

THE VISITOR

Devoted to the Interests of Agricultural Education in Minnesota Schools

Vol. XXII

OCTOBER, 1934

No. 1

FROM YESTERDAY'S LESSONS TO TOMORROW'S PROBLEMS

Twenty Years of Service

"The teachers of agriculture in the public high schools of Minnesota have long wanted some means of inter-communication that each might know something of what the others are doing." That is the first sentence written by Dr. A. V. Storm in Volume I, Number 1, of the Visitor. This first issue is dated January, 1914. The first volume contains five numbers running from January to May. It has occurred to the writer that a great many of the persons who still read the Visitor would be interested in some notes gleaned from the pages of the initial volume now over twenty years old.

The Visitor staff listed for Volume I is as follows:

A. V. Storm
D. D. Mayne
G. A. Works
E. C. Davis
G. F. Howard
T. A. Erickson

One Hundred Thirty-five Teachers Listed

The directory for the Minnesota high school departments of agriculture in the first volume of the Visitor contains the names of one hundred and thirty-five teachers. These men were assembled from nineteen different states. Many of the young men listed among these early pioneers in agricultural education are now well known figures in the field of service to agriculture. Space does not permit giving the entire list but a few names are selected somewhat at random to show where some of our leaders of today were teaching twenty years ago.

G. A. Amidon Litchfield
R. O. Bridgford Grove City
C. B. Campbell Deer River
E. G. Cort Brown Valley
W. K. Dyer Argyle
D. C. Dvoracek Montgomery
A. M. Field Northfield
L. H. Fudge Stephen
L. O. Jacobs Anoka
J. S. Jones Madison
P. S. Jordan Hastings

O. M. Kiser Hector
A. J. Lashbrook Fergus Falls
L. E. McMillan Lake Crystal
C. J. McNelly Willmar
A. C. O'Banion Pine Island
A. J. Olson Waseca
R. C. Pollock Owatonna
J. P. Sheay Hutchinson
J. I. Swedberg Cokato
L. H. Thurwachter Kasson
LeRoy Uptagrafft West Concord
W. E. Watson Herman
Henry Werner Thief River Falls
L. H. Thurwachter and LeRoy Uptagrafft are the gold star members of the agriculture teachers for 1934. They are the only ones out of the list of 135 teachers in 1914 who are at present teaching agriculture in Minnesota.

Time Marches On

Those who remember these early days will recall that at the time of the publication of the first volume of the Visitor, President L. D. Coffey was professor of education at the University of Illinois, Dean W. C. Coffey was professor of sheep and meat at the University of Illinois, J. M. Drew was registrar at University Farm, A. D. Wilson was director of the agricultural extension division, Dean E. M. Freeman was assistant dean of the department of agriculture at Minnesota, and Dr. E. C. Stakman had just begun his study of rust. C. J. Schulz was state superintendent of public instruction and George B. Aiton was state high school inspector charged with the responsibility of promoting the program for teaching agriculture in the high schools.

L. E. Potter was active in Farmers' Institute work and gave much of his time to helping the teachers of agriculture. Land O' Lakes, now one of the largest farmers' cooperatives in the world, had not been organized. The American Farm Bureau had not even been "dreamed of" and J. O. Christianson, Superintendent of the "oldest and largest school of its kind in America" was a little boy on a big farm on the wind-swept prairies of good old South Dakota. Many of our

THE VISITOR

Published quarterly during the calendar year, in October, January, April, and July, by the Division of Agricultural Education, University of Minnesota, University Farm, St. Paul, Minn.

Entered as second class matter at the post-office at St. Paul, Minn., under the act of August 2, 1912.

Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized August 2, 1918.

THE STAFF

A. V. STORM
A. M. FIELD

V. E. NYLIN
C. L. NEMZEK

A. M. FIELD, *Editor*

present excellent teachers of agriculture who are now driving cars of their own were than being pushed around in baby buggies or perhaps proudly riding with daddy in the fashionable family surrey.

Yes, time marches on, but then twenty years does not seem so long after all to those who keep busy rendering a worthwhile service to mankind. The end of another twenty years will surely find many of the present agriculture teachers occupying the important positions now served by the teachers of 1914. Perhaps it is a little early but, anyway, here is good luck and best wishes to those whose unselfish devotion to their work today will warrant the promotions to a wider future service.

News

A portion of each issue of Volume I of the Visitor was devoted to news items concerning the activities of teachers of agriculture and others interested in the program for teaching agriculture in the high schools. The following items are quoted from the five issues that make up Volume I.

