

# THE VISITOR

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## WAINO KORTESMAKI AWARDED AMERICAN FARMER DEGREE

Waino Kortesmaki, Cloquet, Minnesota, is the third young man from Minnesota to receive the degree of American Farmer, highest degree awarded by the Future Farmers of America to its members. The degree was conferred upon him at the sixth annual F.F.A. convention held at Kansas City, Mo., in November, 1933.

In choosing candidates for the degree, each state organization may submit one candidate for each one thousand members in the state organization. Not more than seventy-five candidates may be elected to this degree annually.

Waino has a long record of honors and achievements in his farm practice work and his activities in the agriculture department and F.F.A. organization at Thomson Township and in the state, and finally in the nation.

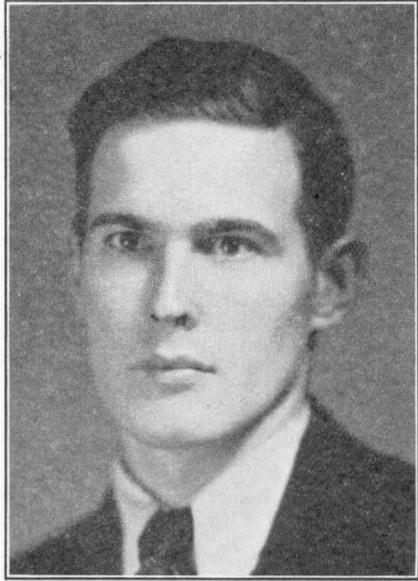
From the very beginning, when the F.F.A. chapter in Thomson Township was organized in November, 1929, under the supervision of Leo Knuti, Waino has held positions of responsibility and has been prominent in local and state activities. He was elected to the office of president in the local F.F.A. chapter at Thomson Township in 1931. At this time, he was already holding the position of secretary of the state organization of the F.F.A. to which he was elected at the first annual meeting in the spring of 1930. He was reelected the following year to this position. He is a member of the state F.F.A. Executive Committee, elected in 1932 for the three year term.

His study of vocational agriculture began in 1929 under the supervision of Leo Knuti, now supervisor of agricultural education in St. Louis county, who was at that time instructor at Thomson Township consolidated schools.

In 1931-32 his farm practice work was conducted under the supervision of Wilho Martin. He continued under the direction of Mr. Harold Lawrenz, present agriculture instructor at Thomson Township.

Waino was graduated from Thomson Township high school in 1931 with a high scholarship average of 89.65, the highest ranking boy in the class. He maintained an "A" average in agriculture.

Because of his splendid achievements and his fine leadership activities, he re-



Waino Kortesmaki

ceived his degree of Minnesota Farmer in the spring of 1931. This degree is one step below that of American Farmer.

At the University of Minnesota, College of Agriculture, Waino is now a junior in the division of Agricultural Education. He is a member of the University Farm Y.M.C.A. and of the Agricultural Education Club. His first two years of college study were taken at the Duluth Junior College.

In his supervised farm practice work in 1930, he conducted projects in alfalfa experimental plots to show the value of lime, different fertilizers and inoculations. He introduced a new variety of oats on the home farm. He was responsible for the introduction of purebred cattle to his father's farm. He began testing his father's dairy herd and culled out four low producers the first year. One cow that was thought to be only a fair producer turned out to be the best in the herd. A few cows were "placed on probation," as Waino puts it, "and if their records do not improve they will be sold." The agriculture department at

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### THE STAFF

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Thomson Township tests the herds of some sixty-four farmers on the first and third Saturdays of each month. This testing association was established for the benefit of the local farmers and no charge is made for the service. None of these farmers were ever before in any herd improvement association, and, according to Waino's story, these farmers found that at least one fourth of their herds were composed of cows that did not pay for their feed.

Waino took a farm inventory and kept a complete set of farm and household records of the home farm business. He made plans for crop rotation. He improved the convenience of the farm and beautified the homestead. The planting of fruit trees added to the value of the farm. He carried out a successful poultry project, culling out the low producers and marketing the poultry products in Duluth with the help of his brother. The flock has maintained sixty per cent production since he began his work with the poultry project.

### Experimental Work on Home Farm

Experimental plots have formed a large part of Waino's farm practice work. He has carried on a number of valuable experiments and has carried into practice the facts he has gathered from these experiments. He conducted a potato experimental plot to determine the value of different fertilizers, of certified, of selected, and of treated seeds, as well as the spraying with Bordeaux. In his experimental rye he showed the value of soil preparation and of manure.

