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Amos Alonzo Stagg's Contributions to Athletics

George Robert Coe
University of the Pacific

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College of the Pacific
Stockton, Calif.

AMOS ALONZO STAGG'S

CONTRIBUTIONS

Submitted to the Department of Physical Education

TO

College of the Pacific

ATHLETICS

75705

In partial fulfillment

of the

Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts

By

George Robert Coe

Stockton

1946

Carl R. Jackson Chairman of the Thesis Committee

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ideals and code of ethics will be felt throughout the
for many centuries to come.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a collection of Mr. Stagg's contributions to athletics covering a period of the last sixty-six years, partly as a participant, but largely as a coach, director of physical education, and as a leader of men.

Herein the author wishes to bring tribute to this great man who has contributed more to the field of athletics and the development of manhood than could be written here in the form of facts and figures.

His achievements and inventions in the various phases of athletics speak for themselves and will go down in the archives representing this field of endeavor.

As a true Christian leader Mr. Stagg has created an enviable character that has left its imprint on many thousands of men whom he has guided through college and university careers. Through this truly great influence on men, his ideals and code of ethics will be felt throughout the world for many centuries to come.

2. The locker-rooms, which furnish space for 1,370 lockers, of which nearly 1,000 are already installed. The lockers are enameled, rolled steel, fitted with a lock and very effective locking device, and a ventilating duct in each locker through which air is drawn from the room over the clothes and out by a large exhaust fan with a capacity of 8,500 cubic feet of air per minute.

3. A faculty exercise-room, 53 by 28 feet in size, on the first floor, equipped with apparatus for individual and recreative work, and provided with a special adjoining dressing-bath-locker room to accommodate 60 persons.

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL EDUCATOR

Through his originality in planning Bartlett Gymnasium at the University of Chicago, Mr. Stagg has contributed many fine ideas which have proven to be of great value in the field of physical education. Upon examining the following contents of Mr. Stagg's report to the President of the University of Chicago in the year 1904, the reader will find a very modern trend of thinking on the part of Mr. Stagg in the construction of the gymnasium:

I submit herewith my report on the Division of Physical Culture and Athletics for the years 1902-4. These two years have been, from many points of view, the most important in the history of the Division. The old gymnasium which had housed the Division since its organization has been torn down and the new Bartlett Gymnasium completed.

The principal features of the Bartlett Gymnasium are:

1. The natatorium, 90 by 50 feet in size, situated on the first floor and containing a pool 60 by 28 feet in size, a visitors' gallery with seats for 190 persons, and a special shower-room and instructors' office.
2. The locker-rooms, which furnish space for 1,570 lockers, of which nearly 1,000 are already installed. The lockers are enameled, rolled steel, fitted with a new and very effective locking device, and a ventilating duct in each locker through which air is drawn from the room over the clothes and out by a large exhaust fan with a capacity of 8,500 cubic feet of air per minute.
3. A faculty exercise-room, 58 by 23 feet in size, on the first floor, equipped with apparatus for individual and recreative work, and provided with a special adjoining dressing-bath-locker room to accommodate 60 persons.

4. The main exercise-room on the second floor, 196 by 76 feet of clear space, is equipped with all kinds of apparatus necessary for mass gymnastic work, group games, and competitive athletics. This includes movable bleachers, accommodating over 1,000 persons, for use at games and meets; a triple cage for baseball batting practice...which can be quickly stowed under the edge of the gallery when not in use; bells, clubs, and wands for calisthenic work; 50 chest weights; set pieces of apparatus, horses, horizontal bars, ladders and parallel bars arranged for work by six squads at one time, and constructed so that they can be hoisted out of the way by windlasses when not in use. A running gallery...is suspended from the roof trusses. The track is covered with cork carpet, and built with banked corners for competitive running. On the west side of the main floor is a room...used for medical gymnastics and as an office and dressing-room for instructors. A room of the same size, off the running track, now used for storeroom, affords space for a departmental library. regular library hours established.

5. In the basement are the gymnasium store; the athletic team locker-, dressing-, bath-, and hot-rooms; the filters through which water for the swimming-pool passes; and the fans for heating and ventilation.

The building, as a whole, is not only unusually practical throughout, but appeals to the aesthetic sense in the harmony and beauty of its equipment and furnishings, as well as by the striking mural decorations in the main entrance hall, and the beautiful memorial window over the Lexington avenue entrance.¹

Upon the completion of the gymnasium, Mr. Stagg was quick to realize the need for a library within the walls of this gymnasium, wherein students and faculty who were interested in physical culture and athletics could read material in these fields. Too, he discovered that in this new structure there was a need for a trophy room wherein

¹Chicago. University. President's Report, 1902-04, Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture and Athletics," p. 182.

the athletic victories could be adequately commemorated. Mr. Stagg made provisions for the athletic team rooms in the basement of this gymnasium and covered the walls with pictures of the various teams from the beginning of the University. As evidence to the above statements in regard to Mr. Stagg's foresight, a quotation is presented from the President's Report:

An event of importance to the Division has been the installation of the books and magazines on physical culture and athletics in the small room off the main floor of the gymnasium. These are now being catalogued, with the idea of making them more accessible to the students. The library will be put in charge of an attendant and regular library hours established.

From the beginning the Division has been gathering trophies of athletic victories, in the hope of someday placing them in a suitable trophy room. Various plans for displaying these have been suggested from time to time, but have failed of realization. As a temporary expedient, last fall it was decided to hang the banners about the walls of the exercising room, and the space above the running track is now hung with about thirty of these. The hundreds of baseballs and footballs and other athletic trophies will be put into cases as soon as the funds permit.

The athletic team rooms in the basement have been beautified and made historically interesting by covering the walls with the varsity team pictures from the beginning of the University. This display has proved interesting and stimulating to candidates for the teams.¹

In view of Mr. Stagg's great planning ability and foresight in the construction of Bartlett Gymnasium, we find another feature which to this day has been taken advantage

¹Chicago. University. President's Report, 1906-07, Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture and Athletics," p. 101.

of throughout the entire country, and that is the use of movable equipment so that the gymnasium can be used for social as well as gymnastic and athletic affairs.

Bartlett Gymnasium grows yearly in value and satisfaction. With the exception of slightly defective roofing, there have been no serious mistakes discovered in the construction of the building or in the apparatus during the five years of its occupancy. Certain original features in the making and placing of apparatus by which the floor can be cleared quickly when desired, as well as special points in the construction of the building, have caused it to be used as a model for a number of gymnasiums. This facility in clearing the floor has led it to be utilized for some of the larger university gatherings, so that its function has been social as well as gymnastic and athletic.¹

Even today there are colleges which do not advocate the necessity for physical education requirements; yet back in 1892 Mr. Stagg drew up definite requirements of physical education to be fulfilled both by men and women students at the University of Chicago. Although the University of Chicago was not the first to have physical education requirements, Mr. Stagg should be given credit for being the first to organize a big program in which the students were given recreative games and the choice of required physical education courses. The past world conflict seems to emphasize more than ever the need for required physical training. The Army, Navy, Marine and Air Corps have well organized programs of physical training and are completely satisfied with

¹Chicago. University. President's Report, 1907-08, Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture and Athletics," p. 145.

the results derived from these physical training classes.

