



THE GREAT WAR DEAD

by Pat Murdock

Thanks to the dedication of a retired faculty member and two Distinguished Alumnus Award recipients, a glaring absence in Texas State’s Veterans Memorial Garden was corrected during a Veterans Day observance on Nov. 8.

Everette Swinney, distinguished history professor emeritus, was concerned that students who died during World War I had no memorial in the Veterans Memorial Garden nestled next to Flowers Hall in the central part of campus. World War II, Korea and Vietnam each have memorials, but not World War I.

So Ev Swinney, in his usual thorough way, decided to pursue a solution to the problem. He approached various campus administrators and groups. Texas State’s new Retired Faculty and Staff Association, which Swinney helped organize, endorsed the project.

But the project would require funding that was not designated.

Distinguished Alumni step forward

Swinney and a small Texas State delegation went to visit Brig. Gen. Chris Luna of Boerne, a retired U.S. Air Force officer and 1965 Texas State graduate, to elicit his help raising the funds needed to commission the monument.

It didn’t take long for Luna to come up with a possible funding source. He thought about his fellow Distinguished Alumnus and former boss, J. Dan Bates

of San Antonio, president of Southwest Research Institute and a 1966 Texas State graduate.

Eager to assist with a project that would pay tribute to World War I veterans, Bates would provide the funding for the memorial as long as it could be dedicated in honor of his father, Jess Bates, a two-time graduate.

Jess Bates received his first degree from what was then Southwest Texas State Teachers College in 1935. He had grown up on a farm near Sabinal and ventured off to San Marcos for college at the age of 16. At college, he played football and basketball and majored in mathematics. He returned to receive his master’s degree in educational administration in 1959. He was a public school math and science teacher, principal and superintendent for more than 40 years and helped found Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde.

Jack Arnold

Born July 25, 1897, Arnold planned to major in agriculture. After two years in college, he enlisted in San Antonio on May 2, 1917, and served on the Mexican border until October. From then until July 1918, he trained at Camp Bowie. He sailed for France in July 1918 and was killed in action at 5:30 a.m. on Oct. 8.

A handwritten note on his transcript says simply: “Killed in France.”



Kenneth S. Gardner

He came to the Normal from San Antonio on Oct. 12, 1912, at the age of 16 or 17 – only his birth year, 1896, is listed on his transcript. He attended the 1912-13 school year then returned for summer sessions in 1913 and 1914. His father was a teacher, although we do not



know where. According to the *Pedagog*, he was killed in action Nov. 2, 1918, at Commune Liny-Devant-Dun, Meuse, France.



Although he was not a veteran, Jess Bates would eventually serve as an instructor for the military during World War II.

The Bates family is the second family to step forward to assure that the university has an appropriate memorial for veterans.

Veterans Memorial Gardens

In 2000, the family of the late Lt. Col. Graham G. Kyle funded the move of the collection of existing war memorials from a location near Old Main to the more visible south side of Flowers Hall. Kyle's daughter, Linda Pennington, and her husband Bill, alumni and owners of Pennington Funeral Home in San Marcos, and his widow, Doris Kyle, made the relocation possible. The garden was rededicated in the campus' former AFROTC detachment head's honor.

The memorials located in the rededicated memorial garden had been moved from their original locations and, in some cases, from storage to an area adjacent to Old Main on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 1989. The fact is that most of the memorials had been salvaged from construction contractors. Although the work that led to the creation of the first memorial garden was good, the location proved too isolated and hard to reach.

After Flowers Hall was renovated, the current location was identified as more accessible and the 2000 move occurred.

The World War I memorial added to the garden this past Veterans Day bears the names of six students who died in the war, among them the son of a popular professor. An excerpt from M.L. Arnold's poem *The Deathless Dead* about the loss of his son Jack in 1918 is featured on the monument.

