dec. 12, 1951.
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- "Drama Group Plans, 1-Acts for May 13-14," May 7, 1952.
- "'Jubilee' to Feature Three Eras," June 19, 1952.
- "Children's Theatre Completes Casting for Wizard of Oz," Dec. 5, 1952.
- "'Wizard of Oz' Holds Attention of 4,000 Grade School Kids," Jan. 9, 1953.
- "Speech Dept. Presents Play February 11," Feb. 6, 1953.
- "Speech Students to Direct Four One-Act Plays in May," Apr. 24, 1953.
- "Students Present One-Act Plays," July 31, 1953.
- "Backstage Work Important in Staging 'Pygmalion,'" Oct. 24, 1953.
- "Exes Honored at First Performance of Pygmalion," Nov. 7, 1953.
- "Tryouts for 'Medea' Follow Two Successful Productions," Feb. 27, 1954.
- "Speech Dept. to Present 'Medea' April 20-22," Apr. 10, 1954.
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- "Setting Construction Underway for 'Winterset' Presentation," Mar. 15, 1956.
- Remington, Robin. "Winterset Got Better as Week Got Longer," Apr. 12, 1956.
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- "Drama and Speech Festival Set for August 3-4 in Little Theatre," Aug. 2, 1956.
- "New Play Opens Tonight," Dec. 13, 1956.
- "2500 Children Will See 'Jack and the Beanstalk,'" Feb. 7, 1957.

- Baldwin, Wilmer. "Broadway Spirit Felt in 'Song of Norway,'" Mar. 7, 1957.
- "Drama Students Direct Five Plays," May 9, 1957.
- "Speech-Drama Workshop Will Have Final Curtain," Aug. 2, 1957.
- "Barton Lists 'Red Shoes' Double Cast," Oct. 18, 1957.
- "Cast to be Picked for Spring Play," Jan. 17, 1958.
- "Students Initial Play in Slate of One-Acts," May 2, 1958.
- "Barton Sets Extra Run," May 16, 1958.
- Carpenter, Connie. "Musical Boasts Full House for Opening Performance,"  
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- Parr, Ralph. "Students Comment on Musical Review," May 16, 1958.
- "Speech, Drama Workshop to End Tonight, Saturday," Aug. 1, 1958.
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- "Youngsters to View Children's Production," Feb. 27, 1959.
- "Play to Open Fine Arts Festival," Apr. 10, 1959.
- Bustin, John. "Cocklebur Rare Creation--Bustin," Apr. 17, 1959.
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- "The Little Theatre: One Classic Auditorium," May 1, 1959.
- "Practice Begins Saturday for 'A Cloud of Witnesses'," June 12, 1959.
- "'Cloud' Cast to Move to San Antonio," June 26, 1959.
- "Director Barton and Cast Visit Movie Star Wayne," July 24, 1959.
- "Drama-Speech Workshop Hear Visiting Lectures," July 24, 1959.
- "'Diary' Cast Changes, Crew Begins Scenery," Oct. 2, 1959.
- Spurrier, Linda. "Old Main Fire Trap Fire Chief Asserts," Oct. 2, 1959.
- Rearson, Martha and George. "'Diary' Cast Draws Reviewer's Approval,"  
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- Pearson, Martha. "Staged Reading Very Effective," Dec. 11, 1959.
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- "Drama of the Alamo to be Staged Again," Mar. 4, 1960.
- "'Six Who Pass' to Start Monday," Mar. 4, 1960.
- "Critique Highlights Rocksprings Debut," May 6, 1960.
- "Barton Again Directs 'Cloud of Witnesses'," June 10, 1960.
- "High School Plays Here Open to Public Today," July 29, 1960.
- Clayton, Janice. "'Skin of Our Teeth' Proves Theatre Not Dead," Nov. 5, 1960.
- "Shaw, Marlowe Productions Scheduled Here Nov. 16-17," Nov. 5, 1960.
- "'Skin' Cast, Crew Receive Thanks," Nov. 18, 1960.
- Burruss, JoAnn. "Paul Baker Defines Creative Art Mind," Apr. 14, 1960.
- "One Acts Slated by Little Theatre," May 5, 1961.
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- "Workshop, Special Classes Highlight Second Semester," July 21, 1961.
- Kercheville, Jimmy. "'Alamo' Starts Slow but is Polished Play," Aug. 18, 1961.
- "Play Cast Getting Aid for Linguistics," Oct. 13, 1961.
- Spurrier, Linda. "'Corn is Green' Nears Close as Knowles Shines in Lead," Oct. 27, 1961.
- Eubanks, Carolyn. "Crew to Launch Burlap Ark in Children's Theatre Play," Apr. 27, 1962.
- "Student Play on Schedule for Theatre," May 4, 1962.
- Roach, Bruce. "Precision Smoothness Mark Drama," July 13, 1962.
- "Basil Rathbone First Slated in Annual Allied Arts Series," Oct. 19, 1962.
- "Tragedy Honestly Portrayed," Mar. 29, 1963.
- "Eight Plays are Staged," May 10, 1963.
- "75 High School Students Enroll for Speech Workshop," July 19, 1963.



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"Symphony to Give Musical: 'Three Penny Opera' Due," Oct. 25, 1964.

"Fine Arts Festival Begins Monday with King Lear," Mar. 6, 1964.

