

# THE VISITOR

Devoted to the Interests of Agricultural Education in Minnesota Schools

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## AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN NORWAY

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In order to understand the system of agricultural education and the training of agricultural teachers in Norway, it is necessary to have a general view of Norwegian agriculture and its place in the economy. Of the total area, only about 3.61 per cent is considered arable land. About 25 per cent of the total area is productive forest land. The remainder consists of mountains, inland lakes and streams. The area of arable land is divided into many small units, a total of 328,000 farms. The farms of Eastern Norway are relatively large, having an average of 103.5 dekar, or about 26 acres of arable land per farm, while the farms of Northern Norway are at the other end of the range having an average area of arable land of 11.2 dekar, or about 2.75 acres. From these figures, the extreme limitations of tillable land is evident, although the farms usually have a large area of mountain pasture land or saeter.

About 28 per cent of the total labor force, 360,000 people of whom one third are women, is engaged in agriculture. The number engaged in agriculture has declined steadily since 1900, and since 1945 the rate of decline has increased, some 30,000 workers having left for industrial occupations.

Another important factor is that, in all parts, except Northern Norway and to a lesser extent, the West Coast, there is a close tie between farming and forestry. Seventy-one per cent of the forest land is privately owned. The major part of the private forest is combined with agriculture as

woods belonging to the individual farms. The term "farm forest" is used to describe the forest belonging to the owner of the farm and usually managed by him. The farm forests, divided among 143,000 farms, account for 75 per cent of the private forests, with an average area of about seventy acres per farm. In addition, farms which do not have any forest land, have the right to take timber for fuel, building and repairs, and to let the cattle graze in forests owned by the community or farm societies. The farms with and without forests have the right of property or use to about 75 per cent of the total forest area.

In areas other than the far northern part of Norway, forest lands contribute varying amounts of real money income (up to 50 per cent) to the farmers. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the usual combination of agriculture and forestry. Many of the farms are too small to enable the owner to subsist on the agriculture yield alone, but he can frequently manage very well when there is also a forest belonging to the farm.

A third factor influencing agricultural education is the structure of the educational system. The state requires attendance in the grammar school from the age of seven to fourteen. However, in the various kinds of secondary schools, attendance is not obligatory. The lack of compulsory attendance in these schools influences the importance placed upon the training of agriculture teachers at the Agricultural College of Norway and at the Agriculture Teachers' School (Smabruklaererskole).

### The Agricultural College of Norway

The Agricultural College of Norway, located at Aas, about 19 miles south of Oslo, is the highest school of agriculture in Norway, being equivalent to the state agricultural college in the United States. Total enrollment from year to year varies around 200 students and the length of the study period is three years. The ratio of student to faculty is about 8 to 1. Sixty to seventy new students enter the College each year. The number of students taken each year depends upon the demand for trained people in the various fields, and there is a distinct

\* Mr. John Norby is a young man who has had an exceptionally varied and interesting career. He has taught school, worked as a carpenter, and managed an onion dehydrating plant. Mr. Norby is a graduate student in the University of Minnesota with a particular interest in economics and the cooperative movement. Last year he accepted a scholarship at the University of Oslo, Norway, and is spending this year studying education, labor relations, and cooperatives in that country. Mr. and Mrs. Norby and their children—Tina, Tula, John Jr., Kaarin, and Stephen report to the editor of THE VISITOR from time to time and indicate that they are taking full advantage of every opportunity during their year abroad. Because of Mr. Norby's interest in education and in agriculture, THE VISITOR asked him to prepare an article dealing with agricultural education in Norway. The first half of this article appears in this issue. The second part of Mr. Norby's analysis of agricultural education in Norway will appear in the next issue.

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effort on the part of the College to equate the supply of and the demand for agricultural graduates.

The caliber of the student attending the Agricultural College is high because of the entrance requirements, and also because on the various lower levels of education, only the better students are accepted. Many more students desire to continue their education at the College than are permitted to do so. The weeding out of the relatively poorer student is a continuous process, starting with the Real School and the Continuation School, and continuing through the lower agricultural schools up to the College. During the years 1945-49 inclusive, only 27 per cent of the applicants for entry to the Agricultural College were accepted. It is common to all the yearly statistical reports of the various schools to give the number of applicants and the number accepted. The number of rejections seems to be very high, not because of the lack of educational qualifications of the student, but rather because of a deliberate effort to limit the supply of trained personnel, or because of lack of physical facilities.

Both practical and theoretical training is required for entrance to the Agricultural College. Two to three years practice in one of the five fields of forestry, agriculture, dairying, gardening and horticulture, and surveying is required. Students are required to have had previous agricultural school training which has at least 1,000 hours in theoretical courses, pass the examination for matriculation, or pass one of a number of alternative examinations. The results of all the examinations on the various levels of learning are published in the official reports of all the schools.

The curriculum at Aas is divided into five fields; namely, agriculture, horticulture and gardening, forestry, dairying, and a fifth which emphasizes surveying and the laws

concerning the division of farm and forest lands. Of the total number of students graduating, about 25 per cent enter the teaching field, usually after a number of years experience in a position related to their particular field. Teaching positions are relatively scarce, are looked upon with high esteem, and are considered very desirable. Hence, the graduate of the College usually cannot secure a teaching position for a number of years. The new graduate usually takes a position, either in the cooperative or private dairy plants, the state or provincial forest or private forest companies, or in the agricultural department of the state or province. Very few graduates go back to manage farms.