"F. A. Andert, superintendent, and E. C. Magill, agriculture teacher, at Wayzata, are working out a course especially adapted to the conditions of their community. It is always promising when the superintendent and agriculture instructor unite harmoniously for the development of the work."

"The high school at Thief River Falls fattened a steer last year and gave a carcass demonstration with him at the farmers' week, exhibiting data of cost, methods and kind of feeding, and profits. The work was so valuable that the school is repeating the work this year with two steers. The community is greatly interested and sees the practicality of agriculture in a high school."

"At the Lake Crystal farmers' short course the major portion of the premiums offered for the best exhibits of corn were carried off by one of the members of the Boys' Corn Club."

"It is interesting to notice that the teachers of agriculture and the superintendent of the city schools where agriculture is taught are recognized by the farmers and business men as a genuine part of the community's business life by making them officers of such organizations as business men's clubs, county fairs, local products shows, committees to purchase well-bred stock, short courses and farmers' weeks. This is one of the many indications of an improved relation between home and school interests."

"An Agricultural Education Club has been formed at the College of Agriculture. Students and members of the faculty interested in the teaching of secondary and elementary school agriculture are eligible to membership."

"A. M. Field of Northfield reports the establishment of twenty farmers' clubs. It is stated that there is not a farmer within a radius of ten miles of Northfield who has not access to at least one of these clubs. Has any school a better record?"

"The manual training department at LeSueur has taken a contract to erect a barn."

"*Farm Management*, by Andrew Boss, 237 pages. Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago. This text has been published for use in secondary agricultural schools and in high schools giving courses in agriculture."

"The Visitor is indebted to P. E. Miller of the West Central School of Agriculture for the following account of a contest at Morris: 'The West Central School of Agriculture of the University of Minnesota conducted the Second Annual Minnesota High-School Corn- and Stock-Judging Contest on March 12 and 13.'"

"The Minnesota Association of High School Agricultural Instructors held its fourth annual meeting at the College of Agriculture, March 27 and 28. The sessions were devoted to the discussion of problems connected with extension and class-room work. Seventy-seven of the one hundred thirty-six instructors were

in attendance. The officers elected for the ensuing year are: president, A. M. Field, Northfield; vice-president, A. J. Olson, Waseca; secretary, W. J. Corwin, Grand Rapids; treasurer, W. E. Hedgcock, Albert Lea."

"C. L. McNelly, who has been in charge of agriculture in the Willmar high school for several years, has resigned. He will begin farming at the end of the school year. H. L. Popenoe, of Alexandria, will go to Willmar."

"The agricultural department at Cokato has made 2,500 wealthy apple grafts this spring. These grafts were distributed among the farmers and pupils. The students were required to make the grafts which were given them."

"Many of the men have been testing corn for the farmers of their communities. Mr. Lashbrook, teacher of agriculture in the Fergus Falls high school, has, since January 1, tested 40,800 ears. Has anyone a record that exceeds this? Most of this is school corn, altho about 45 bushels belonged to farmers."

"P. L. Johnsrud, who will graduate in June from the College of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, has been elected instructor in agriculture at Virginia, Minn. Mr. Johnsrud took charge of the work April 1 and will make a feature of garden work in the upper grades this summer. The board of education has provided the department of agriculture with an eighty-acre farm."

"The high school at Slayton has issued a pamphlet entitled 'Murray County Corn and Pork Contests.' It was prepared by R. F. Crim, of the department of agriculture."

Activities of the Teachers

One of the problems of special interest to the pioneer teachers of agriculture according to the first volume of the Visitor was the "school farm." The state law providing funds for the agricultural departments specified that each school must have a school farm of five acres or more. E. C. Davis, then a member of the agricultural education staff, gave special attention to the activities considered appropriate for the school farm. ("Hell's half acre," some of the teachers called it.) If the teachers carried out the many suggestions made by Professor Davis, the school farm rendered a useful service as a means

of interesting the farmers in new and improved methods of farming. Demonstrations of new and improved crops and of improved cultural practices played an important part in the school farm activities. Many new varieties of grains and grasses were introduced by teachers of agriculture via the school farm route. For example, the first alfalfa was grown in many communities on the school farm where the farmers learned of its superior feeding value.

Altho the school farm has gone the way of the horse and buggy, the high top shoes, and other one-time useful things it did serve a useful purpose twenty years ago. If the school farm did not do anything else, it forms the basis of many interesting memories for those who had one years and years ago.