Mr. Stagg gave the following statement to his President concerning the problem of compulsory work in physical training:

From the beginning of the University, compulsory work in physical training was made a requirement for graduation. In this the University became a pioneer among western institutions, some of which had a requirement in military drill, but no department of Physical Culture. Since then nearly every college and university of note in the middle West has added a department of physical training.

...The original regulations demanded ten quarters' work in Physical Culture, unless excused on account of disability or other sufficient reasons. This rule was changed on April 24, 1893, to read: "Six quarters' work in Physical Culture is required of Academic-college students, and four quarters of University-college students." ...As the difficulties of enforcing the requirement presented themselves, additional rules were added. At the beginning no penalty was attached to non-attendance at classes, but simply the general statement that students were required to take Physical Culture--the idea of the Department at the beginning being to require eleven quarters of work. No statement in definite form, however, was made to this effect, so that one of the first actions of the Board of Physical Culture, which was organized March 27, 1893, was to announce definitely that "The requirements for graduation shall be thirty-six majors and ten quarters' work in Physical Culture."

It was thought that the change of the rule so as to require six quarters' work in the Academic College would have the effect of preventing delinquency, inasmuch as the student would want to get his transfer to the University colleges as quickly as possible. This he could not get if he were deficient in Physical Culture. Later it was found that this was not sufficient inducement, and a regulation was passed, stating that "students taking an excessive number of cuts will not be allowed to continue their University work until they shall conform to the requirements."...¹

¹Chicago. University. President's Report, 1897-99 (with summaries for 1891-7), Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture," pp. 186-187.

The University of Chicago was among the first few universities to offer physical education for women, and the following quotation refers to the early dates when the problem arose in regard to the appointment of instructors for women students:

No change was made in the officers of instruction until the Autumn Quarter of 1894, when Kate S. Anderson, Instructor, was placed in charge of the women's work, in place of Dr. Foster, who had resigned in June. Miss Bertha Steig was also appointed Assistant. Miss Anna F. Davies temporarily conducted the women's work during the Summer Quarter of 1894.¹

Mr. Stagg has been always an advocate of high scholastic standards among athletes. This is shown by his written approval of athletic participation on the basis of scholarship in the year 1898. His comment on this subject reads:

... That there is an appreciation of the value of athletics and the need for these wise regulations in the high schools is shown in the reorganization of the Cook County (Chicago and vicinity) High School League by the principals of the various schools. All of these schools are now acting under the same rules of eligibility, among which is a most useful rule of scholarship. This, to my knowledge, is the best movement in an athletic way which has ever taken place among high schools, and is worthy of being followed throughout the country.²

Mr. Stagg states that he did not originate the idea of physical examinations in colleges and universities. Again, however, he has proven himself to be far reaching and versatile in his approach to any subject dealing with the human

¹Ibid.

²A. A. Stagg, "Football in the West," p. 63, Football Rules, (Spaulding's official football guide), 1898.

element and the development of the individual inasmuch as he advocated that the university physician should give physical examinations and make the necessary recommendations to his department as to forms of exercise, both desirable and undesirable. Mr. Stagg incorporated the following rule into the policy of his department:

All students will be examined as to their physical condition on entering the University, and at intervals during the course. The University physician, who will make the examination, will give each student thus examined a written statement, in detail, of his physical condition, indicating constitutional weaknesses, and forms of exercise, desirable and undesirable, for the individual in question. A student will not be permitted to study in the University four consecutive quarters without a physician's certificate that he may do the work without injury to his health. The director of the department of physical education will give his personal attention, not only to the organization and training of athletic teams and the general athletic interests of the students, but especially to the physical training of each student insofar as it is practicable.¹

In the San Francisco Chronicle on September 10, 1939, Dick Friendlich in his column "Flashback," mentions Mr. Stagg as the first football coach to make a cash gift to the school which employed him. Mr. Friendlich was referring to the three thousand dollars that Mr. Stagg gave to Comptroller O. H. Ritter of the College of the Pacific on July 17, 1939, to be used in purchasing twenty-two acres west of Baxter Stadium for the purpose of expanding

¹Chicago. University. President's Report, 1897-99 (with summaries for 1891-7), Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture," pp. 186-187.

the physical education program and facilities. At Mr. Stagg's request this area was named "Knoles Field" after the President of the College of the Pacific, Dr. Tully C. Knoles. This is another example of Mr. Stagg's far-sightedness as a physical educator since he was the first to realize that the rapid growth of the college would demand greater playing and recreational areas. From "must tackle above the waist" to "tackling anywhere above the knees," and that led me to conceive the idea that it might help our tackling if I wrapped up a gymnasium mat and hung it. It wasn't really any device specially prepared; I simply roped it up. As far as I know, that was the first tackling dummy. We hung it inside when we first tried it.

The ingenuity of the "grand old man of football" to put to use the idea of numbering the players in the University of Chicago and Wisconsin game on November 28, 1913, is just another example of the way this great man has influenced the game of football throughout his entire coaching and playing career. The following is a quotation taken from a newspaper article:

Stagg is also credited with inventing the system of placing numbers on sweaters of football players to facilitate identification.

"A. M. Weyand states in his book, American Football, History and Development, 'the rules committee had for the time recommended that players be numbered. It had

1. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1943.
 2. Annette Refame, Sacramento Union, Sept. 18, 1939.

CHAPTER II

The tackling dummy was first conceived by Mr. Stagg in the year 1888. Mr. Stagg had the following to say in regard to this idea that he gave to football:

I conceived the idea of the football dummy when playing at Yale. The rules were changed in 1888 from "must tackle above the waist" to "tackling anywhere above the knees," and that led me to conceive the idea that it might help our tackling if I wrapped up a gymnasium mat and hung it. It wasn't really any device specially prepared; I simply roped it up. As far as I know, that was the first tackling dummy. We hung it inside when we first tried it.¹

The ingenuity of the "grand old man of football" to put into use the idea of numbering the players in the University of Chicago and Wisconsin game on November 22, 1913, is just another example of the way this great man has influenced the game of football throughout his entire coaching and playing career. The following is a quotation taken from a newspaper article:

Stagg is also credited with inventing the system of placing numbers on sweaters of football players to facilitate identification.²

"In 1915," A. M. Weyand states in his book, American Football, Its History and Development, "the rules committee had for the first time recommended that players be numbered. It had

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

²Jeannette Befame, Sacramento Union, Sept. 18, 1939.

