A STUDY OF THE LIFE, PROFESSIONAL CAREER, AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS IN TEXAS OF PRINCE ELMER SHOTWELL

DISSERTATION

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By

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This biography of Prince Elmer Shotwell particularly emphasizes his contributions to Texas interscholastic athletics, to the University Interscholastic League, and to the Texas High School Coaches' Association. Data for this life study are from both primary and secondary sources, human and documentary as well. Shotwell's personal files and scrapbooks are used extensively, and supplementary data come from biographical data forms and tape-recorded personal interviews.

The study includes biographical data of Shotwell's youth, educational background, marriage, and his endeavors in the teaching and coaching fields.

Born near Canyon, Texas, on August 17, 1893, Shotwell attended Canyon High School and earned a teaching certificate in 1916 from West Texas Normal School. He completed his degree requirements in 1923 and earned his Master of Science degree at Texas University in 1937.
Shotwell began his coaching career at Cisco, Texas, in 1916 and subsequently coached at Abilene, Breckenridge, Longview, and again at Abilene, Texas, high schools. He also coached for short periods at Simmons College and Sul Ross College and closed his career as Athletic Director and Chairman of the Physical Education Department at McMurry College in Abilene.

Shotwell won state championships at Abilene, Breckenridge, and Longview. His personal character traits and coaching methods played an important role in establishing interscholastic athletics as an educational process in Texas High Schools. Shotwell's concern with the chaotic conditions of interscholastic athletics led him to assume leadership in the attempts of the University Interscholastic League to establish uniform participation codes. His desire to improve coaching techniques and ethics caused him to become one of the originators of the Texas High School Coaches' Association, the largest organization of its kind in the United States today. He served this organization as president in 1934 and originated the annual all-star games which are currently a highlight of the interscholastic program.

Shotwell's many contributions earned him election to the Texas Sports Hall of Fame, the Helms Foundation National Sports Hall of Fame, and the Panhandle Sports Hall of Fame. In honor of his contributions to the city of Abilene, the
city bestowed a lasting and cherished honor in 1966 by renaming the Public Schools Stadium, "P. E. Shotwell Stadium."

Documentary evidence lends support to the conclusion that the personal character traits and inspired teaching methods of Shotwell left a lasting impression on the lives of the vast majority of his students as well as enhancing the coaching profession.

His work for the Lions International Camp for Crippled Children and other civic ventures established Shotwell as a humanistic advocate of worthy causes and a tireless worker in their behalf. His unselfish desire to help others, his inordinate interest in young people, and his service to all professional groups stand as a tribute to his life.

The study discloses that Shotwell made contributions in various modes throughout his more than fifty years in the profession. Most of his professional endeavors were superimposed by his consistent personality traits of enthusiasm, industry, intensity, and persistence.

A significant contribution to future studies of this type could be made by colleges establishing an archive for storing information pertaining to the profession and its members. The reading of biographies of outstanding men have often served useful purposes as models for aspiring young coaches to follow in planning their own careers.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The world of amateur athletics has always had its idols—men of stature who, by virtue of their deeds on the playing fields, have won for themselves lasting fame in the annals of American sports history. Some of these American folk heroes are honored merely for their unusual prowess and remarkable feats as participants in athletic contests. A few, such as Knute Rockne, Amos Alonzo Stagg, and Dr. Forrest C. Allen have gained reknown not only as leaders in athletics, but as genuine contributors to the educational process. Their fame is built on their ability to be teachers and molders of men through participation in various forms of athletic endeavors.

Various "Halls of Fame" have been formed to perpetuate the memory of these men and their contributions to the youth of America. Almost without exception the men whose names adorn the rolls of these various Halls of Fame have achieved their honors working at either the college or professional level of sports. These men have often been the authors of books and articles which outlined their philosophies. Sports-writers and biographers have written countless other volumes,
extolling the virtues of these heroes which further enhanced their fame.

In contrast to these prominent national figures, literally thousands of dedicated men have spent relatively obscure lives coaching young men at the high school level. The influence of these secondary school coaches on youth at this highly impressionable age may have more impact on society and the educational process than that of the few nationally prominent heroes who have worked exclusively with older and, therefore, less impressionable participants. These relatively unknown high school coaches have not published scholarly works. They have merely gone quietly about their business of using interscholastic athletics as the tool whereby they mold the character of their young charges; and through the wise use of this tool, these dedicated teachers have educated hundreds of thousands of young men to face better the vicissitudes of life.

Occasionally the ability, character, and performance record of one of these men will attain such levels of competence that, despite all the odds against him, society must recognize his accomplishments and elevate that teacher to Hall of Fame status.

Prince Elmer "Pete" Shotwell is just such a man.¹ In 1960 Shotwell became one of the first five persons to be

¹Early in his youth Shotwell was given the nicknames of "Pete" and "Shot." The name Pete is more widely recognized by his contemporaries. His family and intimate friends
elected to the T.H.S.C.A. Hall of Honor. Shotwell has since been honored by election to several other state or national halls of fame. On December 9, 1967, at Morgantown, West Virginia, Shotwell was honored nationally by being inducted into the Helms Foundation National Hall of Fame. This foundation presents awards and trophies for athletic achievement at all school levels. Both amateurs and professionals are honored. In addition to the plaque awarded the honoree, some momento of his career is enshrined in the Helms Museum in Los Angeles, California. In 1968 he was elected to the Panhandle Sports Hall of Fame. This organization honors natives of the Panhandle region of northwest Texas who have made lasting contributions to athletics.

On May 19, 1966, the city of Abilene, Texas, honored the retired coach by renaming the vast Public Schools Stadium the "P. E. Shotwell Stadium." A gala award dinner was held usually refer to him as Shot. His official signature today is Pete or P. E. Shotwell. The author has never personally heard him called Elmer. Hereinafter the name Pete will be treated as Shotwell's official name except for that period during his youth when he was called Elmer.


3 Helms Foundation National Hall of Fame certificate and plaque in the possession of P. E. Shotwell.


5 Panhandle Sports Hall of Fame certificate in the possession of P. E. Shotwell.

in his honor. The event was attended by many of his former players, colleagues, and friends from all over the United States. Those who were unable to attend sent letters and tributes to him in honor of his contributions to their lives, his contributions to high school athletics, and to the general code of ethics of the coaching profession.\(^7\)

The dedication of Shotwell Stadium is, perhaps, the most cherished of the honors bestowed on Prince Elmer Shotwell since it will serve for many years as a fitting monument to a man who, by virtue of his outstanding accomplishments and his own personal pattern of living, has become an example of much that is considered worthwhile about the proper role of inter-scholastic athletics.\(^8\)

Many other honors which will be discussed at length later in this study have accrued to this teacher. Shotwell has achieved recognition not only for his contributions to Texas high school athletics, but also for his tremendous impact on the lives of the countless youngsters, professional colleagues, and laymen who have come under his influence.

Although he has written little; and, therefore, in conventional terms, could not be considered a scholar, Shotwell is both a dedicated teacher and a humanitarian, and these

\(^7\)The collection of these letters and tributes are now in the possession of Pete and Ura Shotwell. They have been made available to the author and they provide a valuable source of data for this dissertation.

\(^8\)Shotwell interview, April 29, 1971.
qualities are reflected in the programs with which he has been connected and in the careers of his former pupils.

Purpose, Plan, and Method

Purpose

The general purpose of this study is to discover and report important aspects of the life and professional career of Prince Elmer "Pete" Shotwell, to formulate and describe his philosophy of the educational value of athletics, and to evaluate his contributions to the development of high school athletic programs in Texas. The study also seeks to report on and describe the influence of Shotwell on the lives of many of his former students.

Organizational Plan

Chapter one relates the purpose, plan, and method of the study. Chapter two includes biographical data concerning Shotwell's youth, educational background, and early endeavors in the teaching and coaching fields. Succeeding chapters present the thoughts and accomplishments of his greatest period of influence on high school athletics in Texas; his thoughts on the role of coaches in the educational process; and his personal philosophy and character traits which seemed to have the greatest influence on his students.
Data Collection Methods

The historical method was used. An analysis has been made of his few published and unpublished writings. His personal correspondence has been examined closely. Minutes of the meetings of the Texas High School Coaches' Association have been carefully reviewed, as have been the reports of numerous committees and organizations of which Shotwell was a member.

Five volumes of his personal correspondence files and newspaper clippings in his scrapbooks have been analyzed. The Shotwell family has been extremely cooperative in assisting with the gathering of data. All personal files and correspondence in the possession of Shotwell and his wife, Ura Shotwell, have been placed at the author's disposal without restraint or restriction of any kind.

Extensive use has been made of tape-recorded personal interviews with Prince Elmer Shotwell, his wife, members of his family, and randomly selected former colleagues and students. Persons interviewed cover a wide range of the social and economic spectrum. Interviewees range from athletes who became star performers under his tutelage to lowly "scrubs" who spent their careers sitting on the bench.

Included among the interviewees are multi-millionaire corporation presidents and common ordinary laborers and tradesmen.
Questionnaires were sent to randomly selected contemporaries of Shotwell in an effort to determine his relationship with other faculty members and administrators. The results of these questionnaires are in the author's possession and are used frequently as reference sources, although no person who returned a questionnaire is directly quoted or identified as the source of data without his permission. This process was used in an attempt to secure more nearly objective data from these sources since it was felt objectivity might be better obtained if anonymity was guaranteed to those persons returning questionnaires. Only a few persons indicated any reluctance to be quoted or to participate in the compilation of the data requested on the questionnaire.

Data concerning the activities of the Texas High School Coaches' Association during Shotwell's presidency of the organization has been selected from the minutes of the organization's general and executive meetings. The original copies of these documents are on file in the central office of the Texas High School Coaches' Association located in the Perry-Brooks Building in Austin, Texas. They remain in the custody and under the supervision of L. W. McConachie, the executive secretary of the coaches' association.
Status of Biographies in Educational Research

Many hold the opinion that historical events are best experienced through reading biographies of men who molded these events. It has been said,

Biographical research has lagged far behind other methods of research in the fields of Health Education, Physical Education, and Recreation; and it is acknowledged that there is a definite need for such research.\(^9\)

The investigator accepts the definition of Carter V. Good who states that "biographical study is a historical study concerned with a person's deeds, successes, problems, etc. during his entire life or some selected portion of it."\(^{10}\)

One of the great needs for conducting a biographical study of this type is to contribute to the history of interscholastic athletics in Texas. A second and equally important reason is to contribute to the recognition to which Pete Shotwell is entitled.

Thus the report of this study is an attempt to present an authentic account of the life and contributions of one of the outstanding leaders in the development of Texas high

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school athletics and the overall educational process in Texas public schools and colleges. Prince Elmer Shotwell has been one of the leaders in this field. Fellow teachers have publicly commended his unselfishness, dedication, and devotion to the task of educating and building character in high school youth which have been of inestimable value in the development of the modern concept of physical education and interscholastic athletics.\footnote{Data collected from returned questionnaires in the author's possession.}

This study will provide a portrait of a man whose contributions in this field may continue to serve as a model or source of inspiration for those persons now actively pursuing a career in the fields of coaching and physical education.
CHAPTER II

PRINCE ELMER SHOTWELL--HIS EARLY LIFE
AND PREPARATION FOR SERVICE

Ancestry and Boyhood

Sometime during the early 1870's, a young man named Samuel Abraham Shotwell left his home in Warren County, New Jersey, and began the travels that would eventually lead him to his permanent home in Randall County deep in the northwest Texas Panhandle. He was born in Warren County, New Jersey, on June 6, 1852.¹ The exact dates and details of his travels are lost in antiquity and only sketchy bits of information can be recorded with certainty. It is known that Samuel, like many other young and ambitious easterners, had read and heard stories of the vast areas of ranch and farm-land that could be obtained cheaply in the western states. However, as far as can be ascertained, young Samuel had not at this time developed any concrete plan of migrating to the Southwest. Samuel's travels carried him into southern Pennsylvania where, in Elk County, he met and married a lovely and vivacious farm girl named Almedia E. O'Vill. The wedding

was held in Almedia's home county on September 1, 1874.²

The young couple remained in southern Pennsylvania until 1878. During the four intervening years, the Shotwells attempted farming the fertile soil of their area; but since both Samuel and his bride were adventurous and ambitious, they decided to set out for the wide open spaces of Texas where they hoped to take advantage of the low-cost land and homestead laws to establish themselves in a profitable farm and ranch business.

Texas, then as now, was a state of many contrasts. The northern and eastern sections contained nearly all the population, the businesses, and most of the cultivated farmland. It was, in many ways, as well established as the younger states of Missouri and Arkansas to the east.

It was to this "civilized" part of Texas that Samuel first brought his bride. They were among an estimated 100,000 hardy pioneers who moved into this area during the decade between 1880-1890, when by Presidential decree vast tracts of land in Oklahoma and northern Texas were thrown open for homesteading or made available for purchase.³

The young couple and three children made the trip overland by covered wagon and settled first in Ellis County, Texas, where Samuel Abraham engaged in farming and various

²Ibid.

other ventures common to the frontier. Apparently these early ventures were relatively unsuccessful since the family moved frequently.\(^4\) During this period while the Shotwells were searching for a permanent home, children continued to be born with almost yearly regularity. A total of fifteen children were born to the couple; three of the children died at childbirth or in early infancy, but twelve survived either to adulthood or their early teens. The first surviving child was a daughter whom the couple named Mary Jane.\(^5\)

The family continued to move about the north Texas area in search of a suitable place for the farming and ranching business which Samuel Abraham hoped to start. In quick succession they moved to Dallas County and Willabarger County and then settled in Gainesville.\(^6\) Although Samuel Abraham was now prospering in their Texas home, his pioneering spirit and the ever-increasing size of his family once again turned his thoughts toward migration into the virtually unpopulated areas of west Texas where land was plentiful and where business competition was virtually non-existent.

In 1891 the Shotwells left their home in Gainesville and moved into the Texas Panhandle; they used the same covered wagon in which they had moved from Pennsylvania and had used

\(^4\)Warwick, *The Randall County Story*, p. 140.

\(^5\)Infra., p. 14.

\(^6\)Warwick, *The Randall County Story*, p. 140.
in all their previous moves about Texas; but this time the moving ended—the Shotwells remained for the rest of their lives in Randall County, Texas.7 The Shotwell family continued to live and thrive in Canyon for over forty years before ill health forced Samuel Abraham to retire. Both he and Alemedia Shotwell died in 1933 within a few months of each other and are buried in Dreamland Cemetery. They were survived at the time of their death by ten of their fifteen children.8

When Samuel Abraham Shotwell arrived on the Plains he moved his family onto three sections of farmland about four miles from the settlement of Canyon where he engaged in stock farming.9 The Shotwell family had continued to increase in size. On August 17, 1893, another son was born; he was named Prince Elmer.10 Three more sons—Frank and Hugh, who are both currently living in Pampa, Texas, and Sanford, who met a tragic death in his early youth, followed the birth of Elmer. This brought to a total of twelve the number of children living in the home: Mary Jane, Alice, Belle, Saron,

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7 Warwick, The Randall County Story, pp. 140-1.
8 Ibid.
9 The Abilene Lions Club Growl, III (February 28, 1962), n. p. This entire issue of The Growl was devoted to the promotion of the candidacy of Pete Shotwell for the position of Governor of District 2-E1, Lions Club International.
10 Ibid.
Minnie, Roy, Elizabeth, Beulah, Elmer, Frank, Sanford, and Hugh. Shotwell recalled,

There were fifteen children in all and twelve survived infancy. I can remember vividly the many occasions when the entire family sat down to a meal together. There would be fourteen of us at a huge table—the mother and father and sisters and brothers. There was always plenty of good plain food and much talking and laughing.

Educational facilities were extremely limited on the frontier. Nevertheless, Samuel and Almedia Shotwell insisted that their children get the best education possible. For a while they attended a small rural two-teacher school. Shotwell recalls very little about this school. It had no official name and research was unable to locate sufficient information to further identify it. The teachers were usually young men who took time out from their own studies to earn enough money for their next year's tuition.

Recognizing the need to offer his children a better education, Samuel decided to leave the farm, and in 1907 moved to the growing city of Canyon where there was, by this time, a

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11 Warwick, The Randall County Story, p. 140.

12 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971. Elmer Shotwell has never been known as a talkative person. His statements are direct and to the point. He is a willing interview subject, but seldom volunteers details. It was evident, however, when he made the above statement that he had considerable love for, and pride in, his family and its way of life.

13 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972.
complete high school; and where there would shortly be erected a two-year teachers college. Shotwell explains that move:

In the beginning, I was born on a farm four miles south of Canyon, Texas; and we lived on the farm for a number of years and then we moved to town. The idea in moving to town was because my father and mother wanted to give us kids a better chance at an education. The move to town enabled us to go to Canyon High School.14

To sustain the family in their new home in Canyon, Samuel had purchased a feed store and wagon yard which W. C. Kenyon had established in the late 1890's.15 He also imported and sold coal and similar items which were scarce on the Plains, but which were necessary items in the ranchers' lives. With all the children helping, it soon became a thriving business.

The Shotwell children took full advantage of the educational opportunity offered them. Elmer, like most of his brothers and sisters, was an eager student. He compiled an excellent academic record and in 1911 was graduated from Canyon High School. He was approaching his eighteenth birthday.16

Like most schools of its day, the high school in Canyon was mainly concerned with "book-learning" and frivolous

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14 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
15 Warwick, The Randall County Story, p. 140.
pastimes such as organized athletics were not considered a part of school activities. However, the new environment of town life and the opportunity to mix and mingle with other children quickly converted young Elmer into an avid participant in the many games of baseball, races, and the new sport of football which the town youngsters spontaneously organized. Despite his short stature, young Elmer quickly earned a reputation as a speedy, tough, and determined competitor with a fierce desire to win.