World War I

The military conflict that would be called World War I began in August 1914 and would continue until November 1918. The United States remained neutral at first but joined the Allied forces in 1917. The war would involve most of Europe, the United States and Japan — 32 countries in all. It would be one of the most violent and destructive wars in European history. Of the 65 million men who were mobilized, more than 10 million were killed and more than 20 million wounded. (The term World War I did not come into general use until a second worldwide conflict broke out in 1939.)

While the immediate cause of the war was the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, by a Serbian nationalist, the causes of the conflict were rooted deeply in the European history of the previous century, particularly in the political and economic policies that prevailed in Europe after 1871, the year that Germany emerged as a major European power.

Once the war began, the countries involved mobilized their entire populations and economic resources to achieve victory on the battlefield. The term "home front," which was widely used for the first time during World War I, reflected a new concept of a war in which the civilian population behind the lines was directly and critically involved in the war effort.

The Normal at war

History Professor Ron Brown, author of the university's centennial history book, *Up the Hill, Down the Years: A Century in the Life of the College in San Marcos*, describes the formation of the Student Army Training

David Haile

Born April 7, 1895, he was the son of a San Marcos farmer. He enrolled as a sophomore in the sub-college on Sept. 25, 1916, and proposed to major in history. He enlisted in July 1917, trained at Camp Bowie and died there of measles and pneumonia on Dec. 3, 1917. He was buried in the Live Oak Cemetery near Buda.

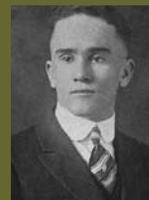


William T. Harris

Son of a San Marcos teacher, he first entered the college on Sept. 14, 1914. He attended the Normal for the 1914-15 school year and part of the 1916-17 school year as an agriculture major. He enlisted on Sept. 5, 1917, and died of heart trouble at the base hospital in San Antonio on Nov. 14, 1917.

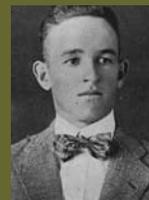
W. Joe Stribbling

He listed his permanent address as a San Marcos post office box and enrolled as a senior history major on Sept. 25, 1916. Born Feb. 10, 1896, he had completed the 1915-16 school year at an unspecified junior college. He had graduated from Sulphur Springs High School in 1915. He enlisted Sept. 15, 1918, and died at Camp Pike, Ark., on Oct. 19.



Henry M. Whipple

Born March 31, 1896, he entered the Normal on Sept. 15, 1913. He was a native of Oklahoma whose family lived in Goliad, Texas, at the time he enrolled. His father was a farmer. He graduated from Goliad High School and attended college during the 1913-14 school year. He enlisted July 5, 1917, and was wounded at 5:15 a.m. on Oct. 8, 1918. He died Nov. 19 and is buried in the American Cemetery in Blois, France.



Below, Ev Swinney, right, persisted in efforts to add a World War I memorial to the Veterans Memorial Garden. Justin Edmondson '88, president of the Alumni Association, left, and Associated Student Government President Reagan Pugh spoke at the November dedication ceremony.

At right, President Denise Trauth congratulates Dan Bates and his brothers John Paul Bates, left, and Bill Bates, right, on the dedication of the memorial to their father, Jess Bates. Photos by Melissa Johnson



When the United States entered the war in 1917, 434 men from the Normal “donned khaki.”

Corps at the Normal School in September 1918, one of the first steps of the school’s active involvement with the war effort.

Brown wrote, “President Evans called Berry (Grace Berry, head of home economics) into his office early in September of 1918, shortly before the end of World War I, though they couldn’t know that at the time.

“We got that training unit, Miss Berry. About 80 men. They’ll be here in a few days. I want you to plan the meals. Buy the food. Oversee the cooking. I’ve arranged for George and his wife to help you as cooks.”

“Berry was stunned,” Brown continued. “The boys were quartered in the empty Coronal Institute building, but since that school had closed a while before, the old wood ranges had been un-maintained and were clogged with soot. And George’s only known qualifications were that he had once been illegally elected

president of the Freshman Class, and he had been school janitor for longer than most faculty members had been there.