A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

urged this policy at subsequent meetings and, during this period, practically all colleges complied with the request.¹ Mr. Stagg gave the following information on this subject:

I was the first to have numbers put on the sweaters and jerseys of the players. There was a meeting of the managers called on November 28, 1913. The directors met and we voted that football players be numbered for the first two games of the following season, and if satisfactory to all members of the conference, it would then be made permanent. Mr. Huff appointed a committee of one to secure opinions of the conference as to whether it was satisfactory and to notify all members. Then on November 29, 1914, at a meeting of the directors Mr. Huff reported that the numbering of football players was of great value to the spectators. Second, while it might aid the scouts, there was no special advantage if all teams numbered their players.²

The policy of dividing the gate receipts was established by Mr. Stagg in 1897. Most of his opponents were willing to play in Chicago because of the larger crowds, and he conceived the idea that to share the receipts would be a sound but friendly way of expressing his appreciation to them for their cooperation.

The principle of the field house was established by Mr. Stagg in the year 1894. Mr. Stagg describes the first field house as follows:

I established the principle of the field house. We had a room 250 feet long by 50 feet wide for our gymnasium with a running track built up and around.

¹A. M. Weyand, American Football, Its History and Development, p. 319.

²A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

Then we had about 150 feet of wooden floor and about 50 feet of dirt, and in that dirt I had a jump pit for running broad jump and running high jump and a place for pole vaulting and putting shot. I had the boys field off it with grounders in baseball, and we used it for line work in football. Of course, it was too small a space for such a purpose, but when it rained I took the linemen in there and worked them. Notre Dame took the idea and built a building with an entire ground floor. Our building was a temporary structure made of rough brick and was torn down after the new gymnasium was built in 1901.¹

William D. Watson and Everett C. Parker in their pamphlet speak of Mr. Stagg's experiment with the field house:

The year 1894 also saw the completion of the new combined gymnasium and field house. Stagg tried the experiment of leaving the south 50 feet of the 250 feet of floor space with a dirt floor to permit shot putting, pole vaulting and high jumping.²

Mr. Stagg was the first director of athletics to organize the block letter or varsity lettermen organization.

The Order of "C" Men was formally installed at the annual banquet of "C" men on June 7, 1906. The following pledge was adopted: To denote ourselves as members of the order of the University of Chicago "C" men and to devote our steadfast loyalty to our alma mater, and our enduring support of her athletic honor and tradition, we hereby subscribe ourselves.³

The history of the Order of the "C" is traced through the following quotation:

Gymnastics, fencing, and wrestling first had recognition in an intercollegiate way in what was called "Stagg's Circus," held in the famous horse arena called "Tattersalls" on March 5, 1898. However,

¹Ibid.

²William D. Watson and Everett C. Parker, "Amos Alonzo Stagg," pamphlet.

³Chicago. University. President's Report, 1906-07, Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture and Athletics," p. 103.

previously the first "C" had been awarded in gymnastics in 1895 to Harry Wheeler Stone who won the championship of the University in this event. This was the first award of the "C" in gymnastics and is the only award of the letter in any sport not for inter-collegiate competition.¹

Mr. Stagg, in reminiscing on this subject, recalls the following data:

We had our first meeting in 1904. It included baseball players, trackmen and gymnasts. We called it the Order of the "C". It was just a letterman's club. I founded it. It started with an annual dinner, and then I suggested that we have an organization, having a pledge. I was very particular about giving letters. One really had to be outstanding to get a letter or have been a good man over two or three years and have qualified in manhood. There were many heartaches, but I was adamant to upholding the standards. I was also responsible for the awarding of the blankets. Graduating "C" men received blankets. That was later, but I started that. One of my assistants handed me the blanket, and I put it over the back of the athlete.²

The first college football game to be played under lights as an annual Thanksgiving classic is mentioned in the following article by Mr. Stagg:

Interest in the Michigan and Chicago series really began with the institution of an annual Thanksgiving Day contest in 1893...The notable game of this series was the 6 to 4 game in 1894...; and the game last season (November 26, 1896) was won on a safety touchdown and by a remarkable drop-kick from the 40 yard line by Hirschberger of Chicago - all in the first ten minutes of the game. The latter game was the first on record to take place on a full-sized field under cover, having been played in the Chicago Coliseum, and, during part of the time, by electric light.³

¹A. A. Stagg, "Expansion of Varsity Sports at the University of Chicago," June 4, 1932, (program of the 28th Annual Interscholastic Track and Field Games).

²A. A. Stagg, conference with author, March 1942.

³A. A. Stagg, "Football in the West," pp. 100-101, Football Rules, (Spaulding's official football guide), 1897.

Ends were first used as halfbacks or wingbacks by A. A. Stagg in 1889 and 1890. As a player, he employed this wingback position by pulling himself back a yard or two from the line of scrimmage which gave him a running start both as a blocker and tackler.

Stagg wants no credit in the development of the wingback type of play, but he recalls that as an end at Yale in 1889 he discovered that by dropping a yard or so back of the line of scrimmage he could get a driving start, both from the tackling standpoint and to dodge in to form part of the interference.¹

It is the opinion of the author that Stagg was the first to use the wingback style of football, and as proof we offer the following quotation:

Making use of the experience gained while playing end at Yale, he pulled his ends back out of the line and used them like backs to carry the ball around opposite ends and to drive into the line ahead of the ball carrier, both revolutionary practices which were later copied by the coaches of other schools.²

Parke Davis furnishes us with more information, suggesting that A. A. Stagg was the first to develop the wingback formation:

And now we come to the celebrated "tandem" of Princeton. In 1890 and 1891, Alonzo Stagg had been coach of Springfield, his teams known as "Christian Workers." This adroit and famous football genius conceived the idea of withdrawing the ends from the line of offense and using them precisely as wingbacks are used today.³

¹Russell J. Newland, "Stagg's Story," San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 9, 1939.

²W. D. Watson and E. C. Parker, op. cit.

³Parke Davis, "Football's Famous Formations," Intercollegiate Football 1869-1934, Christy Walsh, Editor.

Mr. Stagg was the first one to pull his tackles out of the line of scrimmage to carry the ball and lead the interference. In a conversation with the author, he offered the following information on this subject:

I was the first one to use the tackles by drawing them back. That was in 1894. I had them carry the ball and also used them as battering rams to precede the runner carrying the ball. They were really "battering rams."¹

Mr. Stagg is undoubtedly the originator of the spinner type of play; however, he does not claim to be responsible for it. The following remarks and dates mentioned by Mr. Stagg and two newspaper quotations tend to prove that he was.

I can't say I am responsible for the origination of the spinner play. I did do this: I developed the spinner fake of a quarterback in which the quarterback would fake a half spin. That I developed, but I didn't develop the spinner play. The first time I ever saw a spinner play was in 1912 in Minnesota. We beat them 7-0, and that was the first time I ever saw it from the fellow deep in the backfield. In 1905 I developed the quarter spin play, but he was close up behind the line.²

Then in Bill Leiser's column in the San Francisco Chronicle, December 20, 1942, Wally Steffen is mentioned as a great passer and quarterback for Mr. Stagg in 1907 - after the time (1905) that Mr. Stagg states he first started using the quarterback spinner. Then in the Los Angeles Times, April 2, 1944, Glenn S. (Pop) Warner credits Hugo Bezdek and Wally Steffen as the inventors of the spinner. These

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

²A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Feb. 28, 1943.

gentlemen may be the developers but certainly not the originators. The time element alone would disprove this claim since they were players for Mr. Stagg two years later than 1905 in which he admits developing the quarter spin play.