Elmer or "Shot" as he became known to his friends was always rather undersized. When he graduated from high school he was only five feet six inches tall and weighed 130 pounds. Even in college his weight seldom exceeded 145 pounds.\(^\text{17}\)

Much to the chagrin of his mother, who considered such games a frivolous waste of time, Elmer frequently showed up at mealtimes dirty, battered, and bruised from his encounters on the athletic fields with his much larger friends.

Mrs. Ura Shotwell relates an incident which illustrates Elmer's mother's disdain of athletics and her particular reaction to Shotwell's penchant for slipping away on Sunday afternoons to play baseball.

Shot just loved to play baseball, but his mother strongly objected to his playing on Sunday, and this was when most of the games were played. The boys and young men in the community were occupied during the week with their jobs and school, but on Sunday afternoons they would collect at a rough baseball diamond which they had carved out of the prairie and play ball.

\(^{17}\) Shotwell interview, April 23, 1973.
On this particular Sunday, Shot came in for supper and was pretty well skinned up—seems like he had gotten a cleat in the shin or something, and it had torn his clothes and scratched him up. His father looked at the bedraggled youngster and demanded to know where he had been and what he had been up to. Knowing his mother disapproved of playing on Sunday and fearing that if she knew what had happened, he would be forbidden to play anymore, Shot decided to lie about how he had been injured. He decided to tell his father he had been fighting with another boy. He had little doubt that he would be punished for fighting, but at least he would get to play some more baseball.

His story of the fight did not fool Mother Almedia, however. She listened from the kitchen to the story of the fight, and then appeared in the doorway to proclaim, "He hasn't been fighting. He's been off playing that baseball again." His cover story about the fight had not fooled anyone, but at least it had accomplished its purpose. The subject was dropped without Elmer's being forbidden to play again.

During the week Shotwell's days were filled with his school work and his share of the chores connected with the growing family business. Samuel's wagon yard was now doing a thriving business and the store had developed quite a good trade in selling coal for the stoves and feed for the townspeople's cattle and horses. Almost all the families kept a cow to furnish milk for the family, and a good many of the owners bought their feed at the Shotwell store. Shotwell describes his role in the family business:

18 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972.

19 Advertisements appearing in old newspapers and college yearbooks in the possession of the Shotwell family indicate that the S. A. Shotwell firm supplied the bulk of the coal, feed, and seed for the ranchers and was one of Canyon's more prominent business enterprises.
It was my duty to help around the wagon yard after school and on Saturdays. The truth of the matter is, I delivered a lot of coal and feed, too—course a lot of the feed we sold went to farmers and ranchers, and most of them came into town in their wagons to get it. I would help them load their wagons. A lot of the people who lived in Canyon had horses and most all of them had milk cows. They bought their feed—a lot of their feed—for those horses and cows at my father's store. It was my job to deliver this feed and often times coal for their stoves to the people in town. Nearly all my family worked at the business, but by this time the three older girls and two of my brothers had already left home. The rest of us, though, all worked around the home and the family business.

Elmer, despite his growing interest in developing athletic skills, never forgot that education was the main goal of the Shotwell family. He continued to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered at Canyon High School. The school was a truly remarkable educational institution for its time and place. Few west Texas communities in the early 1900's could boast of a school as well organized as the one in Canyon. There was a teacher for each grade at the elementary level, and in the high school the teachers had begun to specialize with a teacher for math, another for English, etc. It is true that few of the teachers had a degree, but all had had some college work and most had been to a normal school.

It was an atmosphere which in today's crowded, hurried, world seems almost an ideal environment in which to grow up.

20 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972.
21 Warwick, The Randall County Story, p. 87.
and develop one's potential at a leisurely pace. Although he worked hard in school, Elmer at this time had no idea that he would one day become a teacher. At this stage of his life he was not consciously preparing himself for any particular vocation. He had, however, begun to realize that two things were both enjoyable and important to him. He loved the thrill of competitive athletics and he thoroughly enjoyed working with people, especially young children. His athletic prowess had already begun to make him somewhat of a hero to the younger boys; and Shot loved being able to aid these youngsters in improving their abilities and also to impart to them some of the expertise in carpentry and wood-working which he was learning in school. Later when the opportunity presented itself, he would be irresistibly drawn to complete his education and become a teacher.

His boyhood was an unusually happy one and only rarely was it marred by a tragedy or unpleasant experience. One such tragedy did occur, however, when Elmer was about fifteen years old. Sanford, the next to the youngest of the Shotwell children, was killed in a railroad accident. During one interview, Shotwell recalled the incident:

I didn't see the accident because it happened about one-half or three-quarters of a mile from where we lived in Canyon. Sanford had been spending the day with another family who lived on the west side of Canyon—west of the Santa Fe Railroad tracks. There were about five or six boys in that family; their last name was Reynolds, but I can't remember the given names of the boys who were about Sanford's age. Sanford was ten years old and I was about
fifteen. There were about three of the Reynolds boys who were near Sanford's age. He [Sanford] had been visiting the Reynolds boys earlier in the day. The Santa Fe train came along in the afternoon--pretty late in the afternoon--and I don't know exactly what happened except that I think and I know that these Reynolds boys said he [Sanford] tried to catch a ride on the train. He tried to swing onto a car and it swung him under the train. The train ran across him just below his head and cut off his head and one arm. Sanford's death was a blow to all of us in the family. 

Except for this one tragic event, Shotwell's boyhood seemed as happy and carefree as one of the characters in a Mark Twain novel. Indeed, young Elmer's days often included many adventures of the Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer type. One of these adventures, or misadventures as the case may be, is indicative of the true character of the man Shotwell. Throughout his career as teacher, coach, and humanitarian, he has always been known and admired by friend and foe alike for his clean living and for the reliability of his word. His word has always been his bond and a Shotwell promise has been recognized as being as valid as a written contract. He has been known throughout his coaching career as a man who used neither tobacco nor alcohol, and who believed in doing nothing which might cause undue deterioration of his physical or mental processes. His strength of character and his

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22 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972. In this interview, Shotwell recalled Sanford as being ten at the time of his death; but the family's biographical sketch in The Randall County Story indicates that Sanford was only eight at the time.
ability to keep his word as well as his desire to be a clean-living individual is well illustrated in the following story related by him.

When he was about thirteen years of age, Elmer and a group of his friends decided to emulate the grown-ups who hung around the feed store and learn to roll and smoke cigarettes. This was before the day of the manufactured or "tailor-made" cigarettes and the western cowhand was unusually adept at rolling and lighting cigarettes under adverse conditions. Many of the cowboys could roll and light a cigarette using only one hand while the other hand was busily engaged in guiding their horse or performing some other ranchland skill. Naturally the expertise of these cowboys was much admired by the younger generation. Shotwell and a group of friends decided the time had come to enhance this sadly neglected part of their education. They secured the necessary ingredients which consisted of two or three sacks of "makings" and a book of cigarette papers:

One Sunday afternoon just before school was scheduled to start Monday morning, three of us boys decided to learn to smoke. We were all about fourteen years old—thirteen or fourteen—three of us.

One was Guy Ballard and the other was Shorty Pritchard and then there was me. We slipped off from home and rolled and smoked the equivalent of about three packages of cigarettes that day. We were really rolling and puffing away and trying to pretend it was great fun. It was late in the evening, in fact it was after dark when we decided we had had enough and that maybe smoking was not a good thing. We made a solemn promise never to smoke again and shook hands all
around to bind the oath. To this day I have never smoked again and as far as I ever knew, neither did Guy or Shorty.23

Ura Crawford Shotwell's Arrival on the Plains

As the carefree Elmer grew to maturity and pursued his education, another incident occurred which was to have a profound influence on his life. The incident seemed so ordinary at the time that neither Shotwell nor any of the participants were aware that a chain of events was set in motion which would eventually culminate in the marriage of Prince Elmer Shotwell to Ura Crawford.

The little-noted event occurred when a wagon carrying the family of Carroll Jackson Crawford pulled into the Shotwell wagon yard. Mr. Crawford and his wife, Margaret Seline Kirk Crawford, had decided to leave their farm in Erath County near Dublin and move to the high Plains. Two motives prompted the Crawford move. They also wished to allow their children to take advantage of the educational opportunities available in the area and they wished to join Mrs. Crawford's father, Joseph Newton Kirk, in pioneering the ranching country near Spearman, Texas. Joseph Newton Kirk had several years earlier established a ranch near Old Hansford, Texas.24

23 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972.
24 Interview with Mrs. Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972. Old Hansford no longer exists as a town, it was located in a canyon near the present-day town of Spearman, Texas. As Old Hansford died out, the citizens moved up onto the rim of the canyon to the little city of Spearman.
Mrs. Shotwell explained in an interview how the Crawfords came to leave Erath County and migrate to the Panhandle.

My Uncle Dip Kirk had moved up to Old Hansford some ten or twelve years after the Battle of Adobe Walls and had started a stock farm near Old Hansford. It wasn't too long after the Battle of Adobe Walls, because the story of Billy Dixon shooting the Indian off the horse a mile away was still being talked about. Uncle Dip was burned terribly in a prairie fire. Those prairie fires used to be pretty bad because the grass was high. My grandfather, Joseph Newton Kirk, took some antiphlogistine from the doctor in Erath County and went up there and treated Uncle Dip, and that was the first treatment he had had. After Uncle Dip was well, Grandpa Kirk went to that country to live and eventually all his sons and daughters and their husbands and wives came up there to live.25

The parents of Ura Crawford remained in Erath County near the city of Dublin until they felt their children were ready for the move to the high Plains. Ura Crawford was, at this time, ready to enter the seventh grade. When the family arrived in Canyon, they pulled their wagons into the Shotwell wagon yard. Ura Shotwell describes that first night:

The first night that we moved to Canyon--the first night that we spent in Canyon--our wagons were driven into the wagon yard that Shot's father owned. He had a wagon yard and feed store in Canyon. Our wagons contained our furniture and household goods.

25 Interview with Mrs. Ura Shotwell, April 23, 1973. The Billy Dixon episode referred to occurred in 1874 during the Battle of Adobe Walls. Bill Dixon, a famed buffalo hunter, shot a member of an attacking Indian party from his horse at a measured distance of 1538 yards. This story is documented on p. 189 of Ralph K. Andrist's book The Long Death--The Last Days of the Plains Indians. The shot is considered one of the most remarkable in the history of the Indian wars.
We left them stored in the wagon yard, which at that time was located just across the street from an old opera house. We all went to the show that night, spent the night in Canyon, and moved into our home the next day.

My father had gone down to Canyon two days before—he had been down three times before to get us into school. Finally Mr. Cousins said, "If you will come in the summer and those kids can make their work, we won't kick them out."

So we entered summer school. Daddy bought a house and we went to school in the summer. We stayed in Canyon and entered school immediately. We had to make a quick move in order to catch summer school. From then on we went through the Normal School. At that time it was not divided into high school and college. I was in the seventh grade; my sister was in the third, and my brother was younger.

The stage was now set and the pattern was unfolding which would eventually bring together two very remarkable people, Prince Elmer Shotwell and Ura Crawford. Both Elmer and Ura maintain that they did not get to know each other for several years. Ura was, after all, only a very young teenager and Elmer was already well along in his career at the Normal School, participating in athletics and doing school work beyond the high school level. In one interview Ura Shotwell reluctantly admitted that she had taken notice of Elmer because of his athletic skill and his leadership at

26 In 1910 Canyon High School had added work beyond the general level. It now carried courses equalling roughly grades one through fourteen.

27 R. B. Cousins, President of the Normal School and head of the Canyon school system.

the school. It would, however, be many years yet before the courtship would begin.

Struggle for a College Degree

One year before Elmer's graduation from high school, an event occurred which opened up new vistas in the educational world of the Texas Panhandle. The Thirty-first Legislature of Texas enacted the law establishing what is now the West Texas State University. The legislative act authorized the school at Canyon to offer three years of work above the general level offered in schools at that time. Two of these years were below what is now the college level, while the third year was classified as college level work. The institution was named West Texas State Normal School and the first regular session began in the fall of 1910. The first president was the Honorable R. B. Cousins.29

When the West Texas State Normal College was established in 1910, it was believed by those who were most interested in its welfare, that every school which professes to train teachers should have a special department for that purpose. In order to give prospective teachers actual teaching experience before sending them out as capable teachers, the training school was begun in 1910.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
The training school is essentially a place where students learn to do by doing. They are given an opportunity to work out, in actually teaching, the methods they have endorsed in their Educational classes. . . . In short, it will give the student first hand knowledge of real live eager children under conditions

29West Texas State University Catalog, 1973, p. 29.
where that knowledge may be gained with the least possible loss to himself and the children.

All of these things will be slow growth, but the future seems to promise that the training school will approach nearer and nearer the ideal expressed in its name—a school for training in real, efficient, altruistic, social service, not only for the student teachers, but for the children with whom they work.  

Now that the Normal School was established, it seemed the natural thing for Pete to continue his education beyond the high school level. He could live at home, continue to work in the family business and get enough education to become a teacher himself. It was at this time that Shotwell first gave serious consideration to the idea of making teaching his life's work. There were still no thoughts of coaching, but he did formulate the plan which would allow him to work with young boys and help mold their careers.  

Shotwell explained his enrollment and subsequent decision to teach in this way:

In the beginning I had no concrete plans for my life. It was simply a quest for more education now that the opportunity was offered. I didn't, at this time, have any real idea where I was going, but I felt like I needed education and my parents felt like we needed education to be a success in life. 

Pete Shotwell entered West Texas Normal School's upper level division in the fall of 1911, and it was here

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31 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.

32 Ibid.
that he was first introduced to formal organized athletics. The Normal School\textsuperscript{33} offered a variety of extra-curricular activities including the sports of football, baseball, and basketball. Elmer Shotwell became an avid participant in all three of these sports.

Depending upon the source of information used, one gets conflicting versions of Shotwell's skills as a player. Shotwell describes himself as only an average or even mediocre player who was handicapped by his size. The following is an excerpt giving Shotwell's version of his days as an athlete at West Texas Normal School. He was asked whether or not there were such things as athletic scholarships and to describe his own participation on the teams.

There were no athletic scholarships. The students who desired to play, simply played for the love of the sport. I participated in all the sports, but my first love was baseball and then football, and I went out for basketball although I never did play regularly on the basketball team at West Texas State.\textsuperscript{34}

The above story seems, however, to be just another example of the Shotwell modesty. Even as a first year man, Shotwell appears to have been a prominent member of all the teams. Apparently he did not reach star status at this time however.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{33}Hereinafter the term Normal School will be used to designate that portion of the school considered as work beyond the high school level. Most of this work was designed to train teachers.

\textsuperscript{34}Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.

\textsuperscript{35}Le Mirage, 1912. Information from squad pictures.
In 1913 Shotwell dropped out of the school for a year and worked at various jobs mostly in the construction business in order to obtain money to return and complete his training. Upon returning to school in 1914, Shotwell really began to make his mark in athletics. His school yearbook had this comment:

Elmer Shotwell (Little Shot) was one of only three men who lettered in all sports. He started and played aggressive games at end and quarterback on the football teams and was one of the best tacklers the Normal has ever had. Shot played a star game at guard in basketball, making it very difficult for his opponent to score. Baseball was where Shot excelled. Small of stature, but full of grit, he attacked every ball that came toward his position at third base, threw the ball like a rifle shot, and could tag a man like lightning. Shot stole bases until opponents sometimes called him "the thief." He fielded .826 and batted .309.

The college played a schedule composed of a mixture of high school and college teams. Listed among their opponents were Amarillo, Hereford, and Plainview high schools in addition to the several colleges which now dotted the area. Located in the Panhandle by this time were Goodnight College, Clarendon College, Wayland College and the Lowery-Phillips Military School at Amarillo.

Accounts of the games in the 1914 yearbook indicate the teams traveled by auto and train to play their games. The host team usually allowed the visitors to spend the night in

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36 Le Mirage, yearbook of the Normal School for 1914. The pages were unnumbered. These yearbooks are in the possession of Pete and Ura Shotwell.
the host dormitories. Accounts of the games indicate that the rivalry was hot and the games played hard. When the games ended, the occasion turned into a social affair. The girls' dormitories of the host school generally sponsored cake and ice cream suppers for the visitors and everyone had a good time regardless of the outcome of the game.

Detailed accounts of the games appear in the 1914 yearbook and there are many instances listed where Shotwell made key plays that frequently decided the outcome of games. The baseball team lost only one game. Goodnight College beat Normal 4–3 on May 6, 1914, for the Normal's only loss of the season. Normal had earlier beaten Goodnight 13–3.37

Pete Shotwell had enrolled for several courses in manual training which was one of the more popular teaching fields of that era. He was elected secretary of the Manual Training Association for the spring term.38 In 1915, Shotwell continued to excel in all phases of both the academic and extra-curricular activities of the college. The 1915 yearbook indicates Shotwell attained the following honors: He was student editor-in-chief of the yearbook.39 He received honors as the best field goal kicker in football.40 He is pictured on page 150 in his football uniform and noted as

39 Le Mirage, 1915, p. 5.
40 Ibid., p. 89
being the captain of the team. Further mention of his attributes appears on page 151 where he is described as an "exceptionally fine captain with splendid combination of brains, nerve, and muscle." In baseball he was again "a third baseman wanted by every team that saw him play. With the 'stick' he was a demon."