"Vliet Visits Today," June 26, 1964.

"'Alice' in Never Never Land," Dec. 11, 1964.

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Sheppard, Ross. "Nothing . . . Nothing!," Nov. 5, 1965.

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"Authenticity to be Featured in 'William Tell' Production," Nov. 19, 1965.

"Director Yelvington Names Play Cast," Feb. 4, 1966.

Zamora, Robert. "Drama Production Previews Monday," Mar. 4, 1966.

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"'Party' Rehearsals Likened to Iceberg," Apr. 1, 1966.

"Drama Fest Cast Picked," Apr. 22, 1966.

Albrecht, Jan. "Pinter? The Actors--Yes!," Apr. 29, 1966.

"One-Act Plays Presented," May 6, 1966.

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"'Dream' Has Fairyland Touches," Oct. 28, 1966.

"Fall Drama Production Draws Sell-Out Crowds," Oct. 28, 1966.

"Shakespeare's Play Continues Run to Set Attendance Records," Nov. 4, 1966.

"Androcles to Open Here December 5," Nov. 18, 1966.

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Smith, John. "Satire Falls Short," Dec. 9, 1966.

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"Theatre Workshop Will Begin March 13," Mar. 10, 1967.

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"Student Efforts Highlight One-Act Play Festival," Apr. 28, 1967.

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Wood, Jan. "Trilogy Will Bring Texas Heroes to Life," Feb. 16, 1968.

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"'Phaedra' Coming Here Soon," Mar. 8, 1968.

"One Act Casts Announced," Apr. 19, 1968.

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"Needed: An Audience," June 28, 1968.

"Workshop Held Here," Aug. 26, 1968.

- Tomlinson, Cathy. "'Our Town' Updated," Sept. 20, 1968.
- "'Faustus' to Appear in Replica of Globe," Oct. 4, 1968.
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- Donaldson, Eilse, Houde, Joe. "'Hostage' Opening Proves Enjoyable," Mar. 7, 1969.
- "Absurd, Funny 'Luv' Prepares for Opening," Apr. 4, 1969.
- "One-Act Plays to End Casting," Apr. 4, 1969.
- Spelvin, George. "'Luv' Fast-Paced Fun," Apr. 25, 1969.
- Aug. 15, 1969.
- "Director Still Searching for Cast as Montezuma Alley Develops," Sept. 19, 1969.
- "Play Auditions Continue for 'The Crossroads'," Oct. 17, 1969.
- Ross, Mike. "Play Accurately Shows Mexican-American Life," Oct. 31, 1969.
- "Miser Cast Found," Nov. 7, 1969.
- "ACE, Drama Co-Sponsor 'Crossroads'," Nov. 14, 1969.
- "Students Direct One-Acts," Nov. 14, 1969.
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- "Soil Broken for Complex," Dec. 12, 1969.

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"College is to Present Play," Nov. 8, 1929.

"College Play Big Success," Nov. 21, 1929.

"College Play Goes Over in Fine Way," Feb. 28, 1930.

- "Kempy Presentation Nights of May 22-23," May 23, 1930.
- "One-Act Plays Go Over Big," Aug. 15, 1930.
- "College Theatre Holds Initial Tryout," Oct. 2, 1931.
- "Jitney Players to Present 'The Murder in the Red Barn' Main Auditorium, Saturday," Oct. 16, 1931.
- "Ben Greet Players Here for Two Shakespeare Plays Friday," Nov. 20, 1931.
- "College Players Present 'The Racket' Tonight," Jan. 29, 1932.
- "Reception Will Follow College One-Act Plays," Apr. 29, 1932.
- "Two Original One-Act Plays Please Large Audiences Monday-Tuesday," May 6, 1932.
- "College Players Will Present Play July 9-11," July 8, 1932.
- "College Lyceum Presents Players from San Antonio," July 29, 1932.
- "'The Queen's Husband' Pleased Two Critical Audiences," Nov. 6, 1932.
- "'The Nut Farm' is Initial Production of College Theatre," Sept. 20, 1933.
- "'Ten Nights' to be Reviewed by College Players Next Month," Oct. 13, 1933.
- "'Ten Nights in a Barroom' to be Presented at College," Nov. 24, 1933.
- "Freshmen Players Make Appearance Jan. 15, 16," Jan. 12, 1934.
- "Players to Present Bright Comedy as Spring Attraction," Mar. 30, 1934.
- "College Players in Benefit Play Tonight," Apr. 6, 1934.
- "Two Short Plays are Scheduled for Night at College," May 25, 1934.
- "Plans Made for College Homecoming Saturday," Nov. 22, 1935.
- "College Play to Show Next Week," May 15, 1936.
- "Robbins Selects Plays to be Given at College Soon," July 3, 1936.
- "Theatre to Show Three One-Acts August 14, 15," Aug. 7, 1936.
- "Homecoming Proves to be Gala Affair," Nov. 20, 1936.
- Kessler, Mary. "Duke Will Return to College as Doctor After Two Year Leave, June 18, 1937.
- "Take My Advice is Comedy for Wednesday Nite," July 2, 1937.
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"Famous Broadway Play will be Presented," 1948.

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- Bock, Les. "First Nighters Get Glimpse of 'Taming of the Shrew,'" 1949.
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- "Cast Chosen for Cinderella," 1956.
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