The wide open and spectacular spread formations that are employed today were introduced through the influence of the forward passing rule adopted in 1906. Up until 1906 there was no need for spreading the team as the passing rule had not yet presented the need and possibilities of this style of football. However, during the season of 1906 Mr. Stagg had worked up a series of sixty-seven passing plays with which he had hoped to beat Minnesota. Among them were several of the flanker and spread type of formations.

Mr. Stagg also originated the spread punt formation which is not widely used but effectively used by a few of his wiser opponents and by admiring pupils. Two of the better known coaches using Mr. Stagg's spread punt formation are Jeff Cravath of the University of Southern California and Henry Frnka of Tulane University. In speaking of the spread punt, Mr. Stagg said:

I used it first in 1918; I have used it ever since. I remember Red Strader (assistant football coach at St. Mary's College, Moraga, California) saying to me a few years ago, "Mr. Stagg, we like your spread punt. How do you work that out?" I said, "Haven't

you figured that out yet? We have been playing it right along. Just watch it a few more times; you ought to be able to get it." In the big universities the coaches inherit a lot of very fast, splendid ends, and they don't feel the need for compensating for this lack of material. Our ends are not always fast, and that is how I came to use the spread punt. I have centered more on calling signals from it here at the College of the Pacific than I did at Chicago, but we punted from it in the same way at Chicago.¹

There has been much controversy about who originated the forward pass, and I wish to state that Mr. Stagg does not attempt to claim this distinction. In fact, in our conference on January 31, 1942, he voluntarily proclaimed the three men who should share this honor. However, it must be borne in mind that Mr. Stagg probably has done more to develop the forward passing game than has any other single man. On January 31, 1942, Mr. Stagg discussed the origin of the forward pass with the writer:

1906 was the first year of the forward pass. I was on the Rules Committee. The idea originated in the Rules Committee and there are three men who claim credit for it. I am not one of these three. They are all dead so I might as well take the credit, but my New England conscience wouldn't permit me to do the thing. I have sometimes been given credit for it, but I was not the "father" of that idea. My own impression of it was: We were thinking how we could improve the game; among those in the group were P. J. Dashiell (Navy), J. C. Bell (Pennsylvania), and Dr. H. L. Williams (Minnesota). I have the impression that Dr. Williams should have had the credit. The idea originated in our meeting. That meeting sanctioned the passing of the ball five yards behind the line of scrimmage, and it had to cross the

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

scrimmage line five yards either side of the center. The reason for that limitation we discussed, but we thought if they heave it as far as they can straight down the field that is a little too much to start off with. The rule limited five yards back and five yards either side of the center; in other words, it had to be thrown somewhat flat. That limitation was removed in 1910. You could then throw anywhere as long as you were five yards behind the line of scrimmage.¹

In 1906, as soon as the forward passing rule was adopted, Mr. Stagg devised several spread formation passing plays to use against Minnesota. He held them under cover just for this game, but he waited too long as the rains gave them a muddy field. Eckersol, his ace passer, couldn't throw one pass all during the game, and Chicago lost four to two. Mr. Stagg did use these plays, however, in beating Illinois by the score of 63 to 0 the following weekend.

Mr. Stagg did much to develop the passing game, as has already been proven, but his experimental work with Hugo Bezdek at the University of Arkansas bares this out even more thoroughly. In 1910 when more rule changes were tentatively passed by the Rules Committee, he and Bezdek called out the Arkansas boys early for a spring work-out in order to test the tentative passing rules recently suggested. All the rules were adopted officially, largely because of the splendid, scientific research done by Stagg and Bezdek, a former pupil of Mr. Stagg's.

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

The following is a fine tribute to Mr. Stagg, recognizing the outstanding part he played in the development of the forward passing attack in football:

The forward passing attack devised last year by Director Stagg is regarded by coaches as the greatest advance that has been made in forward passing in a decade. The offense reached its greatest development in the final game, when Chicago defeated the powerful University of Washington eleven, with a bewildering series of passes. Known as the "flanker" formation, this offense is the latest of a long series of original offensive systems developed by the "Old Man" in his forty years of coaching, thirty-eight of which have been spent at Chicago.¹

In 1908 Mr. Stagg originated the fake forward pass and run, which is one of the most dangerous plays used today. He had a very clever back in Wally Steffen and decided to teach his team this fake forward pass. Steffen ran wild against Minnesota, helping Chicago beat the "Gophers" 29 to 0.

The new model "T" formation, which is the most talked about and widely used system today, is another one of Mr. Stagg's many contributions to the game of football. In 1893 he used the quarterback up under the center in a semi-crouched position. The quarterback took the ball directly from the center. Then in 1899 he conceived the idea of using the split buck play, which is another

¹"Athletics at the University of Chicago," p. 14 (Official program of the Twelfth Annual National Interscholastic Basketball Tournament at the Univ. of Chicago), April 1-5, 1930.

important part of the new "T" formation. This same year he inaugurated what he calls the flier in motion. This is the same as the man in motion in the new version of the "T" formation. By putting these three inventions together one can see readily that the essential parts of the "T" formation were the sole creation of Mr. Stagg.

The huddle was first used by a Chicago team in 1896. Mr. Stagg instructed his team to huddle together in their game with Michigan. This was an indoor game, and his previous experiences with indoor games had taught him that the reverberations from the cheering made it difficult to hear the signals.

Mr. Stagg feels certain that he was the first man to use the fake place kick. In this connection he relates the following:

Chicago got her first touchdown against Pennsylvania in 1898 by Herschberger's pretending to make a place kick, and Clarke, who held the ball, ran twenty-five yards around Pennsylvania's right end for a touchdown. Later, I evolved other variations of the same play.¹

The lateral pass was devised by Mr. Stagg in 1898, at which time the end carried the ball after receiving it from the quarterback and ran across his own line and tossed it out, using a basketball toss, to one of the halfbacks who had circled back.

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, June 18, 1946.

The trapezoid or box formation was devised by Mr. Stagg in 1925. He used this with a balanced or unbalanced line from which strong and deceptive strategies were employed.

During the year of 1904 Mr. Stagg employed a backfield shift which was the beginning of what is now known as the Notre Dame shift. Mr. Stagg is credited for the origination of the Notre Dame shift in the following quotation taken from The Autobiography of Knute K.