During his last year at the Normal School (1915-1916 term), Shotwell confined his activities to playing football and baseball and completing the courses required to obtain a teaching certificate. In order to prepare himself, he had concentrated on several areas: manual training, mathematics, and social studies. He was awarded a teaching certificate in the spring of 1916 and that fall took his first teaching job at Cisco, Texas. He taught manual arts and received a salary of $75.00 per month.

Continuation Toward a Baccalaureate Degree

When Shotwell "graduated in 1916, the Normal School was authorized to grant teaching certificates, but it had not yet been accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools as a degree-granting institution. As early as 1914 one additional year of college

41 Le Mirage, 1915, p. 151.
42 Ibid., p. 153.
level work had been authorized, but it was not until 1917 that the Board of Regents authorized the school to become a degree-granting institution. The first degrees were granted in 1919.\textsuperscript{44}

Since Shotwell had begun teaching before the institution granted degrees and because he now knew definitely that he wanted to make this his life work, he realized the expediency of obtaining a Bachelors Degree. Now that the school had been accredited, many of the courses taken by Shotwell were disallowed in the degree plan. This meant that he would be required to take considerable additional courses to be granted a baccalaureate degree.

Such a declaration might have deterred a lesser man. The gaining of his teaching certificate had been no easy task. He had been forced to spend as much or more time working at the wagon yard and various other jobs as he had spent in the classroom. He had finally attained the minimum qualification to become a teacher. He had actually been in the field teaching; and now he learned that if he hoped to continue and advance in his chosen field, he must once again return to the classroom at every opportunity and, in essence, retrace a path already trod in order to reach his goal.

Shotwell had, by this time, made a firm commitment to the teaching field, and he never wavered in this decision.

\textsuperscript{44}West Texas State University Catalog, 1973, p. 29.
In fact, only once did Shotwell ever express the slightest doubt that teaching was meant to be his life's work. He decided he would continue to teach in the fall and winter, and return to school in the summer until he completed the requirements for a bachelors degree.

In his first teaching job at Cisco, Shotwell had immediately, although inadvertently, become involved with coaching athletics. Because of his ever-increasing venture into the coaching field, he found his time for study in the summers to be of such short duration that he was unable to take more than a few weeks' work each year. Fall football practice began in mid-or-early-August; and there were coaching schools and clinics to attend. Shotwell felt that if he were to coach successfully, then he must augment that part of his education as well as try to advance himself academically. As a result, he proceeded slowly toward fulfillment of the revised requirements for the baccalaureate degree at West Texas State Teachers College. The college had become fully accredited the previous year.

It had taken Prince Elmer Shotwell seven summers of hard work to attain his first educational goal, but he had not been idle in the intervening time. His success as a

\[45\] *Infra.*, p. 47.

\[46\] In 1923, the year of Shotwell's graduation, the school was renamed West Texas State Teachers College.

\[47\] *West Texas State University Catalog, 1973*, p. 29.
coach had already earned him a better job with the Abilene school system and a growing reputation as one of the state's better coaches.

He had also taken time out during the year of 1918 to serve his country as a member of the small, new, but exciting branch of the military service—the United States Air Force. He completed his pilot training, but the war ended before he saw action overseas. 48

Courtship and Marriage

Ura Crawford had followed a somewhat similar path toward gaining a degree from West Texas State Teachers. Ura and Elmer had, of course, become acquainted when both attended the Normal School, but no real thought of romance had entered the picture—mainly because Pete was several years older. In fact, Pete had served some of his student-teaching periods instructing classes which Ura Crawford had attended while she was in the high school division of the Normal School. 49

Ura Crawford had secured her teaching certificate and accepted her first teaching position at Colorado City, Texas; and she was also placed in the position of having to return

48 Family records in scrapbooks in the possession of the Shotwells. Also revealed during personal interview number one and documented in The Abilene Lions Club Growl and on several occasions in the Abilene Reporter-News.

to Canyon to complete additional courses to earn her degree. During the summer sessions of 1923, the romance between Pete and Ura began to develop. Ura Shotwell, in an interview gave the following version of their courtship:

We [Pete and Ura] had both been out in the field teaching after completing the work for certificates at the Normal School. When West Texas added its last two years of accredited work, most of its graduates who were teaching began to return and take courses in the summer.

When I enrolled one summer, I walked into an education class and looked the group over. Shot appeared to be the likeliest date there was on campus so I went in and sat down by him and started the courtship. So that summer we started going together. That summer we studied together quite a bit.

The instructor for that class was a young attractive visiting teacher from another college, and Ura Crawford felt her biggest rival for Shot's affections might be the visiting teacher. Shotwell was at this time a mature man approaching the age of thirty. He had completed seven years of highly successful teaching and coaching. In fact, that very year he would win the first of his state football championships at Abilene High School. At the close of the summer,

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50 Shotwell interview, April 23, 1973. Information direct from Ura Shotwell on tape in the author's possession.

51 Interview with Mrs. Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972.

52 Data collected from clippings of the Abilene Reporter-News in a scrapbook which is in the possession of the Shotwells.
Shotwell received his degree and returned to Abilene High School. Ura Crawford took a job at Clayton, New Mexico.

Ura Crawford, having been raised around the cattle industry and being a person with great drive and initiative, also made an investment in some cattle. She hoped to be able to sell the cattle; but, as frequently happens, the venture proved disastrous. The ill-fated investment left Ura, in the summer of 1924, some $500 in debt.\(^{53}\) She returned to Canyon to complete her degree. Although the romance with Pete had now reached a point where marriage seemed imminent, Ura felt that she must teach another year in order to pay off the debts incurred in the cattle-buying venture. She did not wish to return to Clayton, New Mexico; and so applications were submitted to three school systems: Dallas, Abilene, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

After the successful season of 1923 in which Shotwell's Abilene High Eagles had won the state championship,\(^{54}\) he returned to Canyon intending to make the beautiful Ura his bride. The championship season had earned him a job at Simmons College in Abilene and the future looked rosy.

In one of many informal talks with the author, Shotwell intimated that he had been so sure he would marry Ura Crawford that he had made wagers to that effect with some of his

\(^{53}\) Interview with Mrs. Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972.
\(^{54}\) Infra., p. 54.
friends. Much to his surprise and chagrin, Pete discovered that the strong-willed Ura had no intention of marrying him until she had paid the $500 debt incurred in the cattle gamble. The desire to pay the debt had led her to submit the applications for the previously mentioned teaching positions. She secretly hoped to obtain the position in Abilene in order to be near Pete; the second choice was Dallas because of its high salary scale; and the Minneapolis application was submitted because relatives had moved into the Minneapolis area. Ura details the situation:

I applied in Minneapolis because my brother and Uncle now lived up there. I had an uncle, Fred Crawford, who was treasurer for three sugar companies. My brother and two cousins were also up there. My brother had married and lived there and the two cousins were seniors at the University of Minnesota. This was in 1924.

I was sure I had the Abilene job. Shot had been called in by Mr. Green, the Abilene superintendent, and asked about me because I had given his name as a reference. Shot had not known of my application and I guess he was so hesitant and taken aback by Mr. Green's request that something in Shot's manner caused Mr. Green to think I was running after Shot, and so Mr. Green turned me down. Shot told me when he got to Canyon that "I know you will get the Abilene job because Mr. Green asked me about you."

I had not heard from Dallas, but had been given the job in Minneapolis. But because we were so sure that I now had the Abilene job, I turned the Minneapolis job down. I wrote a letter and told them that I would not accept. Well, as time went on and I never did hear from the Abilene job, I wired up to Minneapolis and told the superintendent I had had a change of plans and I would take the job in Minneapolis. I owed $500 on some cows and I wanted to pay my debts before I got married. I don't remember why I couldn't sell the cows, but I didn't and so I had to pay for the cows.

I was only going to make $150 a month teaching in Minneapolis. Shot said, "Well, I'll pay you $150 a month and let's get married this summer." But I said no, that marriages get off on the wrong foot too often
and it's enough of a risk without their getting off when the gal's in debt; so I taught up there in Minnesota on $150 a month--made $1500 for the year--and paid off my debts.\textsuperscript{55}

The story of Ura Crawford's move from Texas to Minnesota and its effects on the courtship and marriage plans of Pete and Ura is quite amusing and gives great insight into the character of both these wonderful people.

The author has known and loved the Shotwells since 1957. They are delightful, warm-hearted people and although their personalities are, on the surface, exact opposites, they are really very similar in their drives and beliefs; and both have extremely strong feelings about maintaining their independence and integrity.\textsuperscript{56} In the Shotwells' philosophy, a debt incurred must be paid before any future obligations can be taken on.

During the 1924-25 school year, Pete tried his hand at college coaching and compiled one of only two losing records in a thirty-three year career.\textsuperscript{57} When the 1924-25 school year ended at Simmons College, Shotwell set out immediately in his coupe on the long journey to Minneapolis to make Ura his bride. The couple had, of course, corresponded regularly

\textsuperscript{55}Interview with Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972.

\textsuperscript{56}When the author speaks of the Shotwell penchant for maintaining independence, the reference should be taken in the context of the couple acting as a team. In 1975 they will celebrate their fiftieth anniversary and their marriage is a truly fine example of teamwork. Both have similar ideals, but will approach problems from different angles.
during their separation. They had decided that since both
had come from large families and the numerous close relatives
were now in widely scattered localities, it would be foolish
to try to hold the wedding in Texas. Almost any place they
chose would either not be large enough to accommodate everyone
who should be invited, or else would be disadvantageous from
a travel standpoint. It was decided then that Pete Shotwell
would drive to Minneapolis, bringing with him Ura's sister,
Winnie Mae, to serve in the wedding and the couple would be
married in Minneapolis. The sister would remain with her
brother and cousins while Pete and Ura went on their honey-
moon and returned to Texas.

The spring semester ended in mid-May at Simmons College,
but the schools in Minnesota continued on into June. As
quickly as possible when the Simmons commencement exercises
ended, Pete Shotwell packed his clothes in the Ford coupe,
picked up Ura's sister at the family home near Canyon and
set out for Minneapolis.

It was a long hard drive over dirt roads and somewhere
in Missouri an accident—or rather an unfortunate event—
ocurred which terribly upset Pete Shotwell and which Ura

57 Many biographical accounts insist that Shotwell never
had a losing season, but Shotwell's scrapbooks and issues of
the Brand, the Simmons College news publications for the years
1924-25 indicate that the team won two games and lost six.
The following year saw Shotwell return to his winning ways.
Shotwell's personal records indicate the 1933 Breckenridge
team won four and lost six.
says nearly cost her a husband. During an interview, the couple joined in telling the story of Pete’s trip north, the wedding, the honeymoon, and the return to Texas. In 1923, as a reward for winning the state championship, the citizens of Abilene had presented Shotwell with a beautifully inscribed Howard pocket watch and a Ford coupe. The engraved Howard pocket watch had become, and remains today, one of his most valued possessions, and during the trip north the watch was lost. Shotwell knew approximately where it had been lost, but he cannot today recall the small town nearest to the scene of the loss. Shotwell tells of the circumstances which so terribly upset him.

There is an interesting story about that watch. When I was on my way to Minnesota to get married, we were driving along on a very dusty, rutted road. I was wearing a pair of overalls and had the watch in one of the pockets in the top part of the overalls. Because of the condition of the road, I thought I had developed a flat tire. I stopped the car, got out, and knelt in the dust to look under the car and check the tires. That derned watch fell out of my pocket into the dust. A little further along, I missed the watch and knew immediately where I must have lost it. I went back and tried to find it. I left ads in the papers of several little towns in the vicinity, but nothing seemed to help.

Shotwell admits that he was "fit to be tied" over the loss of his prized watch and the remainder of the trip to Minneapolis was far from pleasant. Ura Shotwell laughingly

58 Interview with Pete Shotwell, April 23, 1973. The watch is well kept and is still in perfect working order.

59 Ibid.
commented that in addition to losing the watch, "he danged near lost a girl, too, because he wasn't paying me much attention when he got to Minneapolis."  

Shotwell was extremely lucky and through a fortunate circumstance and the innate honesty of some rural youth, he was later able to recover the watch. He estimated he spent a day and a half or two days retracing his path and trying to locate the watch. He eventually gave up, and after inserting ads in the paper giving his address and offering a reward, he drove on into Minneapolis.

Shotwell, still unhappy over the loss of his watch, and perhaps suffering from a tinge of the universal disease of all bachelors just prior to the wedding—known in the vernacular as cold feet—arrived in Minneapolis on a cold dreary day. He claims he almost turned around and came home immediately. The author suspects this facet of the story is simply an example of the Shotwell brand of humor. At any rate, the wedding was held under less-than-ideal circumstances. In the first place, Shotwell had arrived in town on Tuesday and Ura had not expected him until Friday. She was scheduled to teach her last class on Friday, and they would then be married over the weekend and begin their honeymoon. Ura looks back upon the incident:

They picked me up at school that Tuesday and I wasn't looking for them until Friday. Instead, they arrived six days before our scheduled wedding

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60 Shotwell interview, April 23, 1973.
date. My sister was tired and Shot was still heart-sick over the loss of his watch.

I had been ill, and I came out of school kinda looking down my nose and walking down the street. Shot and my sister saw me, but neither one was sure it was me and they called my name. I turned around real quick and recognized who it was and I was so surprised; but I got in the car, drove Pete downtown to a hotel and took my sister home with me. Later Shot told me, "You know, if I hadn't let you have my car, I might have just walked through that hotel lobby and gone back to Texas."

Shotwell did not return to Texas; however, they did speed up the wedding date a few days though. Ura Crawford taught school through her last class on Friday, June 11, 1925; and that same evening she and Prince Elmer "Pete" Shotwell became man and wife.

They took a honeymoon trip up into the northern lakes region and on out to Denver. Ura's uncle, Fred Crawford, had moved to Denver and the newlyweds spent a few days with them.

As they traveled back to Texas, Shotwell decided to detour through the area in Missouri where he had lost the watch. By some miracle, a group of barefoot youngsters had been walking down the road kicking up dust and one of the

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61 Shotwell interview, April 23, 1973. Shotwell, eyes twinkling, but with a perfectly straight face, continued the narrative. He said that there he was, a long way from home, alone in a hotel room on a cold bleak day, his prize possession lost and the girl he had come so far to marry had, in one short year, learned to talk like a "damned yankee."

62 Ibid.
young people had kicked up the watch. The youngsters saw and answered the ad Shotwell had placed in the paper and Shotwell got his watch back. He recalls his relief:

I had offered a reward of $25 for the return of the watch and when we came back through this little Missouri town—I can't remember its name, but it was just a little place—the watch was there. I paid the reward and got the watch back.63

The couple arrived back in Texas in time to attend a coaches clinic in Austin. They then returned to Abilene. Shotwell began the task of rebuilding the Simmons College football team and his young bride enrolled at the college, where the following spring (1926) she became the first student ever to earn a master's degree from Simmons College.64

The Simmons' master's program was inaugurated in the fall of 1925, and Ura Shotwell completed the requirements in one year. In addition to attending class full time, she taught, for a portion of the spring semester, three Spanish classes at Abilene High School in the afternoons.65

Ura Shotwell, although she had fulfilled all the requirements for the master's degree, was almost denied the degree when President Sanford of Simmons College learned she had been teaching at the high school. He informed Ura that the master's level courses had evidently been too easy

64 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972.
65 Interview with Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972.
since he did not believe the proper amount of work had been required if it still allowed sufficient time for the teaching of three classes. President Sanford wanted to require her to attend summer school and take additional courses; but the independence and spirit that characterizes both Pete and Ura Shotwell quickly became evident. Ura Shotwell informed the president that "No, I have met all the requirements. I will not go to summer school. You may either give me the degree or not, whichever you choose." She was not given a gown nor allowed to participate in the Baccalaureate sermon and processional, but on the next day, President Sanford appeared at the Shotwell home at seven o'clock in the morning to inform Ura that upon re-examination and consideration, he now agreed she was entitled to the degree. He asked that she participate in the commencement exercises that day. It was arranged for Abilene Christian College to lend Ura a cap and gown for the ceremony. In this fashion, then after much debate, Ura Shotwell--wearing a borrowed cap and gown--became the first person ever awarded a master's degree at Simmons College.  

66 Interview with Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972.  
67 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

THE SHOTWELL COACHING CAREER--
HIS METHODS AND RECORDS

The Move into Coaching

When Pete Shotwell had completed the requirements for his teaching certificate in the spring of 1916, he immediately began to seek a teaching position. He particularly desired a position which would allow him to work with young boys in such a way as to mold their character as well as teach them fundamental skills which would enable them to earn a living. His rather diversified education at West Texas Normal School had qualified him to teach manual training, social sciences or math. Shotwell felt that manual training was his first choice since this would enable him to teach useful skills and yet work in an informal learning situation.

The schools in Texas had made great strides in education. There was a fairly sound basis of state organization built around local autonomy. All teachers held certificates or degrees and there was a criteria of minimum standards supervised by the state. Far-sighted administrators had begun to realize the value of extra-curricular activities such as
speech, drama, literary contests and even interscholastic athletics. ¹

In 1911 an organization had been formed under the auspices of the University of Texas to administer and encourage the promotion of extra-curricular activities. The organization was given the name "The University Interscholastic League."² Not for many years would the League become involved in athletics, but it did do an excellent job of regulating and promoting those activities in which it was interested. Today, the League ranks as one of the nation's most comprehensive and well-organized governing bodies of extra-curricular, interscholastic activities of all kinds.

Even with the encouragement of the Interscholastic League and the hard work of dedicated and innovative administrators, teachers, and communities, many youngsters were still dropping out of school at an early age to try to obtain work in the booming railroad, oil, and cattle industries. One of the primary responsibilities of teachers was to motivate young people to remain in school and obtain a high school diploma.