### Social Activities

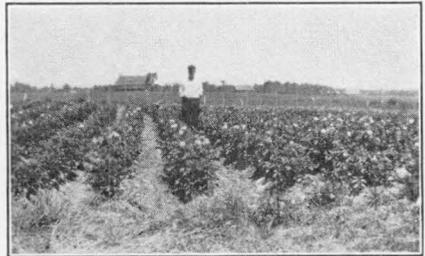
Notwithstanding the demands on his time outside of school hours for his projects, Waino found time to enter school plays and operettas, to be a four-year letter man of the high school basketball and track teams, to play in the high

school orchestra, to take part in local 4-H club work, and to be a member of the high school livestock judging team. He was also very active in the F.F.A. plays and sports. In 1929 he became a member of the American Junior Guernsey Club which is affiliated with the 4-H club work in the country.

A great many honors have been awarded to Waino for his outstanding work, and he has received a large number of rewards ranging from a \$500 scholarship to numerous prizes on potatoes and other farm products.

His essay on "Fertilizer in Agriculture" in which he brought in his own experimental work on the home farm won first prize in 1931 in the annual essay contest of the American Chemical Society. He was one of twelve in the state winning a prize, and was awarded a certificate and a \$20 gold piece.

A farm practice certificate for outstanding work in improved farm practice work in the state is one of his prized possessions. For three years he was the Carlton county 4-H club potato champion, and he also gained third and second place as potato raiser in the state in 1931 and 1932 respectively. For this achievement he was awarded a medal by the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association. In the last three years he has won over \$60 in potato prizes from fairs.



Waino's Potato Experimental Plot, 1933

The Junior Honor Roll of Agriculture at the Northeast Experiment Station bears the name of Waino Kortessmaki.

Waino was chosen winner of a \$500 scholarship by the National 4-H club work committee. The award was made by the International Harvester Company for excellence in extra curricular work in farming among the high schools of the country. The scholarship enabled him to begin his college studies at Duluth Junior College.

In 1931 Waino was chosen as one of the 4-H club boys to receive a trip to the Farm Boys Camp at the State Fair. The

trip is given annually to two boys in the county who have made outstanding long time records in 4-H club work.

Waino seems to have appeared on every program and meeting of any note given in the Thomson Township high school during his four years there. At the Parents and Sons Banquet given by the F.F.A. he gave the speech of welcome. At other affairs he has given the "thank you," the introductory, or the main speech. He was always to be found on the committee lists. In 1932-33 he was a member of the committee to revise the program of work for the F.F.A.

This same year he acted as grain judge at the Community Fair, and the success of the fair was due in part to his efforts. His Irish Cobbler potatoes won first place in the 4-H division at the local, county and state fairs in 1932-33. He was also given third place in the individual grain judging at the State Potato and Grain Show, and gave a talk at the Potato Banquet during Minnesota Potato Week.

During a four week's illness of his father, Waino had complete charge of running the farm with plenty of opportunity to put into practice what he had learned in his agriculture classes and in his own project work and experiments.

In 1933 he helped to put up and was in charge of the vocational agriculture booth at the State Fair.

In 1931 he was appointed local representative in Carlton county for the National 4-H club magazine. He has also from time to time submitted a number of articles to other newspapers and farm magazines.

### Has Faith in the Dairy Cow

The major enterprise on the Kortesmaki farm is dairying. Their 120 acre farm is located ten miles from Duluth. Taking Waino's story in his own words, we learn that "the next leading enterprise is potato raising with poultry and gardening as minor enterprises. The original farm was purchased four years ago, and the eighty additional acres were purchased last year, making it possible to increase the size of the farm business in the future. This additional purchase is an important outcome of the interest taken by my father in my farm practice work. . . ."

In return for Waino's work on the farm, his father purchased for him a pure bred Guernsey heifer for \$150, whose dam has a cow testing association record of 410 pounds butterfat and whose sire's three closest dams has pro-

duced an average of 610 pounds butterfat. This animal is the foundation for a future pure bred herd.