Rockne:

On the following Monday (following Notre Dame's defeat by Yale 28 to 0 on October 17, 1914), Jess Harper put in Stagg's backfield shift with my idea of flexing or shuttling ends, which was the beginning of what is known in football today as the Notre Dame System.¹

The first date of the use of the white football is unknown; however, Mr. Stagg started this fad by painting a tan football with white paint for late afternoon practices. On October 16, 1901, the Chicago Tribune made the following comment about this famous ball:

It was so dark most of the time that Stagg brought his historic white football into play again.²

The charging machine was introduced to football on September 23, 1904. The Chicago Record-Herald wrote the following on this new device:

¹K. K. Rockne, The Autobiography of Knute K. Rockne, p. 200.

²Chicago Tribune, October 16, 1901.

Two new features were added to the practice of the maroon's yesterday. In addition to the usual punting, going down the field for the ball, signal drill and scrimmage, Stagg brought into use for the first time his new charging machine.¹

Mr. Stagg has originated many things in the nomenclature of football: the name "flanker," for instance, which he used back in 1906 against Illinois; the words "flea-flicker" and "pedinger" used at the University of Chicago and the College of the Pacific. Many of these names have come and gone. In the following quotation he mentions a few of these expressions:

I devised a set of plays in 1931 and 1932. I stationed one back on the on-side and called him the on-back. I stationed another back over on the off-side and called him off-back. Rear-backs and wing-backs were also named by me in the same logical manner. There is no sense nor reasoning to this "off and on back" thing now. It is my nomenclature, but it isn't of any value now.²

Mr. Stagg does not know whether he was the first to establish the training quarters for athletic teams, but the following article by him would indicate that he was among the first few to advocate training quarters and to make use of their facilities:

The Chicago Athletic Association had the best team of its history (1897). This was due in large part to the policy of establishing training quarters alongside their practice field, where the players

¹Chicago Record-Herald, September 23, 1904. Football Rules.

²A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

lived throughout the season. The team's feat of winning from the Newton Athletic Club and from the Orange Athletic Club and of playing such a strong game against Yale was quite remarkable.¹

Mr. Stagg first introduced coaching classes as a scientific approach to athletic games in the year 1906. During the summer terms at the University of Chicago, Mr. Stagg began the process of making football a known science, analyzed to the finest degree, and thoroughly understood by leading coaches everywhere. In a conversation with the author he remarked:

We offered instruction in football, track and baseball. We approached these from the standpoint of the coach. I lectured and took up the various positions, and then we did a certain amount of practice work. Many other things in connection with the strategy of the game were taken up.²

Mr. Stagg represented the University of Chicago at the Intercollegiate Conference of Faculty Representatives during the years of 1896-1911. In March of 1904 he became the first representative of the western institutions on the Eastern Football Rules Committee. He is now the only surviving member of the original committee and was elected a life member in December 1932.

The following is a quotation by Mr. Stagg which speaks of his connection with the Rules Committee:

¹A. A. Stagg, "Football in the West," p. 77, Football Rules, (Spaulding's official football guide), 1898.

²A. A. Stagg, conference with author, March, 1942.

I had an invitation to join the Rules Committee in 1898 but did not accept because it was not convenient for me. The reason I was invited was because I felt that the rules were not perfectly clear and that several rules had become obsolete. I was then on the Faculty Committee of the Big Ten which made the eligibility rules covering the Big Ten universities, and I proposed that we make changes and get up a set of rules that occurred to me would be an improvement. At that time the Big Ten universities were the only ones that had a conference governing all sports for the universities that were in it then. I was appointed chairman of this rule changing committee and two others were added as committeemen. I did the whole work by myself. I wrote up all the changes. We started to publish a book and before we could do this the Rules Committee adopted nearly every change that was suggested. We had accomplished what I felt we ought to have accomplished. I wanted to see progress.¹

The following is the final resume of the early history of the Rules Committee and the part that Mr. Stagg played in it. The quotations are by A. M. Weyand:

Following the season of 1905, football again faced a crisis in its existence. The game was fiercely criticised in all parts of the country and was actually abolished at a number of colleges. President Roosevelt called a conference of representatives of Yale, Princeton, Harvard, and Pennsylvania, at the White House and demanded that reforms be inaugurated to save the game which he so greatly admired. At this stage, Chancellor Henry M. MacCracken of New York University, called a conference of twenty-eight colleges. As a result of this gathering, the National Intercollegiate Football Conference was organized. This body later enlarged the sphere of its activities and became the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of America. At the suggestion of its President, General Palmer Pierce of the Army, the new organization appointed a rules committee which was authorized to sit in joint session with the "old committee." The members present at the first joint meeting were: A. A. Stagg (Chicago), L. M. Dennis (Cornell), W. T. Reid (Harvard), P. J.

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

Dashiell (Navy), J. C. Bell (Pennsylvania), J. B. Fine (Princeton), Walter Camp (Yale), C. D. Daly (Army), E. K. Hall (Dartmouth), J. A. Babbitt (Haverford), H. L. Williams (Minnesota), J. T. Lees (Nebraska), C. W. Savage (Oberlin), and F. H. Curtiss (Texas).

Many changes were made in the rules. The number of officials was changed to include a referee, two umpires, and a linesman. The length of the game was changed to sixty minutes with ten minutes rest between halves. A neutral zone, the length of the ball, was established between the two rush lines. The distance necessary to advance the ball in three downs, in order to retain possession of it, was changed from five to ten yards. The forward pass and on side kick were authorized. Crawling with the ball, hurdling, tripping, and unlawful use of the hands and arms, all came in for strict legislation aimed at the abolition of objectionable features of the game. The Central Board of Officials was created and J. A. Babbitt has since developed this feature with great success.¹

The busiest of all Mr. Stagg's fifty-six football seasons was in 1894. During that season he promoted the idea that travel was a necessary part of education, and thus has the distinction of being the first coach to take his team across the Rockies to play on the West Coast. In his book Touchdown! he states:

We played eighteen regular games and four post-season contests--three in California, the first Eastern team to appear on the Pacific Slope.²

¹A. M. Weyand, American Football, Its History and Development, "The Beginning of Modern Football (1906-1911)," Ch. IV, pp. 180-183.

²A. A. Stagg, Touchdown!, p. 189.

CHAPTER III

BASEBALL

Mr. Stagg is known from coast to coast for his brilliant coaching career, but many who know this great leader of sports also appreciate his truly remarkable record as a baseball player in the 1880's.

He made the Yale University's varsity baseball team as a freshman and then proceeded to pitch them to five consecutive championships in the years 1886 through 1890. He was captain of the team in 1888. His greatest strike-out record in a college game was in 1888 in a game with Princeton when he struck out twenty men. Later in a game in Buffalo, New York, he struck out twenty-two men. In nineteen games against Princeton in those five years, he scored one hundred and sixty-one strike-outs. In the same period he faced Harvard nineteen times, struck out one hundred and forty-one men and won fourteen games. His batting average in the championship series of the five years ranged from .417 in 1886 to .235 in 1890. In the latter year he ranked ninth out of the thirty-six players in the league. In 1886 he ranked third in fifty-four players. Other years he ranked fourth, fifth and eighth.