The manual training courses, with their promise that increased skills would bring better jobs, and organized

¹ Shotwell interview, December 31, 1971.
² Roy Bedichek, Educational Competition (Austin, 1956), p. 28.
athletic teams became the two most prominent motivators by which young men were kept in school. Innate ability to highly motivate young people has always been a Shotwell forte and it is natural that he gravitated toward both of these motivating factors—manual training and coaching.

The young graduate, twenty-three years old, obtained his first teaching job at Cisco High School under the direction of Superintendent R. D. Green. Since many pupils in those days followed the practice of attending school during the fall and dropping out to work in the spring, many of the students were, by this time, as old as the teacher.3

Shotwell was employed as a manual training teacher and quickly established himself as knowledgeable and hard-working, thereby gaining the respect of both his students and fellow teachers. As was mentioned in an earlier chapter, Shotwell's first salary was seventy-five dollars a month for ten months. The $750 salary required him to perform all tasks assigned by the superintendent.

Cisco, like all other schools, was having this perennial problem of dropouts and general apathy for schoolwork. When the boys did come to school, they were often rowdy and difficult to manage. However, football had really "caught on" in Texas high schools, and Cisco was no exception. Many

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3The author recalls seeing a photograph of Shotwell's classes and first football team at Cisco. The five foot and six inch Shotwell appears to be—not the coach—but the youngest member of the squad.
boys stayed in school, or at least attended the fall session, in order to play football games against neighboring schools or towns. Cisco had a number of boys interested in playing football; and Shotwell, because of his own athletic prowess and his rapport with the players, undertook the task of coaching the team.

I think the thing that put me in coaching was that I was always interested in working with younger boys. In my first job at Cisco, for example, we had to do something with the boys, and football was the best thing we had. I had taken a teaching job and just got into coaching because it was something needed in the school program. I took this added duty at no extra pay, but merely because they needed a coach and I enjoyed doing it.4

The Cisco team played seven games against nearby opponents. There were no restrictions concerning size of schools, and the team might play either a college or high school team. The 1916 Cisco team finished its season with a record of four wins and three losses. This was the first of Shotwell's many winning seasons.5

Since there was little or no regulation of eligibility, anyone in school would be eligible to play. Indeed many towns were accused of using oilfield workers or other adults on their high school teams. There was great variation in the sizes and ages of the members of the team. When questioned

4Personal interview with Pete Shotwell, October 15, 1971.

5Clipping in scrapbook in the possession of Pete and Ura Shotwell.
about the general make-up of his first team, Shotwell had this to say:

The players ranged in age from sixteen to twenty-one or twenty-two years old. There were not any scholastic requirements as to number of subjects passed or semesters in which he could play. A boy could, for example, start to school today and play tomorrow if he wished. There was no check on his grades or whether he attended regularly or not. There was no age limit whatsoever. Surprisingly, teams did not really, to a great extent, recruit players from out of their area in order to have a good team. Some teams were accused of playing "ringers"—players not actually enrolled in school, although we never did. At all of the schools in which I coached all the players were always bona-fide students.6

His Coaching History

Shotwell remained in Cisco only one year, but in that time he had so impressed Superintendent Green that when Green moved to the much larger school system of Abilene in 1917, he requested that Shotwell come along with him.

The one year of experience as a football coach had made a confirmed believer of Shotwell; and from this moment on, he became as interested in coaching as in teaching. Coaching is, after all, a very demanding type of teaching. Not only must the coach be a superb teacher, but he is required to put, not only his pupils, but also himself, to periodic

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6Personal interview with Pete Shotwell, October 15, 1971. In answer to the author's question, Shotwell went on to state that from the very beginning his philosophy was that football and all athletics in schools should be used to further the educational process and that "ringers" or any tint of professionalism should never be brought into the game.
public tests before a multitude of harsh and unforgiving critics all of whom tend to live vicariously through the testing experience—rejoicing in victory and angrily demanding explanations for defeat.

Since coaching was now to be his way of life, Shotwell accepted the job at Abilene with alacrity. Here was a chance for a young coach to move into a much larger system with more athletes, better facilities, and superb backing from the townspeople. Even in Abilene in 1917, however, football was far removed from the prestigious, expensive sport it is today. Shotwell describes the problems involved in equipping the Abilene Eagles football team in 1917:

Neither Abilene nor any other towns had budgets for game equipment and expenses. There was no budget allotted by the administration at all at that time for football or any athletic program. Most of the kids who played football bought their own equipment. They could get this equipment in stores like Sears and Roebuck or Montgomery Ward. It was not really very expensive.

This arrangement frequently caused the players on a team to be outfitted with various types of headgear, but they all managed to obtain a uniform style and color of jersey by having a department store, such as Sears or Montgomery Ward, purchase a supply of the proper design and then sell them to the boys at cost or just slightly above. Occasionally, when a player simply could not afford some equipment, a

7Personal interview with Pete Shotwell, October 15, 1971.
merchant or someone in town bought it for him. Each player was required to take care of his own equipment.

Players willing to make these sacrifices played because they loved the game. They represented a sharp contrast to the more sophisticated player of today who is given the finest equipment the school can buy, and who is then often-times neither appreciative of the opportunity nor respectful of the equipment.

Shotwell justified Superintendent Green's faith in him by duplicating the record he had achieved at Cisco. Playing all the nearby schools, the Abilene Eagles of 1917 produced a record of four wins, three losses, and no ties. While he had not, as yet, accomplished anything spectacular, Shotwell had managed to produce two consecutive winning seasons at two different schools.

As an illustration of the chaotic organization of high school football in 1917, an article giving the newspaper account of one of the Eagle losses that season is indicative of the need for a central governing body for all extra-curricular high school activities.

The Eagles had traveled to Stamford to play the strong Bulldog team. The story of the game and the resulting confusion was reported to the Abilene Daily Reporter by Edward Munden, principal of Abilene High School:

8 Undated clipping from the Abilene Daily Reporter in the Shotwell scrapbook.
To the Public:

In regard to the football game played between Abilene High and Stamford High Friday, November 2 at Stamford. We know we were not treated right—not in accord with the rules of football or common courtesy—and we want you to know the facts.

The ball was on Abilene's forty-five yard line in Abilene's possession. Our boys attempted a forward pass which was intercepted by a Stamford player. While the play was being completed, however, the referee blew his whistle to call an off-side penalty on our boys, and to enforce his whistle, motioned several times with his hands for the players to stop. The Abilene boys stopped at once and made no effort to stop the Stamford player with the ball, who, after sufficient coaching, ran with the ball to our goal. The Stamford coach claimed he could decline the penalty and claim the touchdown. Because the rule is very specific on such situations, we refused to continue to play although the referee sustained Stamford. We felt we should have the privilege of playing according to the rules.

Rule VI, Section 12, page 132, says: "The referee should never blow his whistle to indicate a foul while the ball is in play, but if he inadvertently does so, the ball is dead and play shall stop." 9

The resultant controversy was never settled and it was finally decided to count the game as a loss for Abilene since the team left the field and refused to continue play. Principal Munden was correct, however, in his interpretation of the rules. On occasions where inadvertent whistles occur, the ball becomes dead instantly at the point on the field where the ball is in play. If the ball is free (as was probably the case in this instance—a thrown pass in flight), the down should have been replayed. The most advantageous

interpretation for Stamford possible under the rules would have been to retain the intercepted ball at the point of interception. Abilene can hardly be blamed for withdrawing their team from play.

World War I had broken out; and when the United States became involved, Shotwell felt it his patriotic duty to serve his country. Consequently he temporarily resigned his position at Abilene High School and in March of 1918, he enlisted in the United States Air Corps. The Air Force was the newest and most glamorous of the services and the thrill of flying would naturally appeal to the adventurous nature of Shotwell. He entered pilot training and learned to fly, but before he could be sent overseas, the war ended.

Shotwell had missed the 1918 football season; but when he received his discharge in July, 1919, Superintendent Green immediately rehired him to head up the Industrial Arts Department and coach football and baseball. The 1919 season ended on a mediocre note for a Shotwell team. The Eagles won three and lost only one game, but suffered three ties to give them an unsatisfying record. However, this young Eagle crew formed the basis for one of the most devastating gridiron machines ever seen in Texas schoolboy football.

11 Ibid.
12 Records from the Shotwell scrapbook.
In 1920 the Interscholastic League began to exert its influence over athletics in an attempt to bring about order and open the way to declaring championships. Football and basketball were brought under the League in 1920 and other sports have been added since that year.\textsuperscript{13}

Playing in a more organized situation and now confining their games to high school teams only, Shotwell's Eagles ripped off seasons of ten wins and one loss in 1920, repeated that record in 1921; and in 1922, the Eagles won eleven straight games before losing 13-10 to the Waco team coached by the famous Paul Tyson. The Waco team featured the great Boody Johnson, one of Texas' all-time great schoolboy players.\textsuperscript{14}

One sportswriter, Pop Boone, who witnessed the game and conducted post-game interviews with the referee and Shotwell, contended Shotwell's Eagles might have won the game had they been willing to resort to unnecessarily roughing up Jack Cisco, the injured Waco quarterback.

Cisco had been injured and left the game, but returned at the request of his teammates to call plays and hand off the ball although he was no longer in shape to carry the ball himself. The Eagles avoided any attempt to hammer Cisco. Instead they


\textsuperscript{14}Harold Ratliff, Autumn's Mightiest Legions (Waco, 1963), p. 28.
seemed to be avoiding trying to hurt him and helped him to his feet after every play.

Referee Reichenstein called it "the finest exhibition of clean football I have seen. This Abilene eleven is absolutely the cleanest team I have seen—I never saw any unnecessary roughness in the game."

Coach Pete Shotwell was asked about the game and replied that his boys were coached to play clean and that they personally believed in that code. Shotwell said, "I believe a team can win with that type of football and I believe if all coaches will teach it, that the game will develop into the greatest sport the world has known. So I do what I can to that end by insisting the players play absolutely clean."

The next season, Shotwell's Eagles won all twelve of their games and gained the state championship, plus a win over Waco, who had denied them the championship the previous year, by defeating Tyson's team 3-0 on a twenty-five yard field goal by Pete Hanna.

Paul Tyson, the master of coaching, was the big man in the League in its early years. Tyson, it was said, was far ahead of his time and that no one could successfully compete against him. Shotwell did though, because Shotwell was from the same mold as Tyson.

It came in 1923 and even though Johnson still played for Waco, Abilene took the championship. The Abilene team that season was a great one—it scored 571 points and gave the opposition only 7.

The state championship was the first of three for Shotwell who later won championships in Breckenridge and Longview.


17 Ibid., p. 9.
The championship and the outstanding teams of the three previous years caused Simmons College (now Hardin-Simmons University) to pressure Shotwell into rebuilding their sagging program. Shotwell took the position of Athletic Director, football and baseball coach at Simmons College. He had one assistant, Vic Payne, who coached basketball and track. The first year at Simmons was a disaster, with only two wins and six losses; but the following year Shotwell reversed the record by winning six and losing two.

In 1926 Shotwell moved to Sul Ross University in Alpine where he produced one of their rare winning seasons by winning five, losing two and tying one.

Shotwell did not really enjoy coaching in college as much as he had enjoyed the high school programs, so when the opportunity came in 1927, he moved to Breckenridge as football coach, and math teacher. He was given an assistant coach, Tom Howorth.

When asked to explain why he preferred coaching in high school rather than at the more prestigious college level, Shotwell explained in the following manner:

20 Shotwell scrapbook in the possession of Pete and Ura Shotwell.
21 Interview with Pete Shotwell, October 15, 1971.
I find that adolescent boys in the great game of football rise above their personal jealousies and play the game for the team. I felt I could teach them more of the game of life.

Breckenridge had already become a football-crazy town and Shotwell's arrival on the scene merely added to the mania. Shotwell's coaching technique consisted of hard work, simple offenses and defenses and near-perfect execution by his players. His squad morale was always high. Believing, as he did, in the educational value of sport, he never cut a boy from his squad simply because of lack of playing ability, and he had the knack of making the lowest sub feel that he was a member of the team. Roy Edwards evaluates this quality:

He never put it into words, but his philosophy was the same as that of Red Barr . . . "If it's good for the champions," Barr says of competitive sports, "why isn't it good for the rinky-dinks?"

It is a point well-taken, and it is a point Coach Shotwell made many times with rinky-dinks. There are too few places in this life for rinky-dinks, virtually none at all any more in sports. Everybody wants a winner. The administration and the fans want a winning coach. The coach wants winning players. No one has time or equipment to waste on rinky-dinks.

But those of us who were rinky-dinks and, because of men like Pete Shotwell, had the opportunity to compete, however poorly, feel that we are better folk than we might have been had the opportunity been denied.

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22 Taped from a speech by Shotwell at a breakfast in his honor, December 31, 1971, prior to his induction into the Texas Sports Hall of Fame.
Pete Shotwell has been a winner for 50 years, and not alone on the field. He is a far greater winner off the field for the lessons his youngsters have learned from him. 23

Shotwell describes the methods by which he turned the little west Texas oil field town into the football capitol of Texas thusly:

Well, we worked at the job, and we were fortunate in having some very good boys on our team. For example, the best punter I have ever seen in my life—high school, college, or professional—was in Breckenridge. His name was Boyce Magness; they called him "Boone," but he worked at the job of punting. That boy taught me more about punting than I ever got out of all the coaching schools put together that I ever attended. At the end of practice when the other boys would go in to take their bath, Boone, along with a center and two other boys to return the balls, would spend twenty or thirty minutes practicing. He would put a marker on the goal line and one on the five yard line. He would back up to about the forty yard line and try to kick the ball out of bounds between the markers. 24

The statement by Shotwell that his own player taught him about punting is indicative of the open-minded approach to the game held by Shotwell, and also of the respect he showed to his players. This, in turn, caused the player to maintain an adult relationship with the coach without losing respect for him. Shotwell has always been known as a stern taskmaster, 25 but his willingness to change his own methods and

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24 Personal interview with Pete Shotwell, October 15, 1971.
25 Infra., p. 67.
learn new techniques from even his own players is a trait that is not generally associated with the so called "hard-nosed" coach. Driving, stern coaches are usually stereotyped as bullish, stubborn men who believe they know all the answers and would never give one of their players credit for intelligence and initiative. The Shotwell philosophy is much more inclined to produce the type of athlete who can follow directions, but who is not afraid to improvise in unusual situations. Because he developed these traits in his athletes, an amazingly high percentage of his former players have led highly successful and productive lives.

Shotwell also availed himself of every opportunity to speak before civic groups and he soon had the entire population of Breckenridge giving strong support to his program. The unification of the town of Breckenridge played an important role in its football success and Shotwell's narrative explains how he accomplished this:

I joined the Lions Club, and I did whatever I could in that club and whatever civic effort the city was making. I always participated and did the best I could to make friends for the school. I also talked to the people and encouraged them to come to the games and support our boys. However, I was just trying to do my civic duty and make friends rather than engaging in a conscious planned effort to promote Buckaroo football. The civic work and the fact that we started winning was what excited the town.26

26 Personal interview with Shotwell, October 15, 1971.
The winning seasons came quickly. In 1927 the Buckaroos won six, lost three, and tied two. In 1928 the record improved to nine wins and two losses; and in 1929 the team won twelve straight games to earn the right to meet Port Arthur for the state championship. The game was played at Waco under adverse weather conditions. The field was in an unplayable condition due to ice and snow, but trainloads of fans had come from both cities to witness the game. The school officials made an informal agreement to play the game with the understanding that if no one scored, they would try to replay the game later. Shotwell recalled the incidents surrounding the game:

We had an agreement among the coaches concerning the snow in the end zone. They had taken the snow off the field by pushing a third of the snow at each end into the end zone and moving the middle third to the sidelines. The snow in the end zone was practically knee-deep on both ends of the field. We made the agreement that if either team had to punt where the kicker must stand in the end zone, we would "lend" that team enough yardage to allow the kicker to move out of the snow onto good footing. Breckenridge dominated the game and kept the ball on the Port Arthur end of the field, but was never able to score. At least twice, Breckenridge runners appeared to be in the clear for touchdowns, but lost their footing and fell without being tackled. Port Arthur never threatened. They were forced to punt once from their end zone and we loaned them ten yards. As soon as the kick ended, we moved the ball forward ten yards and continued play.27

The game ended in a tie and the teams returned home to wait on better weather. The Breckenridge fans wanted to

replay the game, but the Port Arthur school board would not
allow its team to replay the game. The Breckenridge officials
entered a mild protest, but the Interscholastic League ruled
the game was legally played and the two teams were declared
co-champions.28

The 1929 championship earned Shotwell an offer from
Amarillo High School, one of the state's largest, wealthiest,
and best school systems. However, he was under a contract
to Breckenridge and when the Breckenridge school board refused
to release him from the contract, he turned the Amarillo offer
down. This is another indication of the character and inte-
grity of the man. Today, in the thinking of most coaches,
their contractual obligations to their school mean little or
nothing if a better job comes along. The contract binds the
school and should the coach be fired before its expiration
date, he must be paid for the entire contract except in
highly unusual cases involving immoral or criminal acts.
The coach, on the other hand, may simply walk off the
job and take a better position. School officials seldom

28Interview with Shotwell on April 23, 1973. From that
game came the ruling that in championship play, when games
ended in a tie, the winner would be the team which had most
often penetrated its opponent's twenty yard line; if that was
also tied, then the team having the greater number of first
downs would win; if that should also be tied, the team with
the greatest amount of total yardage is the winner. These
rules still hold true up to the final round. In that round,
the coaches may choose to determine a winner solely by score;
and in case of ties, declare a co-championship. This basic
data is verified from rule books of the Interscholastic
League, informal interviews with various coaches and League
officials. The author is himself a rated football official
and is well familiar with the procedure.
object. They deem it better to let him go than to force
an unhappy person to remain in their system. Shotwell
was questioned at length about his reaction to Breckenridge's
refusal to release him. The interview brought forth these
observations from Shotwell:

After the '29 championship, Amarillo offered us
a job. They offered me a job and my wife a job which
would enable us to make about $7500 more a year than
we were making at Breckenridge. We submitted our
resignations at Breckenridge, but I had one more year
to go on my contract.29

At this point in the interview, Ura Shotwell took over
the narrative:

They were going to have a board meeting and call
Shot down for a hearing. Well, they haven't called
him yet for that hearing. He walked the floor all
afternoon waiting on a phone call to come to the
hearing. So later, we went by the office. They had
already dismissed and had decided they would not
release him from his contract and that was that.30

When questioned about his feelings when Breckenridge
refused to release him from his contract and allow him to
take a better job, Shotwell's answer was emphatic and
sincere, "Well, I felt like I had an obligation to fulfill,
and I was going to do the best I could do." When pressed as
to whether he could honestly say he was able to accept this
without bitterness and continue on in Breckenridge, Shotwell
replied, "Definitely. Definitely. I loved the kids there
so. You can get so attached to kids and a community. We

29 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
30 Ibid.
stayed on in Breckenridge five more years before we moved to Longview."