"The potato crop," says Waino, "is the second largest enterprise on our farm. From field trips to potato fields I learned that our seeds were mixed, infected with disease and in a so-called run out condition. My father complained in the previous year of a poor yield. At a family meeting we took up the question as to whether it pays to raise potatoes. I convinced the family that the only way we could improve our yield was to buy new seed and keep that seed free from diseases and true to its variety characteristics. The following Saturday we set out to see some reliable farmer who had good seed for sale. We stopped at a farm where they were digging potatoes. The yield looked good, the potatoes were true to type and free from disease. We purchased fourteen bushels of the seed for the foundation stock. The new seed that we purchased outyielded our own seed by twenty per cent. . . . One bushel of these potatoes was tested for mosaic in the green house at the Northeastern experiment station. This seed will be used for a seed plot."

These incidents are just samples of the type of thinking and the well-planned work that has been carried on at the Kortesmaki farm with Waino planning and instigating, aiding and encouraging.

He is at present the owner of two purebred bulls and one purebred cow. Yearly he rents about five acres of land to carry on home projects with alfalfa, potatoes, oats, and rye.



Purebred Bull Owned by Waino

Waino has contributed a great deal to his community in service. He encouraged farmers to raise Anthony oat seed after finding through his experiments that Anthony oats was best suited to the soil of that region. He found this variety outyielded other varieties by over 10 bushels per acre. He encouraged the farmers to grow alfalfa. He helped

sponsor farmers' club and part-time class. He tested milk for the local farmers. He encouraged farmers to test their soil for acidity and distributed agricultural bulletins to them. He encouraged local farmers to make use of the local agriculture department and Experiment station.

In his own home, Waino built up a library of over 300 farm bulletins, a number of Farm Year Books and other books of interest to the farmer.

"The cooperation of my parents and instructor has made this education on problems of farm operation and farm management possible. Knowledge may be gained from books but this knowledge can only be made a part of one through actual practice such as received in the study of vocational agriculture. My home projects have improved our farm practice to such an extent that in terms of money it would be practically impossible to estimate the benefits received. However, these projects, both my own and those of others, have made our community more progressive and our parents richer in measures of scientific knowledge and experience. Therefore, we, the Future Farmers of America, have planted a firm foundation for a more prosperous, more progressive rural community."

The Future Farmers of America is a farm boys' organization, controlled, officered, and operated by farm boys. It is designed to recognize and to encourage the instinctive tendencies of boys to organize into gangs or groups. The purpose of the organization is to promote the study of vocational agriculture and to encourage the boys to improve the quality of their work both in school and at home; to create more interest in the intelligent choice of farming occupations; to create and nurture a love of country life; to provide recreational and educational entertainment for Future Farmers of America; to promote thrift by membership through the establishment of savings accounts, and investments in agricultural enterprises; to afford a medium of co-operative buying and selling; to establish confidence of the farm boy in himself and his work; to promote scholarship, and to develop local leadership.

The plan of organization for the Future Farmers of America includes a local chapter for each high school where vocational agriculture is taught. The local chapters operate under a state charter and a state constitution. The various state organizations operate under a na-

tional charter, thus giving the entire program the dignity, scope, and stability it needs to assure its success.

The Minnesota Association of Future Farmers of America aims to establish a local chapter of the F.F.A. in each enterprising community where a department of vocational agriculture is maintained in the high school. This organization allows members to advance from grade to grade upon the basis of their achievement. Ample opportunity is given to measure their skills in the field of agriculture and to make decisions for themselves. Excellence in the work and unusual abilities are suitably rewarded as is evident in the long list of honors and awards conferred upon Waino Kortesmaki.

The idea of learning how to farm through study in the classroom and through farm practice has not met with entire approval of farmers in the past. Men in the professions are products of school preparation and there is no reason why successful farmers cannot be prepared as a result of school experiences. For, as Waino remarked in a speech of his, "Farm practice is not a mere preparation for farming; it is farming." The activities of the departments of agriculture in the high schools serve to assist the boys to carefully plan their farming careers and at the same time get started in one or more of the farm enterprises.

Schools are or should be maintained for the purpose of better preparing the youth for living a wholesome satisfying life and making a living. Minnesota is essentially an agricultural state. The schools' offering, therefore, should include instruction in agriculture for its rural students to the end that all those who plan to enter upon farming as a life occupation may have the opportunity of acquiring the background of learning and experience that has come to Waino Kortesmaki as a result of his school activities. The opportunities that are provided for the rural youth at the Thomson Township consolidated school is due largely to the interest, foresight and untiring efforts of Superintendent A. L. Winterquist. He knows the need of rural people and he tries to make the school meet that need. It is possible for every high school in the state to give its rural students a real new deal in education by adding a department of agriculture to the school offering. This gives a trained rural leader for your community and provides opportunity for the farm boys to become members of the F.F.A.