He had done well against professional players, too. On one occasion he pitched his amateur team to an eight to two victory over the New York Metropolitans (now New

York Yankees). In 1887 in a game against the old Boston Nationals, he struck out Ten-Thousand-Dollar Kelly, the Babe Ruth of his time, and won his game two to one. Needless to say, he received six professional offers to pitch for such teams as Detroit, Indianapolis and the New York Metropolitans.

Mr. Stagg promoted five international tours for his University of Chicago teams, and they played in Japan, the Philippines, and China.

While Mr. Stagg was Captain of the Yale baseball team in 1888, he devised a sliding apparatus. The principle was that of bed springs, much lengthened and covered with Brussels carpet. The men ran, dived and slid along this device to learn how to avoid ripping themselves. The point of a good slide was to go along the ground rather than into the ground. That season and for the next two Yale led the league in stolen bases.

On March 19, 1896, the Chicago Chronicle has this to say about Mr. Stagg's invention of the outdoor batting cage, which is now used universally in a similar form:

An innovation in methods of baseball practice is about to be introduced at the University of Chicago in the shape of an outdoor batting cage. The idea is Stagg's own and has never been made use of before by any team.¹

¹Chicago Chronicle, March 19, 1896.

CHAPTER IV

BASKETBALL

Mr. Stagg was among the first few men to play the game of basketball. Basketball was invented by James Naismith at the Springfield YMCA College during the time that Mr. Stagg was an instructor at this institution. Mr. Naismith and Mr. Stagg were classmates at Springfield, and Mr. Stagg reveals the following history on the game of basketball:

I knew Jim very well because he was in my class, and there were only four of us in the class of 1891. He played center on our football team, and he invented this game while I was off on one of my lecture tours. He divided the class with nine on a side. I played more or less football; it was great fun to me, and I was penalized often. They had certain rules but a very small number of them. He used a half-bushel basket for the goals. The first baskets were not peach baskets, but peach baskets were substituted because the ball bounded out of the half-bushel baskets. Someone would stay on the running track above the court, and remove the basketball each time a goal was made.¹

Mr. Stagg fostered the game of basketball in many ways, but one of the most important ways in which he did this is shown through his statement, "In 1917 I established the National Basketball Championship Tournament."² This tournament was held at the University of Chicago from 1917 through 1930, exclusive of the two years 1918 and 1919.

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Feb. 28, 1942.

²A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

CHAPTER V

GOLF

Mr. Stagg's athletic influence is felt even in the game of golf. He was the first president of the Olympic Field Country Club, Chicago, Illinois, which has four¹ eighteen-hole golf courses. He did not start the promotion, but he worked very hard to help promote it. It was the conception of a man by the name of Charles Beach. Mr. Stagg was the forty-sixth to buy a ten-dollar membership; the understanding was that each member was to give five-hundred dollars more when the membership reached five hundred. The others urged him to become the first president. At that time he had a very good assistant at the University, Pat Page, allowing him to work very hard on this project. Mr. Stagg was president for the first four years--1916 through 1919.¹

A few years later the club built a 1,200,000¹ dollar clubhouse. Mr. Stagg was not responsible for that. He was not interested in developing this club beyond the reach of the middle class man. He expressed his viewpoint on this subject by the following statement:

My only interest in the club was to create golf for men of moderate means. That was the ideal that I held before me while I was president. More and more the richer people filtered into the club and dominated it, but that was not true while I was president.¹

¹Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

TRACK

Mr. Stagg, while no longer coaching track and field athletics, which he did for thirty-two years, has had as much to do with the promotion of this sport in the United States as any other individual. For example, he started taking his track team to the Penn Relays in 1898. Then he took a five-man track team to Paris in 1900. In order to do this, he had to borrow twenty-five hundred dollars at the bank to finance the trip, President Harper and T. W. Goodspeed, secretary of the University, indorsing his note. Probably the greatest contribution that Mr. Stagg made to track is expressed in his next statement:

I established the National Track and Field Meet in 1902. I was chairman of the committee that established the National Collegiate Athletic Track and Field championships, now known as the N.C.A.A. I was chairman for its first twelve years.¹

Mr. Stagg has promoted, organized or conducted over two hundred intercollegiate, high school and academy meets. Starting in 1902 he organized and directed the National Interscholastic Track and Field Meet, which continued for twenty-eight years. He originated the first eligibility rules for the interscholastic meets, which undoubtedly had an influence on the National Association when it was formed.

¹Ibid.

Mr. Stagg has been the referee at the West Coast Relays held in Fresno, California, for the past eight years (1939-1946). He has acted as either the referee, honorary referee, chairman or member of the managing committee of the following championship track and field meets of the National Collegiate Athletic Association:

- June 18, 1921 (University of Chicago)
Gen. Palmer E. Pierce, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 17, 1922 (University of Chicago)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 16, 1923 (University of Chicago)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 13, 1925 (University of Chicago)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 11-12, 1926 (Soldier Field, Grant Park Stadium, Chicago)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 10-11, 1927 (Soldier Field, Grant Park Stadium)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 8-9, 1928 (Soldier Field, Grant Park Stadium)
Gen. Palmer E. Pierce, Hon. Referee
(President N.C.A.A.)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 7-8, 1929 (University of Chicago)
Gen. Palmer E. Pierce, Hon. Referee
(President N.C.A.A.)
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 6-7, 1930 (University of Chicago)
Chas. W. Kennedy, Hon. Referee
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 5-6, 1931 (University of Chicago)
Chas. W. Kennedy, Hon. Referee
Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee

- June 10-11, 1932 (National Collegiate Track and Field Meet and Semi-Final American Olympic Tryout)
 Avery Brundage, Hon. Referee
 Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
 A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 16-17, 1933 (Held in connection with the Century of Progress at Soldier Field, Chicago)
 Rufus C. Dawes, Hon. Referee
 Sen. Chas. A. Rawson, Referee
 A. A. Stagg, Chairman, Managing Committee
- June 22-23, 1934 (Los Angeles Coliseum)
 Games Committee, Willis O. Hunter, Chairman
 A. A. Stagg
 T. N. Metcalf
 Major John L. Griffith, Hon. Referee
 A. A. Stagg, Referee
- June 21-22, 1935 (University of California, Berkeley)
 Games Committee, W. W. Monahan, Chairman
 A. A. Stagg
 T. N. Metcalf
 Willis O. Hunter
 C. E. Edmundson
 Major John L. Griffith, Hon. Referee
 A. A. Stagg, Referee
- June 19-20, 1936 (Track and Field Championships and Semi-Final Olympic Trials, University of Chicago)
 Robert Maynard Hutchins, Hon. Referee
 A. A. Stagg, Hon. Referee
 John L. Griffith, Referee
 Games Committee, T. Nelson Metcalf, Chairman
 Ten men on committee including A. A. Stagg
- June 18-19, 1937 (University of California)
 A. A. Stagg, Hon. Referee
 John L. Griffith, Referee
 Games Committee, Kenneth Priestley, Chairman
 A. A. Stagg
 Kenneth L. Wilson
- June 17-18, 1938 (University of Minnesota)
 A. A. Stagg, Referee
- June 16-17, 1939 (Los Angeles Memorial Stadium)
 William B. Owens, Hon. Referee
 Major John L. Griffith, Hon. Referee
 A. A. Stagg, Referee
- June 21-22, 1940 (University of Minnesota)
 (A. A. Stagg unable to attend)
- June 20-21, 1941 (Stanford University)
 A. A. Stagg, Hon. Referee
 K. L. Wilson, Referee