The five years at Breckenridge continued to produce winning teams. The Shotwell name was, by now, one of the most prominent in Texas high school coaches ranks. He had become an important figure in the Texas High School Coaches' Association and wielded great influence on some of the rulings of the Interscholastic League. During one span of time centered around the 1929 championship season, his teams won twenty-six consecutive games playing mostly against schools with much larger enrollments. The winning streak began in 1928 when the Buckaroos won the last four games of the season—beating Sherman 40-14; Tarleton College 75-0; San Angelo 12-0; and Ranger 13-6. In the 1929 championship season, they were undefeated and followed that with quite a successful season in 1930 when they defeated their first ten opponents before Ranger brought the streak to a halt by beating the Buckaroos 12-7.

31 These excerpts, the questions and replies are taken from a tape of the first interview with Pete Shotwell on October 15, 1971. The tape is in the author's possession. During the interview, the author probed searchingly in an attempt to determine if the unprecedented move on the part of the Breckenridge school board had embittered Shotwell in any way. The refusal to release him might well have, at that period of his career, robbed him of a chance for advancement which might never come again.

32 Infra., p. 94.

33 Buckaroo Yearbooks, Breckenridge High School yearbooks, 1928-31.
In 1935 Shotwell accepted a job in Longview as head football coach and a teacher of mathematics and physical education. Two years later in 1937 he produced his third state championship by defeating Wichita Falls 19-12. The Shotwell record for his ten-year stay in Longview was eighty-five wins, twenty-seven losses, and seven ties. In addition to the fourteen win, no loss championship season, he had records of ten wins, one loss, and one tie in 1936 and ten wins and two losses in 1940. He advanced into the playoffs both those years.34

In 1946 Shotwell returned to Abilene as coach and math teacher. He ended his active coaching in 1952 when he was named supervisor of health, safety, and physical education for the entire Abilene public school system. He remained in this position until 1956 when he closed out forty years of service by "retiring" to the post of Athletic Director and Chairman of Physical Education at McMurry College. His active coaching career brought him a record of 260 wins, 90 losses, 18 ties, and three state championships at three different schools.35

35 Compiled from records in Shotwell's scrapbooks.
Coaching by the Shotwell Method

Since Shotwell's retirement, several other coaches have duplicated his feat of winning three or more state championships, but none, with the possible exception of Gordon Wood of Brownwood, seems destined to vitally influence the lives of so many young men. In an effort to determine what special ingredients made up the Shotwell coaching formula, extensive interviews were held with former players, fellow coaches, and friends. Questionnaires were used extensively.

When all the data were compiled, the overwhelming evidence pointed to the fact that Shotwell believed the only way to win was to execute the fundamental skills better and more enthusiastically than your opponents. Invariably, his former players commented on the thoroughness of his teaching, his attention to the minutest detail, and the many hours of repetitious drill he might require in order to perfect some skill. Shotwell teams were never fancy. His players just went after their opponents like demons and seldom, if ever, made mistakes which caused their own defeat. When a Shotwell team lost, it was usually to a more talented team and not because Shot's team had made a mistake. He was able to instill so much pride in his players that being a member of one of his teams remains a high point in each of their lives.\(^{36}\)

\(^{36}\)It was the author's privilege to be allowed to attend, as the only "outsider," a breakfast given for Shotwell by his former players on December 31, 1971, prior to his induction into the Texas Sports Hall of Fame. His former players,
The ability to instill pride in his players has to be the secret of Shotwell's success; and while he may have been born with the mantle of leadership, it is obvious that Shotwell worked hard all his life at trying to help his fellow man improve himself, and this both gave his players confidence in their ability to do the job, and caused them to hold in awe the man who had taught them this confidence in themselves. The following story by Ed Leach, sportswriter for the Longview News, illustrates one of Shotwell's methods of instilling pride and confidence in his players.

After a district championship and a bi-district loss to Lufkin in 1936, the Lobos saddled up to go all the way in 1937. The cinch on the saddle didn't seem too tight early in the season though as the Lobos barely squeaked by Port Arthur 12-6 and the Masonic Home 13-12 in pre-season games. After about three games Shot did a curious thing, he got me in corner one afternoon after practice and asked me what I thought of the team. I told him it was the best-grounded team in fundamentals of football I'd seen since the 1930 Tyler High School Lions who were state champions. "I think we might go all the way," Shot told me, "if we can keep the kids' feet on the ground and I want your help." Then he asked me to do one thing for him—watch the blockers and give

mostly from Longview, represented people from every social and economic strata. A few held menial type jobs, but the vocations ranged from brick-layers to millionaire corporation presidents. It included one of the nation's top sports writers (Roy Edwards) and the coach at Kansas State University (Don Fambrough). Regardless of their status in life, one could see that when Shot entered the room, they instantly became a team once again and Shot became their leader. The author has never witnessed another human being who, in such a quiet manner, could command such respect.
them credit in the stories I wrote. Scorers of touchdowns thereafter had the fact duly noted in the stories, but the men who cleared the way got paragraphs of ink where the ball carriers got sentences. I had some pretty good blockers to write about, and by playoff time they were pure murder.37

The Shotwell techniques can be further elucidated by relating incidents and anecdotes revealed by colleagues of Shotwell who returned questionnaires or submitted to interviews.

Perhaps no one describes the Shotwell philosophy and technique better than two of his most famous proteges, B. L. Blackburn and Buck Osborne. B. L. "Blackie" Blackburn, who recently retired after twenty-five years as baseball coach at Abilene High School, is a dedicated Shotwell fan. At the time of his retirement in 1972, Blackburn held one of the outstanding coaching records in Texas high school baseball circles as well as commanding great respect for his abilities as an assistant football coach and civic leader. Blackburn attributes most of his success in life to lessons learned under Shotwell.38 The two men first became associated when Blackburn was a member of Shotwell's first Breckenridge team in 1927. Shotwell inspired Blackburn to attend college and enter the coaching ranks himself. They were reunited when Blackburn joined the coaching staff at


38 B. L. Blackburn questionnaire.
Longview and remained together the rest of their careers until Shotwell's retirement. Blackburn describes the Shotwell philosophy:

The word most descriptive of Coach Shotwell's technique was his dedication to the job at hand. Whatever the task, Shotwell always prepared himself well and thus inspired his team to prepare themselves well.

His purpose in the field of athletics was to develop young men. He sold the idea to his players that each player was a hero to some younger boy and should, therefore, always set a good example.

He believed athletics were for the boys and not the coaches. He believed that a coach had the greatest opportunity to teach because he worked with the boys under such unusually close relationships. He always taught players to play by the intent of the rules—fairness came first and winning second. Shotwell's discipline was strict, but fair.39

This term, strict and fair discipline, appears again and again in the narratives of his former players. It seemed, above all else, to be the thing which they respected most.

Under today's terminology, Shotwell would be classed as a "hard-nosed," unyielding coach.40 In today's world of the super-sophisticated athlete, this type of coach is often-times finding it difficult to relate to his players. This is especially true in high schools where players will often refuse to come out for teams which are coached by dominating types. Despite this trend, one gets the idea that if Shotwell

39B. L. Blackburn, Questionnaire.
were actively coaching today, his methods would still succeed. He was not strict without explaining the necessity for strictness. He was firm, but not totally unyielding. He was always interested in the greatest good for the boy; and though he made mistakes (as what human does not?), he learned from his mistakes in order that some future player might profit. Shotwell often related one of his greatest mistakes to his classes at McMurry College. He used this example as a teaching device.  

The narrative in question concerned a rigid regulation in effect while Shotwell coached at Longview. Smoking was never permitted on his teams, but in those days Shotwell always announced that anyone caught smoking would be suspended. The mistake in this philosophy, he later learned, was that it was so unyielding it did not allow for unusual circumstances.

One of his Longview teams which failed to win the state championship might actually have been Shotwell's greatest team, but it was defeated in the quarterfinals after a star

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41 This narrative was first heard by the author in an informal discussion on squad discipline between Shotwell and the author in the fall of 1960. Although the author was thirty-three years old at the time, with a personal history of successful coaching well in progress, the lesson learned had a terrific impact on the author's philosophy. Using Shotwell's principles has since enabled the author to "save" two players who under prior regulations would have been suspended from the team. Both players later made outstanding contributions and good citizens. Had they been suspended, their college careers would have ended.
player was suspended for smoking. It was Shotwell's custom to drive through town around curfew time, not to spy on his boys, but to let them know he was around, and it was time to go home. Just prior to a playoff game, he inadvertently saw one of his players, in the company of several non-athletes, light up what was apparently the youth's first cigarette. The boy took two or three puffs, went into a coughing spasm, and threw the cigarette away. When he recovered from the coughing spasm, he looked up and saw Shotwell observing the scene. The next morning the boy came into Shotwell's office before school. Shotwell asked the boy, "Well, what do you think I ought to do?" The youth's answer was clear, "Coach, you have always been a man of your word. You said we would be suspended if we smoked. I tried one last night and got caught. I came in to turn in my uniform and apologize to you and the team."

Trapped by his own reputation and by having previously established a penalty for the offense, Shotwell now had no choice, if he retained the youth's respect, but to suspend him. Without their star, the team was narrowly defeated. Had the boy been a habitual breaker of training rules, Shotwell would have had no regrets, but in this case, evidence later confirmed that the boy had simply been foolishly experimenting with a cigarette. He was willing to accept any punishment the coach meted out. Had the penalty not been previously decreed, the boy could have been severely punished
with extra running or some similar task. The team would not have suffered a defeat, and Shotwell would have lost no respect in the eyes of his team.

For the rest of his career, Shotwell posted his training rules, but stipulated no specific penalties for their infraction. This enabled him to either suspend the athlete or use some other form of punishment. He often said that he had found out you could do the youth more good by punishing him and keeping him around than you could by suspending him and letting him fall in with evil companions.

Another former assistant coach attributes Shotwell's success to "his integrity--his respect for the dignity of a human being--a Christian gentleman and a gentle human being--firm, but not obstinate."\(^4\) This "gentle human being," who cared for his boys, made coaching and guiding them a twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week job. In Longview he began the practice of working closely with the police in order to prevent boys from crossing the line into serious trouble. When the police found a youth involved in some minor difficulties, they soon discovered that it was generally more effective to call Coach Shotwell than to call the boy's parents. This was especially true since many of

\(^4\) Buck Osborne, former assistant coach to Shotwell, in returned questionnaire.
the boys came from homes where oil field living conditions offered little opportunity for home counseling and guidance.

Shotwell did not restrict his aid to his players. He once paid for, anonymously of course, music lessons for a boy who wished to sing, but could not afford lessons. The boy became a good (though not outstanding) musician. The lessons changed his life style and he never knew who his benefactor was.43

In the summers, Shotwell took boys who had no jobs to the family ranch in the Panhandle and paid their wages out of his pocket.44

Occasionally, of course, Shotwell failed to redeem a wayward youth. Despite many attempts to rehabilitate one young lad, the youth was sentenced to Alcatraz Prison. B. L. Blackburn recalled that Shot often berated himself for not having worked harder at guiding the boy. Shotwell never seemed to believe that a boy was incapable of being saved and always considered it a personal defeat when one of his boys went wrong.45

43 Related in letter dated January 10, 1972, from Ura Shotwell to the author. Letter is in author's possession.

44 Ibid.

45 B. L. Blackburn, returned questionnaire. This data is documented in the questionnaire, but the author deemed it expedient to withhold the name to avoid possible embarrassment to the family.
Don Fambrough, one of Shotwell’s greatest players and today the head football coach at Kansas University, likes to tell of a Shotwell coaching technique that proved highly effective in deflating a player’s ego and causing him to play better next game. Coach Fambrough played for Shotwell at Longview from 1937 through the 1940 season. Fambrough was generally conceded to be one of the great running backs in his day, and he reminisces about playing for Shotwell:

Thinking back about Mr. Shotwell, if I had to pick his one outstanding talent, it would be his ability to handle his players. I've never been associated with a coach who could get the effort out of the individual that Mr. Shotwell could. I think that was the secret of his success. They believed in him 100 per cent. When he said "this is the way it is," we never gave it a second thought. This applied not only to his players, but to the whole student body. Students in his classes respected him as much as did his football players.

There was nothing fancy about his football, but we knew our plays and were in better condition than our opponents. I can remember days when we might take only two plays and run them all day until we knew them to perfection.

We also knew that we had to be in perfect physical condition and must always give 100 per cent effort. We could make no mistakes, and we must all carry out our assignments.

I recall my senior year that I thought I was a pretty good running back and felt like this blocking should be left up to someone else. After each game I was receiving an anonymous letter from someone criticizing the way I was blocking. I'd go in and show Mr. Shotwell the letter and maybe I would have scored two or three touchdowns in that ball game and would feel I had done a tremendous job. I didn't feel like I deserved any criticism for what I had done. I would get very angry about this letter and I'd take it in Monday morning. These letters would show up in my mail box Saturday morning and would point out every missed block or mistake I had made.
Years later I found out Mr. Shotwell was using this method to point out my mistakes.\textsuperscript{46}

The letter gimmick was one of Shotwell's many personalized techniques. After a game on Friday, Shotwell would remain awake until he had written the letters to all his players whom he felt needed either a pat on the back or a deflation of their ego. He would then personally deliver these letters to the boys' homes at three or four a.m. while the players were asleep.\textsuperscript{47}

Not only did he ask for perfection in his players, but Shotwell was constantly striving to improve himself. He took every opportunity to attend college games and study the various coaches' techniques. He loved to gather in small groups with his fellow coaches and discuss teaching methods and innovations. Meetings like these were one of the moving forces behind the formation of the Coaches' Association where coaches from all over Texas could get together for their mutual benefit. Shotwell explains his reasons for attending these meetings:

I felt I had many weaknesses as a coach and so I went to games and coaching schools every chance I got. I visited the college training camps always trying to get ideas. I never did feel like that I had the answer to everything and so I tried to use the ideas I picked up by visiting spring football sessions in colleges. I made every major game and coaching school possible in the hope that I might pick up one little idea I could use to make

\textsuperscript{46}Don Fambrough, personal interview at Lawrence, Kansas, on March 14, 1972.

\textsuperscript{47}Shotwell interview, April 23, 1973.
a touchdown or prevent an opponent from making one. I was constantly a student of the game and attempted to learn from fellow coaches and from observing great players.48

Shotwell was a great believer in repetition of a drill until the technique was perfected, but he was not the type of coach or teacher who completely took away the student's originality. When a student or player came to Shotwell completely unskilled, then great stress was placed on learning every movement "according to the book." Tried and proven techniques of stance, footwork, arm and leg movements were taught. If, on the other hand, the player or student showed great natural skill in some particular facet, but used an unorthodox style, then Shotwell never attempted to change the player's style simply for the sake of conformity.

As an example of this teaching method, let it be assumed that Shotwell is attempting to teach a completely unskilled player how to throw a forward pass. He would begin by teaching proper grip, stress bringing the arm up so that the ball is positioned directly behind the ear, and throwing with a straight overhand motion. The unskilled player would then learn the proven technique from the very beginning and, if he possessed ability, would likely become quite skilled.

Another player might already have the ability to deliver the ball to his intended target a good percentage of the time, but might throw with a sidearm motion or some other

48 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
flaw. In these cases, Shotwell usually allowed the player to continue to use the method he already felt comfortable with as long as performance remained high. Some experimentation might be tried, but if the attempt to change the passer's style detracted from the performance level, then originality of style was always allowed.

The same meticulous method was used in his classrooms, and students who never participated in sports derived great benefits from their association with this exacting teacher. Here, again, Shotwell demanded excellence. Each student was encouraged to be the best in his special area.

The outstanding theme of the questionnaires returned by former students and associates of Shotwell was his demand of excellence at all tasks. His ability to instill pride in his students had a great carryover effect and quite probably accounts for the high percentage of professional success attained by his former players.49

The next most often mentioned trait was Shotwell's continued interest in his former students after they completed their football careers. He would still encourage them to try and climb one rung higher on the ladder of success. A good example of this facet of the Shotwell technique was related by Harry Warren, a former player, on the occasion of the breakfast held December 31, honoring Shotwell's induction into the Texas Sports Hall of Fame.

