

The First Saddle Tramp Is Gone

Few Texas Tech alumni can recall a sporting event when the Saddle Tramps weren't around to cheer on the players and instill Red Raider spirit among the student body. Members of this service organization also have given campus tours to untold thousands of prospective freshmen and their parents.

While we recognize the group, few of us are familiar with Arch Lamb,



Lamb with his mule, Parker

the founding genius of the Saddle Tramps. In the 1930s, when he was a student, Lamb wanted an organization that would project a positive image for Texas Tech, a group that would work to better the institution. He formed the Saddle Tramps. Today, at Jones-SBC Stadium an entire section of bleachers is dedicated to Arch and his wife Mina Lamb.

Arch was born in 1912 in Coolidge, Texas. He moved to Lubbock during the mid-1930s to attend Texas Technological College. Arch was a poor country boy who never met a stranger. He put himself through school working in the Dairy Barn. In the early years of the university students could bring cows to the university and the sale of the milk from those cows helped defray the cost of tuition. Arch also had a business shining shoes in the dorm, a job that helped him meet many students and that ultimately led to his election as "yell leader" at football games. He soon joined the student council and later became vice-president of the student body. In 1939, Lamb received his bachelor's degree in dairy manufacturing.

While at college, Arch met the daughter of a prosperous German immigrant, a girl named Mina Wolf. She and her sister, Ilse, both attended Tech. Arch and Mina were wed in 1941 near Stamford, Texas. She was born in Sagerton, Texas in 1910. They had one child, Arch Karl Lamb. Sister Ilse never married.

Mina Marie Wolf Lamb developed a reputation of her own. Mina received her bachelor's degree in chemistry (1932) and master's degree in food and nutrition (1937) from Texas Tech. She received her Ph.D. in Nutrition (1941) from Columbia University. She worked for Texas Tech as assistant professor of food and nutrition, a position she held until she retired a full professor in 1975. She served in other roles as department chair and as the first Margaret W. Weeks Professor of Home Economics. In 1986, the American Dietetic Association awarded her with their prestigious Medallion Award. Dr. Lamb also served on the Dean's Advisory Council from 1981 to 1987. Arch claimed to the end of his life that he had accomplished little and that Mina was the most important one in the family.

Be that as it may, one story that memorializes Arch in Tech lore deals *Continued on p. 38*



Arch Lamb (top); Lamb and some Saddle Tramps

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with the Masked Rider. According to Arch, one evening, he and a friend "borrowed" a horse from the Dairy Barn and rode all over campus bedecked in a home-made "Zorro" costume. The young men were caught and chastened, but the spectacle ultimately contributed to the idea of a masked rider mascot, which Joe Kirk Fulton officially inaugurated at the 1954 Gator Bowl, where Tech trounced Auburn in a New Year's Day victory.

Arch made a final contribution to Texas Tech. Before he died, Arch donated an extensive group of papers relating to his life and family. The collection, now available for research at the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, contains correspondence, business records, memoirs, printed materials, scrapbook materials, and a postcard collection. Some records are from Mina and Arch during their early college and married years. Of special note are the German letters from Mina's relatives dating from the early 1800s through the 1930s. So, like that old saddle tramp that Bill Dean describes in his article, Arch Lamb, to the very end, worked to leave Texas Tech and his community better places than he found them. ■

Featured materials are from the Arch and Mina Lamb Collection at the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library.



Arch and Mina Lamb