- June 12-13, 1942 (University of Nebraska)
(A. A. Stagg unable to attend)
- June 11-12, 1943 (Northwestern University, Evanston)
(A. A. Stagg unable to attend)
- June 10, 1944 (Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin)
(A. A. Stagg unable to attend)

CHAPTER VII

HONORS

Mr. Stagg was the first man in the profession of physical education and athletics to receive a faculty rating, thus bringing dignity to the coaching profession. In the following account Mr. Stagg recalls the time when he was the first teacher of football to be appointed a regular faculty member:

At the opening of the University of Chicago in 1892, I was made an Associate Professor and Director of the Department of Physical Culture and Athletics and a regular member of the faculty, which was the first recognition of its kind. In 1901, I was given a full professorship. Chicago's plan has been copied in many universities and colleges.¹

"The first All-American team," says A. A. Weyand, "was selected by Walter Camp in 1889 for a magazine conducted by Caspar Whitney."² The 1889 selection is as follows:

End	Stagg, Yale	<u>Substitutes, Line</u>
Tackle	Cowan, Princeton	Donnelly, Princeton
Guard	Cranston, Harvard	Stickney, Harvard
Center	George, Princeton	Rhodes, Yale
Guard	Heffelfinger, Yale	Janeway, Princeton
Tackle	Gill, Yale	
End	Cumnock, Harvard	<u>Backs</u>
Quarter	E. Poe, Princeton	Dean, Harvard
Half	J. Lee, Harvard	B. Trafford, Harvard
Half	Channing, Princeton	Black, Princeton
Full	Ames, Princeton	H. McBride, Yale

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, June 18, 1946.

²A. M. Weyand, op. cit., p. 467.

Mr. Stagg was invited to become a member of the American Committee for Olympic games to be played in Athens in the year 1906. He was also a member of the committee for the Olympic games in the following places and dates:

London	1908	Paris	1924
Stockholm	1912	Amsterdam	1928
Antwerp	1920	Los Angeles	1932

He also coached the 400 meter and 800 meter runs and 1600 meter relay of the American Olympic team in 1924.

By action of the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago, October 27, 1914, the University athletic field, commonly known as "Marshall Field," was named "Stagg Field" in honor of the Grand Old Man of football and athletics.

On December 29, 1939, the American Football Coaches' Association honored Mr. Stagg with a life membership in their association and presented him with a bronze plaque, "commemorating fifty years of service to the game of American football, to the development of the American young man, to the advancement of the profession of football coaching."

The Scots of Sacramento, California, honored Mr. Stagg by promoting the inter-sectional game of football played between the College of the Pacific and the University of South Dakota on September 26, 1939, in Sacramento, California. A thousand-piece band played Mr. Stagg's favorite song, Auld Lang Syne, between halves.

At each game during his 1939 season a celebration was held or a presentation of some very complimentary and sentimental nature was awarded this Grand Old Man.

The American Physical Education Association in 1931 elected Mr. Stagg a Fellow in their association. This is an honor rarely bestowed on men in the athletic field.

In 1935 Mr. Stagg was awarded the Silver Buffalo for distinguished service to boyhood. The following is an example of Mr. Stagg's work among the boy scouts as well as among all youths of America. A Stockton newspaper printed the following statement by Mr. Stagg while he and Mrs. Stagg were attending a boy scout meeting held in their honor and naming their troop after Mr. Stagg:

In recognition of my 54 years of coaching experience in which my chief concern has been the character development of my players and in all-around improvement of sports, I am glad to permit the use of my name by troop 54. I have as a matter of course, been greatly interested in the Boy Scout movement and have followed its development since its founding in this country in 1910. I have known many of the directors and have rejoiced in the fine influence which scouting has exerted on the multitudes of American youth.¹

In 1939 the International Loyal Knights of the Round Table elected Mr. Stagg to the honorary role of Knight for Life in their organization.

On January 9, 1941, the New York City Touchdown Club Award was presented to Mr. Stagg in recognition of his

¹A. A. Stagg, Stockton Record, Jan. 1944.

outstanding permanent contributions to the advancement of the game of football.

Mr. Stagg was awarded the Edward Norris Tarbell Medallion on June 14, 1941, by the Springfield YMCA College "for notable service to Alma Mater."

On October 23, 1943, Mr. Stagg was honored at the Coliseum by the Los Angeles Times and the University of Southern California. Braven Dyer, sports editor of the Times, presented Mr. Stagg with a scroll and a set of bookends, while Dr. Rufus B. von KleinSmid of the University presented him with a plaque. The Times scroll, signed by Norm Chandler, publisher of the paper, was engraved with the following thought:

The whole world knows of your devotion to the creed of sportsmanship, both on and off the field of play. Your achievements have recorded themselves through decades of American sports history. They are the great contributions to the character of American youth. Your examples are standards to be followed. Generations of yesterday and today have become enriched. Tomorrow's hopes, too, are founded on the precepts to which you are dedicating your service. The Los Angeles Times is proud to present the memento of its esteem and we know our sentiments are echoed the length and breadth of the nation by the press and public America.¹

Dr. von KleinSmid in presenting the plaque to Mr. Stagg, offered the following tribute:

The University of Southern California presents to Amos Alonzo Stagg, an outstanding sportsman and

¹Norm Chandler, Los Angeles Times, Oct. 24, 1943.

Christian gentleman, this plaque in recognition of his many years of devotion and service to inter-collegiate athletics.¹

The American Football Coaches' Association at their nineteenth annual meeting in December 1939 created the Stagg Award, which is conferred annually on the individual or group or institution whose services have been outstanding in the advancement of the best interests of football. On the trophy are inscribed these words:

Stagg Award. To perpetuate the example and influence of Coach Amos Alonzo Stagg.²

In 1943 Mr. Stagg received the Coach of the Year award through the poll of coaches by the New York World Telegram, and he also received the Football's Man of the Year for Service award voted him by all the football writers of America. The latter award was devised under the auspices of the Football Writers' Association of America.

The honors bestowed on this great man are many, but one of the most significant is the American Education Award given him by the Associated Exhibitors of the National Education Association in the year 1933.

¹Rufus B. von KleinSmid, Los Angeles Times, Oct. 24, 1943.

²Dean Hill, Football Thru the Years, p. 110.