49 Summation of data on returned questionnaires.
When I played for Shotwell, they had only eleven grades in high school, but I had a semester of eligibility and so I stayed over one semester to play football. It was in the early part of World War II. We won district, but got beat in bi-district. I was a pretty big old kid and thought I was pretty smart, so when football ended, I decided to leave school, join the Navy, and go win the war. Mr. Shot came out to my house and talked to me and my father. He helped me get lined up for the Navy V-12 program so I could continue my education. This eventually led to a commission and while that, in itself, was not important, the fact that I did continue my education changed my life. Had it not been for Shot's influence, I would probably never have even graduated from high school. I have always been grateful to Mr. Shot because of the interest he took in me. Even though I had finished my eligibility and was no longer of any use to him, he remained concerned that I try and better myself in life.

As the Shotwell story unfolds, it has become obvious that here was a man who either innately possessed, or had acquired the attributes of a truly sound educator. His understanding and use of various learning techniques was of a professional caliber. He applied basically the same learning techniques to his coaching as he used in the classroom. His personal character was exemplary and inspirational. His interest in the welfare of his students was genuine and long-lasting. His teachings had a profound and lasting effect on the lives of his students. While they did not always adhere to the teachings of Shotwell throughout their lives, his students remember his teachings. Failure to live up to the Shotwell standards can, even today, bring acute

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discomfort to former players when in the presence of Shotwell.

Because Shotwell believed so strongly that tobacco and alcohol were harmful physically and morally, he preached constantly against their use. Long before the medical profession finally came around to the conclusion that tobacco and alcohol caused heart damage, Shotwell was teaching this to his athletes.

Since the heart is a muscle, it will, like all muscles increase in size when used to its fullest capacity over long periods of time. Because the rigorous training connected with athletics taxes the heart muscle to its fullest, the hearts of athletes are nearly always larger than the hearts of persons engaged in less strenuous activities.

A great many athletes, unfortunately, have used alcohol and tobacco extensively both during and after their period of athletic activity. This has sometimes been deemed a contributing factor in heart attacks in very young ex-athletes. The enlarged heart found in these cases was often termed "athlete's heart" and at least partially blamed for their early death. Shotwell maintained that there was no such thing as "athlete's heart." He believed the problem was caused by use of alcohol or tobacco rather than over exertion. The alcohol or tobacco weakened the heart muscle to such an extent that the strain put on the muscle by athletic training might then cause early complications.
So adamant was he on the subject, that even today, there are few of his ex-players who would dare smoke or take a drink in his presence. Roy Edwards, the noted sportswriter, had an interesting story to tell on one of his ex-teammates. The incident occurred in 1966 when the city of Abilene gave a dinner for Shotwell and renamed the 18,000 seat Public Schools Stadium in his honor. Edwards relates the incident as follows:

Several of us wanted to go to Abilene for the ceremony, so I got busy trying to locate some ex-Longview guys to go; and I ran across Bruce Gaw. Bruce had been a great player for Shot at Longview. We decided to drive out to Abilene together and on the way out, I guess Bruce smoked at least a pack of cigarettes. He just chain-smoked.

We got to Abilene about eleven o'clock in the morning and went into the Wooten Hotel. There we ran into Hardy Miller and some of the other guys. We went upstairs and Coach Shotwell came in.

We had the dinner and then went to the reception out at McMurry. There were only about six guys at the McMurry reception from Longview, so after the reception, Coach invited us all over to his house. We went out to his house and visited, and about six o'clock we took Hardy Miller to the airport to catch his plane to Memphis. The coach went along to the airport; and after the plane left, we all shook hands, said goodbye to Coach Shotwell, and Bruce and I got in my car and headed back for Dallas.

As we left the airport, Bruce looked back over his shoulder. When he was sure the coach was no longer in sight, he dived into his pocket and said, "Man, I'm dying for a cigarette." From the time we arrived in Abilene at eleven that morning, until we left after six that night, Bruce had not smoked a cigarette because the coach had so instilled it into us about not smoking.51

There are hundreds of such stories circulating about the power of Shotwell to teach a lesson so thoroughly that the impact of the lesson remained with the student for the remainder of his life.\(^{52}\)

52 The author witnessed an incident similar to the one related by Edwards, so evidently this lifelong respect for Shotwell's teachings on the use of tobacco was not an isolated incident. In October, 1962, the author was teamed with Shotwell in the annual Lions Club Light Bulb Sale sponsored by the club to obtain funds for its many civic and charitable deeds. We were assigned to a fairly affluent neighborhood and were having great success. As we walked down the street we saw a portly man of about forty years of age, wearing an old, but still presentable, corduroy sport coat and slacks. The man was busily raking leaves and had a half-smoked cigar clenched in his teeth; he looked up, saw us approaching at a distance of about half a block; and apparently recognized Shot. He quickly stubbed out the cigar and put it in the left hand coat pocket of his jacket. Unfortunately, he had not fully extinguished the cigar. Shot approached and greeted him; announced the purpose of our visit and began to talk with the man on various subjects. The man quickly made a large purchase of bulbs, but Shot continued to engage in conversation. Shot's eyes were twinkling and I sensed some unusual byplay, but was unaware of the nature of it. The leaf-raker became more and more nervous; soon wisps of smoke began to creep out of his pocket. The man tried several times to unobtrusively pat the pocket to extinguish the cigar. After a few minutes we bade goodbye to the nervous leaf-raker and continued on our way. Shotwell was questioned by the author as to the meaning of all the byplay. Shot replied, Well, he played football for me twenty-five years ago, and he still doesn't want me to see him smoking. I just thought I would make him sweat it out a little, but I finally decided the guy was going to burn up his coat if we didn't leave.

The Return to Abilene and the Conclusion of a Coaching Career

In 1946, the city of Abilene lured Shotwell back to the west Texas city to try and rebuild their football program. Shotwell came at a modest salary, but made several demands
of the administration. He brought B. L. Blackburn with him to assist in football and to rebuild the baseball program. The most unusual and far-reaching demand was that he be allowed to install a comprehensive athletic program in every grade school in Abilene. Shotwell's reasons for this demand were stated in an article written some years later.

I am definitely for competitive athletics for our elementary children, and I say this not just because I am an athletically-minded person. Never before in the history of civilization has competition all over the world been more fierce. Our young people need to get a taste of it early, so they can best be prepared for the future. And through athletics we, who must get our youngsters ready for the crises ahead, can best prepare them.53

Shotwell demanded and received at least one male teacher in every grade school who would work with fifth and sixth graders from 3:45 to 5:00 P.M. each school day.54 The P. T. A. chapters bought equipment, and every grade school in Abilene was soon participating on an organized basis in football, basketball, softball, and track. Every boy who came out regularly for practice was assured of playing in the game. No player was allowed to play in more than two quarters of a football or basketball game. The emphasis was on participation. Shotwell did not demand that his grade school coaches know very much about the game. He only asked

54 Pete Shotwell, personal interview, April 29, 1971.
that they teach the boys the rules, fair play, and encourage them to participate. By 1952 this program had grown to such an extent that he gave up active coaching to serve as director of the program for all the city schools.

At his request, Shotwell was relieved of his coaching responsibilities and appointed as Coordinator of the Health and Physical Education Program.

The school board, after hearing Coach Shotwell request that the transfer be made, unanimously agreed there was a need for a coordinator of health and physical education and that Shot was the ideal man for the post. "I feel there is a great opportunity in this kind of work," Coach Shotwell said, "and I had this sort of thing in mind when I returned to Abilene in 1946."55

A broad outline of his duties were:

(1) To supervise and consult teachers of physical education;

(2) To coordinate instructional programs in health and physical education in all Abilene Schools;

(3) To schedule intra-murals and work with teachers;

(4) To prepare budget and purchase physical education equipment;

(5) To supervise maintenance of playgrounds and equipment;

(6) To counsel school safety patrols.56


56Sanner, "School Board Appoints Shotwell."
This program proved to be a veritable farm system and produced athletes that enabled Abilene High School, under the able leadership of Chuck Moser, who succeeded Shotwell, to dominate all major sports in West Texas during the mid 1950's and early part of the 1960's.

The system Shotwell installed is still in effect in Abilene today and has been emulated by numerous other cities across the state. It has probably encouraged more youngsters to engage in competitive sports in a wholesome, constructive manner than any other program in existence. The feature which has made the program so effective has been its emphasis on participation first and winning second. In this way, the youth had a chance to learn to love competitive athletics. The youngster played as long as it was fun, and if he decided to give up the game in favor of some other interest, no pressure was ever applied to him.57

57During the course of research on this phase of the Shotwell career, some slight evidence was uncovered that indicated the University Interscholastic League frowned on Shotwell's "farm system." Further research was unable to uncover any real evidence of the League's disfavor. Both Shotwell and R. J. Kidd, the retired Athletic Director of the League, denied that any controversy ever developed over Shotwell's use of this system.
CHAPTER IV

PETE SHOTWELL--HIS WORK WITH THE UNIVERSITY
INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE AND THE TEXAS
HIGH SCHOOL COACHES' ASSOCIATION

The Interscholastic League

When competition among various high schools began, there was no single agency to set rules and standards, or serve as a governing body. Consequently, contests between schools were mismanaged and often turned into grudge affairs offering little or no educational value. By 1910, it had become evident to administrators that an organization was needed to supervise and regulate such inter-school activities. The Debating League of Texas High Schools was organized in that year and held its first state-wide meet at the University of Texas in the spring of 1911.¹

In the 1913 issue of the constitution and rules, the name was changed to the "University Interscholastic League."² This enabled the organization to encompass activities other than debate. It had become increasingly clear that an organization promoting extra-curricular activities could serve as

¹Bedichek, Educational Competition, p. 28.
²Ibid., p. 30.
a great motivator for discipline and for maintaining the interest of adolescent boys to such an extent that they might remain in school.

Because the League had worked well in regulating those activities in which it was interested and because football and basketball were gaining such a foothold in Texas high schools, the League, in the 1920-21 school year, decided to adopt interscholastic athletics into its regulatory system. Charles A. Dupre states that the League recognized football as early as 1914, but set up no plan for championships until 1920-21.

The first definite plan for determining a football champion was devised by Roy B. Henderson in April of 1921. The plan divided Texas into twelve sections. Teams played games within their sections and those teams having the best records were matched with other sectional winners until the championship was determined by elimination.

The adoption of athletics by the League was the greatest thing that could happen to bring about order and stability among the competing schools. Prior to the League's adoption

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of athletics, as previously mentioned, participants were often not bonafide students of the school, were too old to play with regular high school youth, and followed no eligibility rules whatsoever.

Such actions were causing great concern among ethical coaches such as Shotwell, Paul Tyson, and others. When the League became involved with football and other sports, these coaches joined school administrators in suggesting and supporting rule changes concerning age of players, semesters of eligibility and number of courses passed by the player.

The original League had only four rules for determining eligibility to participate:

1) a contestant must be of amateur standing,
2) a contestant must not exceed the twenty-year age limit (a twenty-two year limit was allowed for academies),
3) a contestant must have a three-month attendance record in the school he represented, and
4) he must be passing in three courses.⁶

These rules were a step in the right direction, but they were not always adhered to by unscrupulous coaches and administrators. There were still quite a few athletes who lied about their age and moved around from town to town, playing wherever they could get the best "deal." Fortunately only a few towns were interested in using this type of athlete.

The adoption in 1921 of Roy Henderson's playoff program instilled pride in the schools. They wanted a set of regulations to follow so that true state champions could be declared. Shotwell maintains that he never personally knew a coach who opposed the League.\(^7\)

Actually the coaches have little voice in determining policy of the League. The agency is administered from an office on the University of Texas campus. Its paid administrators work with the chief administrators of the schools.

Years later when the coaches had formed their own association, the two groups began, and have continued, to work closely together, since the aim of both organizations is the betterment of high school athletics.

In discussing the role of the Interscholastic League in making athletics truly a part of the total educational concept, Shotwell voiced vigorous approval of the overall policies of the League. It is also obvious that Shotwell found areas of difference in the philosophy of the League and his own philosophy. His statements on the League's attempts to regulate participation on the basis of age and total semesters in school, reveal one of the few inconsistencies in Shotwell's philosophy. In the following statements made at various times during the series of personal interviews with Shotwell, it will be noted that he sometimes drastically

\(^7\)Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
changed his views on certain points. He also admitted being either overtly or covertly guilty of violating the intent of some Interscholastic League regulations. This is in direct contrast to the Shotwell teaching method which constantly emphasized that adherence to rules was a primary virtue of competitive athletics, and that failure to adhere robbed athletics of much of its educational value:

Before the Interscholastic League organized the high school programs, things were rather chaotic. The biggest trouble at that time was that, in many cases, some big old roughneck boys from around town would come up and play football, and there wasn't anything in the organization--what organization there was--to prevent that. These boys would usually enroll in school and attend a few classes although in some cases, the boy might be permitted to play even without being in school.8

The above statement by Shotwell is verified by both Bedichek and Dupre in their historical reviews of the early days of the League. Bedichek maintains that not only were non-students used, but that as late as 1924, instances were recorded where young and over-enthusiastic coaches suited up and inserted themselves into games in crucial situations.9

If incidents such as this occurred several years after the Interscholastic League had made strong inroads into the regulatory process, one can scarcely imagine what the conditions of competition must have been before a regulatory agency existed. Shotwell indicates, and Bedichek tends to

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8 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
9 Bedichek, Educational Competition, p. 373.
agree with him, that instances of such misconduct occurred most frequently in small towns which had difficulty in finding enough bonafide students to field a team.

These roughnecks usually were found playing on teams in smaller towns where they had a hard time having an enrollment large enough to supply boys to play football.

It was because of situations such as these that most of the coaches supported the move by the Interscholastic League to adopt athletics into its program. It looked to me like that there would be so much more to gain educationally from an athletic program if we could compete on the same basis with other schools. That is, if all players were in school, had to pass their schoolwork and so on. I think the greatest thing the Interscholastic League has ever done is in the organization of athletics and sports on the same basis in all schools.¹⁰

While basically, it was the administrative leaders of the schools who laid the groundwork of the League and who composed the working committees, the influence of the more prominent coaches of the day lent great encouragement to the movement. Had the coaches opposed the League's intervention into athletics, the movement would have doubtlessly failed, or at least have been postponed for a number of years.

Bedichek cites the following school superintendents as being instrumental in bringing about the adoption of the football plan: R. D. Green of Abilene, L. H. Hubbard of Belton, B. M. Densmore of Electra, L. C. Procter of Temple, W. F. Garner of Longview, and Principals N. L. Clark of Fort Worth Northside, and Fred G. Ervey of Cleburne.¹¹

¹⁰Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
Shotwell gives great credit to Coaches Howard Lynch of Amarillo, Paul Tyson of Waco, and Jimmy Kitts of Athens.¹²

The coaches, the League, and all school officials who believed in the educational value of athletics, wished to use competitive sports to motivate youth to remain in school, but the question of just how many semesters he should be allowed to play became as thorny an issue as was the age level at which competition should cease.

Coaches and administrators alike were divided on these questions. The pros and cons of various plans began to be heatedly discussed almost immediately upon the League's entrance into athletics. The issue was not fully settled until the mid 1930's.

The second area of controversy concerned the eligibility of athletes who transferred from one school to another. Allowing transfer students to begin play immediately had given rise to the practice of recruiting in high schools. The father of a big strong athlete sometimes found himself inundated with offers of jobs from towns which were trying to build outstanding teams. In many cases, the attractive job might disappear when the athlete's eligibility expired. Most of the successful coaches were guilty of abusing the transfer rule at some time or other. Shotwell, who preached and practiced ethical methods more vociferously than most

¹²Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
coaches, admits to using influence to have the families of superior athletes moved into his school. When questioned about the practice, Shotwell voiced his feelings in a rather ambiguous manner:

Before the transfer rule came into effect, some teams practically "hired" these boys. They would give the job to his parents and move him to town and let him play. I don't think that's what high school athletics is or should be.13

When questioned as to whether or not he considered this highly unethical, Shotwell hesitated and then replied,

Well, everybody was doing it, more or less, to some extent at any rate. Because of this, I, myself, on several occasions, used outstanding athletes whose families were moved into town and given jobs. However, I always felt these boys' situations were appreciably improved by their moving into town. The families' living standard was improved by the job they were given and the boy had an educational opportunity he would not otherwise have had. All the boys I had moved in really attended school and gained an educational experience. They did a good job in the classroom. The best example might be the Miller boys, Hardy and Dick, at Longview. Their father had passed away and they were living in the orphans' home at Corsicana. Dick violated some regulation of the home and the boys were kicked out. They came to Longview where their sister lived. They also had an uncle who lived in the oilfield out from Longview. They lived with the uncle for awhile until we could bring their mother from Commerce. We helped her get a job and they were able to reestablish their home. I didn't really recruit them. I heard about them after Dick showed up with the uncle at Longview.14

This particular bit of "recruiting" paid off handsomely for both Shotwell and the Miller family. Dick, who may have

13 Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
14 Ibid.
been the fastest player Shotwell coached, played only one year of football. However, that one year happened to be 1937 when the Longview Lobos gave Shotwell his third state championship.