“But the transformation took place. Men were fed, drilled, and had first aid practiced on them by patriotic coeds. Management was somewhat complicated by the fact that the War Department had inadvertently sent two commanding officers for the unit, but by the time that was straightened out, it was November, the Armistice had been signed and the unit was disbanded.”

But as Brown explained, “Not all World War I experience was so innocuous.”

Alumni lost in World War I

When the United States entered the war in 1917, 434 men from the Normal “donned khaki.”

The 1919 *Pedagog* yearbook was dedicated to the men who fought in World War I and contained a listing of the six former students of the Normal School who were among the war dead: Jack Arnold, Kenneth S. Gardner, Joe Stribbling, Henry Whipple, David Haile and William Harris.

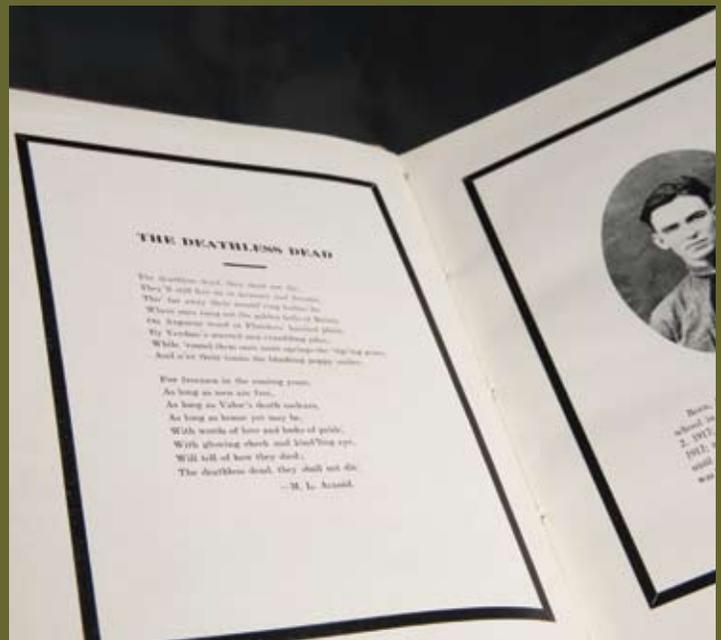


The dedication read: “To the men, who have been students of the Southwest Texas State Normal College, and who, when the call for champions of right, justice and liberty came, so valiantly gave their lives both in the camp and on the battlefield that peace might be the inheritance of all the world, we, the students of 1918-1919, dedicate the 16th volume of the *Pedagog*.”

Back in the garden

Among the other existing memorials in Texas State’s memorial garden are a bell and marker that had been placed on the Quad beside long-gone Lueders Hall (old Liberal Arts Building) and near Old Main. A new interpretive panel, funded by the Texas State Alumni Association, explains the history of the College Bell. It was also dedicated during the Nov. 8 ceremony.

Other memorials include a large metal plaque bearing the names of 50 former students who were among servicemen killed in World War II that was once displayed on the walls of Evans Auditorium and a Vietnam War memorial funded through the efforts of alumnus Joseph A. Marquez of Carrollton. ✨



Included in the 1919 *Pedagog* and at the memorial is a poem written by M. L. Arnold, history instructor at the college. On Oct. 8, 1918, one month before the war ended, Arnold’s son Jack, a sophomore at the Normal, was killed in action in France.

The Deathless Dead

The deathless dead, they shall not die,
 They’ll still live on in memory and dreams,
 Tho’ far away their mould’ring bodies lie
 Where once rang out the golden bells of Reims,
 On Argonne wood or Flanders’ harried plain,
 By Verdun’s scarred and crumbling piles,
 While round them once more springs the rip’ing grain,
 And o’er their tombs the blushing poppy smiles;
 For freemen in the coming years,
 As long as men are free,
 As long as Valor’s death endears,
 As long as honor yet may be,
 With words of love and looks of pride,
 With glowing cheek and kind’ling eye,
 Will tell of how they died;
 The deathless dead, they shall not die.