Emphasis on Production

The pages of the first volume of the Visitor indicate that one of the major objectives for teaching agriculture was on problems of increasing production. The idea was to teach the farm boys how to "make two blades of grass grow where one grew before." The present activities of the triple A seems to indicate that the teachers did a good job. In contrast with the objectives given emphasis in the 1914 issues of the Visitor, the May, 1933 issue of the Visitor states that "the program for teaching agriculture is no longer primarily concerned with the problem of how to 'raise two blades of grass where one grew before.' In fact the major emphasis is not on grass at all but on human values."

In the early days of our agriculture teaching program, the teachers of agriculture were regarded as service agents for the farmers in the community. In rendering this service the teachers pruned orchards, tested seed corn, treated sick cattle, docked lambs and performed innumerable similar services. In contrast with this type of activity, the teachers today use their time in teaching farm boys or farmers how to perform the various jobs themselves. The teachers use their time now in organization work designed to encourage rural folk to plan and to carry on their own program of activities.

Plans for the Future

Interesting as these reminiscences might be, the thoughtful and somewhat bewildered teachers of today are more concerned about the future than they are about the past. Surely they feel that they are in the midst of a rapidly evolving new social and economic order. The pro-

gram for teaching agriculture must be adjusted to meet the demands of a changing rural as well as urban civilization. Students, and teachers as well, are hard pressed to grasp the true meaning of the rapidly increasing complexities of modern life. In the past the schools have always come forward to meet the new demands on them for giving the training needed by its students. At present it seems necessary for the agriculture teachers to pull up stakes and move ahead.

The following are suggestive of some shifts in emphasis that will in a measure help the rural people to a better understanding of what this modern recovery is all about.

1. Shift the emphasis on instruction in problems of production to the problems of "economic production" and improved management in order to produce at a lower cost and at the same time improve the quality of the product.

2. Increase the amount of time given to economics. Problems of marketing quality products, cooperative organizations and problems of distribution should be accorded a prominent place in the study by the students in the agriculture classes.

3. National and international problems affecting local production should receive emphasis as a basis for gaining a better understanding of the changing social and economic existence.

4. Social problems should be studied to the end that appropriate adjustment can be made to the changing standards of living.

5. Increase the emphasis given to planning for constructive recreational activities. Young people as well as adults must find opportunities for enriching what appears to be an enforced amount of leisure time. Plans for worthwhile, wholesome entertainment, reading, physical activities, music, dramatics and other forms of suitable and satisfying activities must become a definite part of the instructional program.

6. Teachers of agriculture must become a part of the program for adult education. Attention should be given to the problems and techniques involved in planning and executing appropriate training for adults.

7. The problems and objectives of the national recovery program should be accorded special emphasis in the work of the agriculture teacher. Such problems as taxes, government loans, production programs, rehabilitation programs, monetary

policies, farm credit, and land utilization should become subjects of special study in the agriculture classes.

8. Training for citizenship should be a part of the program for teaching agriculture. Instilling an interest in local civic affairs is an important approach to a better understanding of the civic problems of the state and nation.

These new problems should not be considered from the standpoint of additions to an already over-crowded course of study in agriculture. The old course of study must be purged of its many obsolete and irrelevant materials and these new social and economic problems should be substituted to the end that the program for instruction and study in agriculture be made to harmonize with the activities and the purposes of our present and future generations.

IDEALS

As you think you travel; as you love you attract. You are today where your thoughts have brought you; you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you. You can not escape the results of your thought but you can endure and learn, can accept and be glad. You will realize the vision (not the idle wish) of your heart, be it base or beautiful or a mixture of both, for you will always gravitate toward that which you, secretly, most love. In your hands will be placed the exact results of your thoughts; you will receive that which you earn; no more, no less. Whatever your present environment may be, you will fall, remain, or rise with your thought, your wisdom, your ideal. You will become as small as your controlling desire; as great as your dominant aspiration.

—James Allen

NEW GUIDE IN FARM MANAGEMENT

A Guide in Farm Organization and Operation, by Dr. L. F. Garey of the Division of Agricultural Economics, University of Minnesota, will be available in a few weeks. It is being published by the Burgess Publishing Company, 426 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, and will retail at \$1.50. The book contains a detailed plan in the study and reorganization of a farm business as well as data and other information useful to teachers in the field of farm management.