In the championship game with Wichita Falls, Dick helped Longview overcome a 12–0 deficit to win 19–12. Dick ran fifty-five yards with a punt and fifty-two yards with a pass for touchdowns to put the Lobos over.\(^{15}\)

Hardy followed Dick as a star for Longview, earned a scholarship to Southern Methodist University, where he became an outstanding player. He is now an executive with the Bostick Corporation in Memphis, Tennessee. Dick entered the service in World War II and was killed in action during the "Battle of the Bulge."\(^{16}\)

Not all of Shotwell's recruiting ventures were of this nature. He freely admits that at both Breckenridge and Longview, he often told businessmen around town about families who had outstanding athletes in them and who needed jobs in order to improve their living standards. Shotwell maintains that, to the best of his knowledge, all the families who were moved into Breckenridge or Longview continued to hold down steady jobs and live in the community long after their athletic sons had graduated.\(^{17}\)


\(^{16}\)Ibid.

\(^{17}\)Shotwell interview, October 15, 1971.
Despite the admitted use of some type of recruiting, Shotwell and all other successful coaches recognized that unless some central organization stepped in to curb such practices and generally govern eligibility standards, that high school athletics would never progress beyond the outlaw stage.

The League experimented with several versions of both a transfer rule and a limitation on age and number of semesters in attendance allowed before completion of eligibility. There was little opposition to the transfer rule which was adopted. Basically it stated that any student who had competed for an accredited high school and then moved to another accredited high school must attend the second school for one calendar year before becoming eligible for athletics. Students moving from rural non-accredited high schools into accredited systems were allowed to compete immediately.\textsuperscript{18}

The decision over whether to allow a student eight or ten semesters of competition created great controversy. Various studies were conducted by the League, and both school administrators and League officials changed their minds several times before a final agreement was reached. In 1929 the League passed the rule that in effect stipulated that a student must complete his eligibility in eight semesters. This ruling also charged students with a year of participation

\textsuperscript{18}Bedichek, \textit{Educational Competition}, p. 375.
if they played as eighth graders on either varsity or junior teams. Shotwell expressed his views on the ruling in a letter published in the League's newspaper:

We have a great deal of junior athletics (boys and girls 15 and under) in this county. I notice in the note on page 20 of the bulletin that a year of participation is charged against a boy of this age if he is in the eighth grade or higher and represents his school in any athletic event. I have always been under the impression that junior athletics did not count toward the four years of participation. I knew that if a boy of junior age played on a senior team, it counted against him, but thought that if he was on the junior team it did not. If this rule is to be interpreted that junior athletics count toward high school participation, it will greatly handicap the junior athletes of this county. The boys of junior age will not want to participate in junior athletics and run the risk of losing their senior year in senior athletics. I feel sure that many schools will cease having junior athletics if this rule is to be interpreted in this way. (Editor's note at bottom of letter affirms that junior participation in eighth grade counts toward four years allowed.)

This ruling brought so many protests from coaches and administrators that a new referendum in April of 1931 passed a rule allowing a student ten semesters in which to complete four seasons of eligibility. Shotwell believed wholeheartedly that a student should be allowed an opportunity to fail one year without losing his eligibility so long as the

19"League Recommends Adoption of 8-Semester Rule," The Interscholastic Leaguer, XIII (December, 1929), unpaged.


21"New Rule Changes Section 18 of Constitution," The Interscholastic Leaguer, XIV (April, 1931), unpaged.
student did not exceed the normal four seasons of participation. The League Executive Committee, however, still favored the eight-semester plan; and on January 27, 1932, the Executive Committee once again changed the rule to allow only eight semesters. The final change read as follows:

"Effective September, 1933, no pupil who has been in attendance upon high school for eight semesters or more shall be eligible for participation in any Interscholastic League contest."\(^{22}\)

Shotwell opposed the eight-semester rule, and in December, 1932, sent a letter to the League office making one last attempt to secure another referendum on the rule. In the letter, Shotwell said,

There has been some violation of the eight-semester rule, but who is it that is drawing money for solving these problems that come up in the schools of Texas? It is not that dumb boy you are penalizing because he is dumb. How do you not know that that boy failed because of a poor teacher? Isn't it your fault in some cases that that boy failed in the 8th grade? We ought to have guts enough to tell a boy that should graduate that he could not play next year. We are making a bunch of dumb boys suffer by making them bear the burden.\(^{23}\)

The League refused to reverse its stand and the controversy died out. Shotwell's plan to allow one year of grace for a student making an honest effort to pass, but who had

\(^{22}\)"New Eligibility Rules Are Carried by Nearly 2 to 1," The Interscholastic Leaguer, XV (February, 1932), unpaged.

failed to graduate was well-taken, but implementing such a plan opened the door to all sorts of abuses. Shotwell accepted the League's rulings and worked diligently to promote its principles. He remained influential, and in 1940-41, was selected by the League to make its second annual survey of football injuries suffered in League competition. 24

The Interscholastic League owed Shotwell a debt of gratitude. He was one of the men who built it into Autumn's Mightiest Legions. His coaching record was 13 district championships, a team in the state semi-finals six times, in the finals four times and two state championships and one tie for a state championship. He built character and ability in equal value. 25

The Texas High School Coaches' Association

The idea of forming an association of coaches was conceived by a group of coaches in attendance at the Southern Methodist coaching school in Dallas in the summer of 1929. Prominent among the coaches who began to push the idea were Jesse Kellum of Lufkin, Johnny Pierce of Corsicana, Jimmy Kitts of Athens, Shotwell, and a few other of the more advanced coaches of the state. 26 These coaches, in an effort to learn new techniques, were in the habit of attending

24 A photocopy of this survey and Shotwell's recommendations for protective measures are in the author's possession. The report was presented to both the League and The Coaches' Association.


clinics sponsored by the various colleges. Many of the major universities sponsored these clinics in which their coaching staff explained the systems used by their teams. In addition to the one at Southern Methodist, Texas A & M and Texas Tech sponsored clinics that were well attended by coaches in their areas.

Shotwell, Pierce, and the others instrumental in forming the association hoped to encourage all the high school coaches to come to one centrally located site to hear several different outstanding coaches explain their systems. This would enable the high school mentor to compare the various styles and adopt those ideas which most nearly suited his own personnel.

At the conclusion of the 1929 season, this small group of coaches went to work in earnest to promote a lecture clinic for the summer of 1930. Shotwell was on the committee which approached Howell Jones, Convention Chairman of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, and solicited his help in putting on the school in that city.27

It was determined that approximately $1000 should be raised to pay the guest lecturers and other expenses of the school. The committee decided to charge each coach twenty dollars as an attendance fee. Howell Jones went to the

merchants of the depression-stricken city and raised the necessary money to assure the success of the venture. It would take fifty paid tuition fees to assure the underwriting merchants of breaking even.

Johnny Pierce, Howell Jones, Pete Shotwell, and Claude Kellam manned the registration desk and literally held their breath until the fiftieth coach registered. Actually 102 coaches attended which enabled the school to show a slight profit.

The idea of having their own association caught on rather quickly with the coaches and also received encouragement from the Interscholastic League. The League felt that such an organization would offer its members the following advantages:

1. Personal contact of the coaches will make for better relationships between schools.
2. Provide an opportunity to discuss and work out common problems.
3. Organized effort in creating the right attitude of coaches toward the profession in order that criticism may be avoided and a wholesome support for athletics encouraged.
4. Meetings will afford a place at which messages of importance can be brought to all coaches by outstanding men of the profession.

Membership dues were set at two dollars for active members and one dollar for allied membership. This membership really did not entitle the coaches to more than the

29 Ibid., p. 30.
31 Ibid.
right to attend meetings as voting delegates. Coaches who attended the clinics and coaching schools which developed into annual affairs were still required to pay a fee for attendance.

Shotwell continued to be prominent in most of the activities of the association. During the first few years, the association was rather loosely organized as pertains to keeping of accurate records. Minutes were often kept on loose leaf note paper, handwritten in pencil. These minutes are now kept on file in their original state in the office of L. W. McConachie, the executive secretary of the association.32

Examination of these meetings indicated that Shotwell was in attendance at all meetings from 1931-1936. He spoke on "Coaching Ethics" at the 1931 clinic held in the Gunter Hotel in San Antonio. In 1932 he served as vice president; in 1933 he held the post of secretary-treasurer; and in 1934 he was elected to serve as president.33

In 1933, President Tom Dennis appointed Shotwell as a committee of one to study what could be done to increase membership. At a meeting in Waco, September, 1933, Shotwell suggested giving each association member a one-year

32 The author was permitted to examine these minutes, but they are in such a state of decay, it was impossible to photostat the earliest portion of the records.

33 Examination of minutes of The Texas High School Football Coaches' Association, 1931-36.
subscription to the *Athletic Journal*. This suggestion was adopted and continues today even though the association now publishes its own magazine.

During the year of his presidency, Shotwell wielded his greatest influence on the association. Shotwell took over as president in 1934, succeeding Henry Frnka, and served for the 1934-35 school year. One of his first acts was to propose that the coaches consider a plan of insurance or the supplying of some aid to crippled football players.

Shotwell had long been concerned with the effects of participation on boys and with the number of crippling injuries or deaths suffered each season. He spent a great deal of time and effort seeking causes of and methods of prevention of these injuries.

Shotwell was particularly concerned over the injury that had occurred to Orbbie Dee Jacobs of Cisco. On September 15, 1930, Orbbie Dee had tackled a teammate in practice, and in doing so, had so injured his spinal cord that he remained a life-long cripple. Shotwell was unable to induce the association to adopt a plan in 1934, but he

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35 Minutes of meeting held at Houston, August 31, 1934.

36 Ibid.

implanted the idea in the coaches' minds that an insurance program was worthwhile. Eventually the idea germinated, as will be detailed later, and today The Texas High School Coaches' Association in conjunction with the Interscholastic League sponsors one of the better insurance programs of any similar organization.

The All-Star Game

Perhaps Shotwell's greatest influence on the association was the promotion of the first high school all-star football game. Today the receipts from the all-star games provide tremendous revenue and help make the association the largest and most affluent state coaches' association in the country.

On the night of August 15, 1934, Pete Shotwell, in talking with a small group of mentors, suggested that they bring up the idea of an all-star game before the general meeting. After Shotwell was elected president at the general meeting a few days later, the green light was given for the foundation of the all-star football game in connection with the coaching school. Shotwell and Standard Lambert, the new executive secretary, arranged for the school and game to be held in Dallas.38

While the association had agreed to sponsor the game, very few members were willing to help organize it. Most of the work fell on Shotwell and Stan Lambert. These two had to work out the details of selecting the squads, getting the boys to the game, and taking care of them during their stay:

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The lot of selecting the first all-star football squad fell heavily upon them. They did the best they could—selecting boys who would agree to come and participate. They were criticized for selecting too many boys from the teams of Greenville and Dallas. They knew they would be criticized, but they selected these boys because they were willing to come and they were close to Dallas, the site of the coaching school and game. The association paid the bus transportation for some; others were brought by their own coach who was going to attend the school.39

The first game was really a make-shift affair, but it served its purpose. It aroused interest in all-star competition. The squads were divided into North and South teams by Shotwell and Lambert. Around 2000 people attended and the South won the game 3-0.40

From that humble beginning, all-star competition has grown to mammoth proportions. Both the basketball and football all-star games (basketball was added in 1946) draw capacity crowds. The selection of the players has been placed in the hands of committees and regulations drawn up to assure that each geographical area and all sizes of schools are represented. Shotwell in 1949 was assigned the task of preparing the regional map still in use for determining geographic areas.41

The Insurance Program

Shotwell never let the members of the association forget the need for some form of permanent disability insurance for severely injured players. He sought constantly

39McConachie, "History of the Texas High School Coaches' Association," p. 89.


to aid Orbbie Dee Jacobs and players who might, in the future, suffer similar crippling injuries. In 1937, Shotwell proposed that the coaches invest $250 to set up Orbbie Dee in a magazine subscription business which he could handle from his bed and wheelchair. In 1938, the association also authorized a monthly allowance to help pay Orbbie Dee's drug bill. Orbbie Dee operated his business successfully for the remainder of his life. Nearly all the coaches in the state and many other citizens subscribed to magazines through Orbbie Dee's agency. This plan enabled Jacobs to earn his own living and feel like a productive citizen.

It was not until 1942 that Shotwell was able to persuade the membership to adopt a plan covering their athletes. The original plan called for the association to subsidize an insurance policy which would pay benefits to any permanently injured player. The main points of the plan were:

1. Head coach must be a member of the association.
2. Limited to high school athletes.
3. Physical examinations of all boys must be made prior to the season by a competent physician.
4. Players' names must be listed with the executive secretary before the first game is played.
5. Limited to forty players.

The plan was adopted by the membership and has been improved over the years. For instance, there is no longer a limit

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43 Motion by P. E. Shotwell, Minutes of The Texas High School Coaches' Association, Directors' Meeting, March 3, 1942.
as to the number of athletes insured, and athletes in all sports are covered.

The insurance program and the all-star game may have been Shotwell's greatest contributions to the association, but his influence was felt in practically every facet of the association's operations. Shotwell remained on the Board of Directors continuously until 1948. He served on numerous committees, and in 1945-46 was once again commissioned to do the annual survey on injuries and make recommendations. This survey indicated that twenty per cent of the serious injuries resulted from faulty equipment and poor supervision by coaches. 44

Shotwell served the association so well that in 1960, when the association created its Hall of Honor, Shotwell was one of five coaches to be installed in the initial ceremonies. Of the other four, Jess Kellam, Jimmy Kitts, and Johnny Pierce were his old friends who had played such a leading role in the formation of the association, and the fifth nominee was Herbert Hopper, long-time athletic director at Brazosport and an early president of the Coaches' Association. 45

44 Minutes of meeting of The Texas High School Coaches' Association, August, 1946.

45 Personal interview, Donald Jay, Assistant Executive Secretary, The Texas High School Coaches' Association, June 11, 1973.
CHAPTER V

SHOTWELL—HUMANITARIAN, CIVIC LEADER,
AND EDUCATOR

The inspirational leadership of Pete Shotwell has not been limited to the classroom and athletic fields. His abiding love for his fellow man is evidenced by his leadership in his church, civic organizations, and by his role as a family man.

In each of these areas, the Shotwell personality and drive have influenced and benefited literally thousands of persons.¹

Civic Leader

Although Shotwell entered wholeheartedly into any venture that might benefit his community, he is best known for his work with Lions International. He first joined the Lions Club at Breckenridge in 1927.² He has been a member and outstanding leader since that time, and has earned many

¹Hershel Kimbrell, McMurry College, in questionnaire.

²The Abilene Lions Club Growl, III (February 28, 1962), unpaged. All information not otherwise documented concerning Shotwell’s activities in Lions International are taken from this publication or from the author’s personal knowledge and experiences with Shotwell in Lion activities.
honors for his work in the international organization. He served as president of the Breckenridge club in 1933, the Longview club in 1938, and the Abilene club in 1960-61. In 1962-63, he served as District Governor of District 2-E1 Lions International.

His great love for children is exemplified by his most noteworthy works for the Lions, the promotion of the Lions Crippled Children's Camp at Kerrville, Texas. Shotwell has, for a number of years, toured the state showing films of the work done at the camp to rehabilitate crippled children. He has urged clubs to make it financially possible for eligible children in their community to attend the camp and use the rehabilitation facilities located there.

Shotwell is a frequent visitor to the camp, and until the infirmity of age prevented it, worked several weeks each summer at the camp. He still visits clubs and promotes the work of the Crippled Children's Camp at every opportunity.

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3 Abilene Lions Club Growl.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 This data is taken from the author's personal association with Shotwell in some areas of this work. During his term as Governor, the author's wife served as volunteer secretary for Shotwell's Lions Club business. The author was privileged to accompany and assist Shotwell in work promoting the Crippled Children's Camp.
He has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Texas Lions League for Crippled Children since 1955.7

Shotwell is a member of the St. Paul Methodist Church in Abilene. For many years he taught a Sunday school class and still serves on the Board of Directors. The Shotwells had begun early in their career to encourage church attendance among their students and taught Sunday school classes in each town where they worked.8 Bob Groseclose, former assistant football coach at Abilene High School and a former player for Shotwell at Breckenridge, tells of the influence of the Shotwells:

At Breckenridge Mr. and Mrs. Shot started the "Shotwell Co-Ed" Sunday School class at the First Methodist Church. Many kids, myself included, attended other churches, but would go to their Sunday School class each Sunday.9

In 1928, Shotwell became affiliated with Camp Stewart for Boys at Hunt, Texas, and served until 1962 as director of the programs for high-school age youth.10

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7Abilene Lions Club Growl.
8Shotwell interview, October 15, 1972.
10Abilene Lions Club Growl. It was at Camp Stewart that the author became acquainted with Shotwell and served for five years as his assistant director of the high school program.
Influential Educator

Shotwell's move to McMurry College as Athletic Director in 1956 removed him from his sphere of influence with high school athletic programs. Although he was not involved in coaching; from 1956 until his retirement in 1968, he continued to teach the aspiring coaches who attended his classes that ethics and hard work were the most important aspects of the career they were about to enter.

Shotwell soon made his influence felt as McMurry College representative to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. His work in this area is somewhat removed from the field of high school athletics, so therefore will not be discussed at length in this dissertation. His connection with the NAIA is mentioned only to illustrate once again that Shotwell always gave his best to the job at hand. For his work in all phases of his profession, Shotwell, in addition to the honors previously cited, has earned the following citations: awarded life membership in the P. T. A., 1956; and received the NAIA Award of Merit, 1966.

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12 This data collected from personal interview with Ura Shotwell, April 23, 1973, and examination of plaques and certificates in the possession of the Shotwells.
Humanitarian and Family Man

It is ironic that Pete Shotwell, whose abiding theme in life was the love of young children, was never blessed with natural children of his own. However, this did not deter Pete and Ura from raising a fine family of adopted and foster children. The Shotwells adopted two sons, Joe and Dick Shotwell. Joe was nine years old and Dick seven when the Shotwells legally adopted them in 1939. Final adoption was approved in 1940. The Shotwells did an excellent job in raising their adopted sons. Dick is married and living in Cross Plains, Texas, with his wife and son, Dick Neal Shotwell, Jr. Needless to say, Dick Neal Jr. is the apple of the Shotwells' eye. Currently five years of age, Dick Neal is receiving all the love and affection it is possible for grandparents to bestow on their grandchildren. Joe is still unmarried.