³Chicago. University. President's Report, 1906-07, Report of Director A. M. Stagg, "Physical Culture and Athletics," p. 132.

CHAPTER VIII

SPORTSMANSHIP, HIGH IDEALS, and HEALTHFUL LIVING

A pre-game banquet was first arranged by the University of Chicago in 1906. Mr. Stagg conceived the idea that a banquet on the evening before the game would foster a friendlier relationship on the football field the next day. In his report to his president in 1906, Mr. Stagg commented on this subject:

One of the most satisfactory features of the football season of 1906 was the successful working out of the intent of the Minnesota-Chicago agreement mentioned in the President's Report of 1905-6. The agreement was a distinct success in every way, and there has never been such cordiality and friendly rivalry in football as existed last fall in our relations with Purdue, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota and Nebraska. A striking feature of the agreement, namely, the giving of a banquet to the visiting team the night before the game, which was looked upon with skepticism and even ridicule, proved a successful event and really enjoyable to the guests as well as to the hosts. The friendly spirit of that occasion dominated the contest on the field the following day, not in any way lessening the intensity of the contest or the desire to win, but showing in the sportsmanlike conduct of the members of both teams. So far as I remember no team was penalized for rough tactics, and personally I saw but one case where I thought it ought to be.¹

One of Mr. Stagg's favorite and popular comments before game time is his expression, "Play hard but never bring shame to your college." This truly exemplifies

¹Chicago. University. President's Report, 1906-07, Report of Director A. A. Stagg, "Physical Culture and Athletics," p. 102.

the spirit of this great person who stands for the highest ideals in the world of sports. In over sixty years of a very prosperous association with all the sports, this man has established an enviable record as a player and coach with a code of ethics in his profession that is beyond reproach. This man personifies all that is righteous, and his influence has been felt in the fields of health, physical education and athletics.

Mr. Stagg believes sincerely that the church is the foundation for youth. He once said, "There can never be too many churches in a community; therefore, I believe in attending regularly and giving generously."¹

He successfully preached many outstanding traits of quality to his players because he was a man who practiced what he preached. He stressed such qualities as respect toward women, thriftiness, sincerity and honesty in everything undertaken, and moderation in living.

Mr. Stagg is a strong advocate of healthful living and believes sincerely that this is obtained through physical education, athletics, recreation and a strict abstinence from tobacco and alcohol. He demands of his players the keeping of rigid training rules which include a ten o'clock curfew, proper diet, regular sleeping habits, and abstinence from tobacco and alcohol.

¹A. A. Stagg, conference with author, Jan. 31, 1942.

As a nightly curfew reminder for the men in training, Mr. Stagg gave one thousand dollars toward the installation of chimes in Mitchell Tower, which stands across from Bartlett Gymnasium of the University of Chicago. As a condition to the gift, Mr. and Mrs. Stagg stipulated that a special cadence be rung nightly at 10:05 o'clock for the better emphasis of their purpose. They hoped that the bells might have for the student body of Chicago the emotional value that the Battell chimes at Yale had held for Mr. Stagg, and that they might speak with greater eloquence than a coach could hope to do of the ideals of the University's athletics.

Mr. Stagg's manner of speaking has always remained beyond reproach. He will not allow the use of profanity among his team members, and no one has ever heard him use this manner of expressing emotion. His method of arousing a player to the point of accomplishment is recognized by his men and assistants as far more effective than if he were to use the language of a mule-skinner and the aid of a bull whip.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

In this thesis Mr. Stagg's athletic contributions have been briefly summarized. In no way does this work pretend to represent the complete influence this great man has had on athletics. Rather, the writer has wished to outline Mr. Stagg's achievements in the fields of physical education and athletics in order that his contributions and ideals may be found readily and used to the advantage of these professions. Each topic discussed herein has been covered as briefly and as accurately as possible.

The writer does not present his work with the thought that it is final or complete. Rather, he hopes that it may be of help to others in glorifying and establishing the truths of the Grand Old Gentleman's contributions to athletics and the life he is so richly endowing.

In the field of physical education Mr. Stagg has established himself as a leader since his original ideas displayed in the construction of the Bartlett Gymnasium are still considered as modern and necessary when architectural plans are drawn up for similar structures. He was also one of the first to advocate physical education requirements, to organize physical education classes for the women students, to require physical examinations of all students partici-

pating in these classes, and to demand high scholastic standards among the athletes.

As this thesis has shown, Mr. Stagg has had some important part in practically all the intercollegiate sports played in the United States. Naturally, he is now known better in the field of football, particularly since he is given credit for the origination of the Notre Dame shift (which was later developed and named by Knute Rockne) and the revolutionary way in which he adapted the forward pass to football the first year it was adopted by the Rules Committee.

He has also originated the tackling dummy; numbering of the players; the policy of dividing the gate receipts; practical use of a field house; the block letter societies; the idea of using ends as halfbacks, which led to the development of the double wingback formation; the tackle in the backfield tactics; the spinner type of offense; the flanker and spread formations; the spread punt formation; the fake forward pass play; the "T" formation, which is so widely used today; the huddle; the fake place kick; the lateral; the use of the white football; and the charging machine.

In baseball he invented the sliding apparatus and the batting cage, and his international tours with the University of Chicago baseball team have set a precedent that has become exceedingly important to baseball as well as to all the sports.

Mr. Stagg's greatest contribution to basketball is his origination and promotion of the National Basketball Championship Tournament held at the University of Chicago.

In golf Mr. Stagg contributed by developing and promoting the large Olympic Field Country Club in Chicago, which has fostered many national tournaments and has provided the playing facilities for the development of several outstanding golfers.

His officiating, committee work, and refereeing in the field of track have contributed a great deal to this sport, but his establishment of the National Track and Field Meet, which later became known as the N.C.A.A. Track and Field Championships, is undoubtedly his greatest contribution to this sport.

Mr. Stagg has received many honors during his span as a physical education and athletic leader and has contributed much to these fields by receiving such awards as the American Education Award, Silver Buffalo Award from the boy scouts, the Coach of the Year Award in 1943, and the Football's Man of the Year for Service Award.

He has contributed greatly to the realm of sportsmanship and athletic ideals through his association with people directly or indirectly connected with sports. As an example, he arranged pre-game banquets for the opposing teams, which directly influenced the conduct and sportsmanship displayed

by both teams the following day, and indirectly influenced the attitudes of the spectators toward athletics. His training policies, health habits, and Christian teachings have been widely expounded. One concrete method by which he used to strengthen his viewpoints was through his gift of the Mitchell Tower Chimes to the University of Chicago which were to remind the athletes and student body that ten o'clock was the sensible time to retire.

The teachings of such men as Mr. Stagg for the past half century have taught us to win and lose gracefully and compete fairly. If those of us who are teaching the future leaders of our country will expound the Christian ideals of Mr. Stagg and combine these with instilling the desire to compete and win fairly, what greater contribution may we as physical educators and athletic coaches make to our nation and the world?

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