In 1946 when the Shotwells left Longview to return to Abilene, the move upset Joe who hated to leave behind his friendships in Longview and move into a new environment. Being somewhat shy and reticent as well as resentful of the move, Joe found it rather difficult to make friends in

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13 Interview with Ura Shotwell, October 15, 1972.
14 Ibid.
Abilene. Being the son of the coach is generally considered to be somewhat of a handicap to a youngster, anyway. Finally after a few weeks of solid effort on his part without seemingly making much headway in this department, Joe decided to run away from home and return to Longview. Mrs. Ura Shotwell relates the story in the following manner:

We realized Joe was having some problems and he came home one afternoon particularly depressed. He had been made the butt of a prank at school which sent him on an errand to an abandoned house. He came in and wanted to talk to Shot, but Shot was at a banquet, ironically as it turned out, making a speech on the subject of spending time with one's children, listening to their problems, and keeping them on the right path. Not finding Shot available for counseling was the last straw, and Joe decided to leave home. I heard him rummaging around in his room and heard coins jingling, but didn't realize he was robbing his piggy bank for travel money. Joe slipped out of the house and left. I soon discovered he was gone and when eleven o'clock came and I hadn't found him, I was frantic. At eleven Shot came in from his banquet and I told him that while he was out worrying about other people's children, his own son had run away. Shot jumped in his car and went out every road toward Longview, but of course he couldn't find Joe. Shot, who had always worked closely with the police, reported the incident and word was sent out along the highway to Ft. Worth, Dallas, and Longview to be on the lookout for Joe. It was in 1946, the first year after the war, and travel was pretty tight. We had a friend named Ray Martin who lived near Dallas right on the highway and asked Ray to watch for him. A policeman friend in Longview agreed to watch for Joe's arrival and phone Shot.

We were up all night worried sick, but the next evening here came Joe walking in the door. He had caught a ride in a car to Ranger. At Ranger he hopped into an empty freight car he thought was headed east and went to sleep. When he awoke the next morning, he found the car was on a siding and he was no nearer Longview than before he boarded it.
He went into town and got some breakfast, and a man came along and picked him up and took him to Ft. Worth. I don't know who the man was, but he talked to Joe all the way to Ft. Worth and convinced him to return home. Joe had enough money to catch the train back to Abilene so he returned that evening by train. Needless to say, although he did not neglect his civic duties, Shot began to pay more attention to his own sons.¹⁵

The Shotwells also raised two foster sons, Pat and Mike Pelfrey. Mike recently completed his Ph.D. at Texas University and is teaching psychology at the University of South Carolina. Mike has two children, giving the Shotwells three grandchildren. The mother of Pat and Mike was an old friend of the Shotwells. When Mrs. Pelfrey became ill and died, the Shotwells got the court's assent to raise the boys on a foster parent basis. The Pelfreys came to live with the Shotwells in 1953 when Mike was a sophomore and Pat was an eighth grader.¹⁶

Joe, Dick, Pat, and Mike received all the love and affection any parent could ever have given a child. After all, the Shotwells had been practicing for years by serving as supplementary parents to all the youngsters who played for Shot or attended classes taught by either of the Shotwells.

Ura Shotwell still teaches sewing classes several afternoons a week in a community center for underprivileged girls

¹⁵Ura Shotwell, interview, October 15, 1972.
¹⁶Ibid.
of junior high age. In addition to the sewing instruction, she seeks donated materials to enable the girls to make school clothing they could not otherwise afford.

These aspects of the Shotwell career are mentioned in an effort to emphasize that both Shotwell and his wife were devoted teachers and civic-minded citizens. Both feel a deep sense of responsibility to society and their community. Both truly love young people and have been willing to spend much of their resources aiding these youngsters to develop a richer life.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The preceding incidents have been related in an attempt to give the reader insight into the forces which molded the character of a man who, as the years went by, wielded great influence on the lives and characters of several thousand proteges, peers, and others with whom he came in contact.

The anecdotes relating to the character of Ura Shotwell are discussed in order to allow the reader to visualize how the personal traits of the two, while seemingly different, actually tend to harmonize and allow them to work as a team.

It is really quite an experience to attend a gathering of any sort with the Shotwells. If the occasion is merely the meeting of a small group of intimate friends, Ura Shotwell will almost completely dominate the affair. She is always vivacious, full of energy, a charming hostess and tends to lead and channel all conversation. Pete Shotwell will usually remain quietly in the background and contribute to the conversation only if he is asked a direct question or if he has special knowledge of some aspect of the conversational subject. When he does speak out, Ura, in nearly all
cases, will defer to Shotwell. If there is a conflict of opinion, both will tactfully steer the conversation into other channels.

Conversely, if the occasion is a large gathering with formal aspects, the roles of the Shotwells tend to reverse themselves. Pete Shotwell, small of stature and quiet in manner, will somehow nearly always become the dominant force in the group. He does this, I am sure, without being conscious of it. He will still seem to be shy and reticent, but after a short period of time almost everyone in the group will be seeking his advice or opinions. The cloak of leadership seems to fall naturally on his shoulders. Shotwell has a great, and perhaps unconscious, gift of organization and can, with effortless ease, soon have the entire group organized and working under his leadership. On these occasions, Ura Shotwell will sit quietly in the background. The author has witnessed this occurrence on many occasions and has never seen either of the Shotwells attempt to upstage or usurp the role of the other.

Perhaps the most amazing aspect of these exhibitions is the unobtrusive teamwork of the couple. Each knows the role that he or she should play and their timing in assuming their proper role is near perfect.

Pete Shotwell’s uncanny ability to automatically inherit or assume leadership defies description; but it, more than
any other factor, probably explains his success in life. He is nearly always able to establish instant rapport with individuals or groups. Young children especially are quickly drawn to him. Perhaps it is because he always notices them and always treats them as adults. The child will sense immediately that here is someone who not only cares about him, but is willing to accept him at his own level. It is a gift that is to be much envied and one which has served Shotwell well throughout his life.

Perhaps this quality can best be described as a sense that here is a man in whom you can, without reservation, place your complete trust. You will further sense that Shotwell is likely to be a stern taskmaster, but that regardless of the demands he makes upon you, he always has your ultimate welfare uppermost in his mind.

Throughout his career as coach, teacher, humanitarian, and tireless worker for the enrichment of youth, Shotwell has always emphasized, by word and example, that the real values of life are attained only by hard work and love and respect for one's fellow man. In all his various teachings he made the point that dedication to the job at hand and a willingness to sacrifice personal glory for the good of the group, would, eventually, bring about the achievement of one's desired goals in life.

Shotwell's many honors attest to the fact that he holds a revered position in the annals of the athletic and
educational institutions of the state of Texas and has exerted considerable influence on the national level.

His achievements call attention to his extraordinary abilities as a leader of men and a molder of the character of youth. His exemplary personal life attests to his willingness to live by the code which he preached. However, like all humans, Shotwell had his weaknesses.

More than two years of intense investigating, probing, conducting of an opinion poll among his associates, and the personal interviewing of approximately a hundred Shotwell acquaintances have revealed that only a very few people who have known Shotwell intimately have disliked him, and not a single person was willing to condemn the man or his methods without qualifying their statements. Without exception, those who participated in the collection of data, assessed Pete Shotwell as an exceptional person; most participants, and especially those who had played for him or worked closely with him in a professional capacity, believed that he demonstrated the qualities of greatness.

Despite his often demonstrated love of his fellow man and his own inordinate capacity for work, he frequently provoked momentary anger or resentment among those with whom he worked. Shotwell tried to approach every problem with an open mind, but once he was convinced he was right, his single-mindedness of purpose and his intolerance of inferior work
often made it difficult for those with conflicting ideas to oppose him. Shotwell tended to confront his problems in a head-on, straightforward manner which sometimes caused his contemporaries to feel he was attempting to dominate them by sheer force of will rather than by the soundness of his arguments.

In his early career he achieved his goals the hard way by pushing forward with all the vigor required, hoping that after accomplishing his purpose, he would be able to smooth over any injured feelings as best he could. This was particularly true in his battles with the Interscholastic League over the eight-semester eligibility rule. However, experience taught him finesse, and during the highlight of his career, he was able to exert the force of his will in a tactful way.

Perhaps he avoided making enemies because he had learned to fight hard for his cause, but when the battle was fairly lost, to gracefully concede defeat and abide by the mandate of the winning forces. It may even be, as Shotwell remarked in a last informal interview, "I have made enemies, but I have simply outlived them all." Shotwell learned early that winning coaches are more open to criticism from their peers than are losing coaches. Opposing mentors sometimes tend to believe the winners must be shading the rules a little to gain an advantage. Shotwell learned to take this in stride, and by the simple expedient of producing educationally sound programs at each of his schools, prove that his theories of
teaching, rather than deviation from ethical standards, were producing the desired results.

Practically all persons contacted in the compilation of data agreed that it was Shotwell's enthusiasm, determination, and boundless reservoir of energy which enabled him to succeed. He was never too busy to take on yet another worthwhile project. Despite the many projects underway at a given time, Shotwell had the capacity to organize so well that he seemed able to handle an endless array of projects while operating at an unhurried pace. A great deal of his success in this area lay in his innate ability to get the enthusiastic support of the entire community behind him. By these means, he soon had any number of people assisting him in getting the job done.

A few people felt that Shotwell was too much of an authoritarian and that he counted too heavily on his own judgement. This feeling, however, was most frequently expressed by rival coaches; and seldom, if ever, did one of his ex-players express this sentiment. Almost to a man, his ex-players rated him as "firm, but fair."

In his early boyhood, Shotwell had developed a keen interest in God and the work of the church. He set an example to his students by faithfully attending and assuming leading roles in the Methodist Church. His teachings never let his students forget that God demanded a certain moral code. As has been demonstrated on many occasions in this
dissertation, his students never forgot these teachings, although in some cases, they seemed to fear the wrath of Shotwell more than the wrath of God.

Shotwell seems firmly convinced that God intended him to be an educator and to use competitive sports as his teaching tool. He has stated many times that he never regretted entering the field. Ura Shotwell remembered one occasion, after the team had played poorly and unexpectedly lost an important game, that Shotwell remarked, "A man has to be a fool to depend on a bunch of kids to make a living for him."¹ This, in nearly fifty years of marriage, was the only indication of regret she had ever heard expressed for the field he had chosen to enter; and this remark is obviously not to be taken seriously.

When a man has reached his peak and retired, he usually divests himself of many of his life-long interests and begins to live largely in the past. Pete Shotwell has not followed this pattern. His retirement has allowed him more time to travel about the country extolling the merits of the Lions Club Crippled Children's Program and speaking on the value of ethically conducted athletic programs. Even as the infirmities of age take their visible toll, Shotwell's interest in young people remains the driving force in his life. His daily life still reflects the statement he made in

his speech at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame induction, "I
never met a youngster I didn't love. There's something
about them that draws me to them."  

At the present time, professionalism may well be
destroying the educational concept of interscholastic and
intercollegiate athletics. The crass commercialism asso-
ciated with ticket sales and television receipts is rapidly
corrupting true amateur competition. There is inordinate
pressure brought to bear on coaches and athletes to win at
all costs in order to sell tickets and fill the stadium.
Many athletes now compete on the lower levels, not for the
fun and educational value derived, but merely to use the
high school and college as a training ground for a short-
lived career as a professional athlete. Many of these
athletes have a distorted image of the real values derived
from the game. Can it be that man has regressed rather than
progressed in building character through athletics? Pres-
umably this is not the case. Hopefully there will always
be coaches like Pete Shotwell who believe in the educational
value of athletics and who will keep the role of inter-
scholastic athletics in proper perspective and make it truly
a character-building device. For this reason, there are many

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2 Excerpt from a speech by Shotwell on December 31,
1971, Dallas, Texas. A tape recording of this speech is in
the author's possession.
who believe that the story of Pete Shotwell should be heard in the hopes that it will serve as an inspiration to some aspiring young coach to emulate the teachings of Shotwell and return, or help to keep, high school athletics that which it was meant to be—a fun-filled educational experience.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a requirement for certification of coaches should include at least one course dealing with the history and purpose of interscholastic athletics. Heavy emphasis should be placed on the proper role of the coach as a teacher and molder of character. Required readings for the course should include biographies of outstanding men in the field who have made lasting contributions to the educational process by virtue of their personal beliefs, character, and their records of success.

It is hoped that this study of Pete Shotwell will serve to enrich the literature available for research in this area.
APPENDIX
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Dear ______________:

I am preparing a biographical doctoral dissertation on the life and influence of Mr. P. E. "Pete" Shotwell. I have permission from Mr. and Mrs. Shotwell, who are very close personal friends, to explore every facet of Mr. Shotwell's life and career and to relate both positive and negative aspects.

I need the help of selected friends, relatives, and professional colleagues of Mr. Shotwell who are willing to supply data in both an objective and subjective form.

All information supplied will be kept in absolute confidence. No member of the Shotwell family will have access to the information. No one will be directly quoted or identified without their expressed permission (in writing).

Your cooperation in supplying this data will be deeply appreciated and will be of immeasurable value in assuring that Mr. Shotwell receives his well-deserved place in the educational literature.

Sincerely,

Sid Simpson
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET
PRINCE ELMER "PETE" SHOTWELL

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain data, both formal and anecdotal, covering the various aspects of the life of P. E. Shotwell. The data collected will be used in preparing a biography of Mr. Shotwell.

Your contributions are vital to the biography. Will you assist in compiling a complete and true story of Mr. Shotwell's life and contributions to interscholastic athletics by supplying information requested on this data sheet? Your contributions will be deeply appreciated.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided for the return of this data sheet. If you have any reservations or questions concerning the purposes of this questionnaire, please call collect for:

Sid Simpson
Area Code 915 573-3541
Snyder, Texas

Directions: Please give detailed information concerning the life and activities of Coach P. E. "Pete" Shotwell by filling in data in the spaces provided and by answering questions throughout the areas included in these data sheets. Use spaces indicated for Additional Data to supplement requested information when that seems important to you. Whenever additional space is needed, use the back of the sheet.

Your name __________________________ Date __________________
Address ____________________________  Street __________________ City __________________ State __________________

When did you first meet and become associated with Pete Shotwell? ____________________________

In what city? ____________________________

In what capacity? ____________________________
Please answer only in the areas in which you have personal knowledge by virtue of having witnessed or been a part of the incidents.

1. Describe Pete Shotwell as a child; and as a teen-ager.

2. Describe his home environment as a child and teen-ager.
3. Describe Pete Shotwell as a college student. Mention any outstanding character traits or weaknesses.

4. List or mention any factors which caused him to become a teacher.
5. What words would you select as most descriptive of Pete Shotwell?

6. Are these words consistently descriptive of him during all the periods of his life with which you are familiar? If not, describe the variations.

7. What is your favorite story about Pete Shotwell?
8. Do you know other stories or events which describe his individual characteristics or which cast light on his support of a particular cause or philosophy?

FOR PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES ONLY:

9. Describe the Shotwell philosophy which guided his relationships with his students and players.
10. Describe his working relationships with his assistants, superiors, and other professional colleagues.

11. Comment on his basic beliefs in reference to:

   A. Coaching as a profession

   B. The ethical concepts practiced by Shotwell
C. Unethical concepts or inconsistencies in philosophy which were evident in his work.

You have my permission to quote any of the above data. I have no objection to being identified as the source of the material.

Signed______________________________________.

I prefer not to be identified as the source of any of the above data.

Signed______________________________________.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Monographs


Yearbooks

Breckenridge High School Buckaroo, Breckenridge, Texas, 1928-1931.

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, "Why High-School Football:" The Interscholastic Leaguer, XI (December, 1927).

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, Letter printed in The Interscholastic Leaguer, XVI (December, 1932), 4.


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The newspaper and other clippings cited in the footnotes lacking data to identify them fully can be found in the author's collection or in the files of Ura and P. E. Shotwell.

Unpublished Materials


Letter-questionnaires were sent to randomly selected colleagues, friends, and former players of P. E. Shotwell. The responses are in the possession of the author.


Minutes of the Texas High School Coaches' Association, from 1930 to 1952, on file in the Executive Secretary's office in the Perry-Brooks Building in Austin, Texas.

Minutes of The University Interscholastic League, from 1920 to 1946, on file in the office of the League's Athletic Director on the University of Texas campus.


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Personal Interviews

Blackburn, B. L., Former assistant coach to Shotwell; Abilene, Texas, January 15, 1972, and April 23, 1973.


Fambrough, Don, Football Coach, University of Kansas; Lawrence, Kansas, March 14, 1972.

Gaw, Bruce, Former player for Shotwell; Dallas, Texas, December 31, 1971.

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McConachie, L. W., Executive Secretary, The Texas High School Coaches' Association; Austin, Texas, November 5, 1972.

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Osborne, Buck, Former assistant coach to Shotwell; Abilene, Texas, April, 1972.


Warren, Harry, Former player for Shotwell; Dallas, Texas, December 31, 1971.
Personal Files of P. E. and Ura Shotwell

Three bound volumes of letters and tributes for "P. E. Shotwell Day."

Two scrapbooks containing personal letters and newspaper clippings.

Files containing personal correspondence and newspaper clippings.