There is no special emphasis on education or teacher training. All the fields of study, except surveying, require the course in Pedagogy, which is given by the director of the Pedagogic Seminar in Oslo. This course is given in the third year and consists of 30 hours or lectures, 30 hours devoted to a paper by each student, and discussion. Little or no practice teaching is done. Of the total number of hours of lecture in the three-year program, only about 1½ per cent is devoted to the education course.

The present curriculum of the College has not been basically changed in the last thirty years except for the addition of more courses to the various fields. At present, there is a committee at work to revise the curriculum to meet present day problems.

In discussing the problem with the chairman of the committee and others, it became evident that some basic change was required, permitting more specialization and freedom of choice for the student. As the curriculum is now constructed, the student can choose his field (if there is an opening), but within the various fields, all the courses are prescribed. Many courses are common to all fields, but it is not possible to take a subject not listed in the curriculum for that field. A student cannot attend the College for more than three years, so he has to follow the prescribed course in order to finish in the required time. The chairman of the curriculum committee desires to have agricultural education be made a separate field. Others at the College believe that greater emphasis should be placed on psychology and teaching methods.

**Small-Farm Teachers' School**

The Small-Farm Teachers' School (Sma-bruklaererskole) at Sem, 13 miles southwest of Oslo, was established about thirty years ago to train teachers to staff the small-farm schools, the special lower agricultural schools for farmers with small holdings, to provide personnel trained in the problems of the small farmer and to teach in the re-

gular lower agricultural school. The curriculum of this school is designed to train teachers in the particular needs of a sector of Norwegian agriculture.

The Teachers' School has a two-year theoretical and practical course for small-farm teachers, a two-year theoretical and practical course to train manual training teachers, a one-year course in diversified farming for younger students, a special course in horticulture and poultry for a few younger students, and short courses.

To enter the two-year teachers' course, the student must be at least twenty years of age, have two years' practice in farming or horticulture, have completed the course in one of the lower agricultural schools, horticultural schools or small-farm schools, and have passed the matriculation examination or pass one of a number of alternative examinations. Both the Teachers' School and the Agricultural College are closed to applicants who aided the Germans before and during the occupation.

The number taken into the course for training of small-farm teachers is limited to twenty each year. This number is to be increased by fifty per cent next year. The theoretical training is about 1900 hours for the two years. Of this total, 100 hours, or about 5 per cent, is in education, of which 30 hours is in practice teaching. The younger students in the one-year course, of which there are 8 to 10 a year, are used as the practice class. There is criticism of the presentations by both teacher and fellow students. Student-teacher ratio is about 5 to 1.

Students graduating from this course staff the eight lower small-farm schools, and the one teacher of small-farming in the lower agricultural school is a graduate of the Teachers' School at Sem. In addition, each of the eighteen provinces has an agricultural expert in small farming, and it is intended that most of the herreds (equivalent to the U.S. county) are to have an expert in small farming. One hundred and fifty of the herreds already have this expert. It is necessary to train about four hundred more, so that each county, where diversified small farming is important, will have a trained expert in this particular field.

The entrance requirements to the two-year manual training course are not so high as those for the small-farm teachers' course. Besides being at least twenty years old and having had practical experience in a trade, the applicant must have attended a continuation school and six months of vocational training school. Seven students are enrolled each year, and greater emphasis is placed on practical training in this course. Students in this field have a little less than half the theoretical training that the students in the

small-farm teachers' course have; that is, about 800 hours of theoretical training. The examination is both oral and written. The students in this field do not have any formal training in education, but do have some practice teaching.

These students are trained to take positions in the lower agricultural schools, the lower small-farms schools, vocational training schools, continuation schools, and short courses.

The one-year course for younger students is largely practical, with a little theoretical training in the winter months. Students must be at least seventeen years old, and have a good record in the grammar school. They receive free tuition, board and room, free laundry and health insurance, and 75 kroner per month.

These students receive practical training in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, bee culture and fisheries, as well as carpentry, painting, horse-shoeing, machine repair, etc.

Neither the director nor the teachers can give any testimony or recommendation regarding a student except the official record of grades. The results of the examinations of each student is published in the year book of the Teachers' College.

(To be continued in the next issue)

### HELP WANTED

As a general rule THE VISITOR does not appeal for help. We are, however, confronted with a problem that needs your assistance. We have assembled copies of THE VISITOR with the intention of binding a complete set. Two issues are missing from our files. They are the January 1940 and the October 1945 issues. If any of our good and faithful readers can supply us with a copy of these missing issues we shall be very grateful. They may be sent to THE VISITOR, Agricultural Education, University Farm, St. Paul 1, Minnesota. THE VISITOR will take note of and make appropriate recognition of anyone who can be of assistance to us in our search.

### FARM-WOODS MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN MINNESOTA

Mr. John R. Neezel, forester in the Lake States Forest Experiment Station at University Farm, is interested in knowing whether any instructors or others would like to obtain a copy of the publication, *Farm-Woods Management in Southern Minnesota*. This publication was distributed sometime ago but complete distribution was not made. Those of you who would like this publication which covers forest management, utilization, grazing, planting, and similar problems of farm-woods management may

get one by requesting a copy from either Mr. Neetzel or THE VISITOR.

### THE VISITOR CONGRATULATES

Mr. R. E. Hubbard, well-known agriculture instructor at Montevideo, Minnesota, who received his M.S. degree at the fall quarter commencement of this year merits THE VISITOR'S congratulations. Mr. Hubbard is widely known and recognized for his outstanding contribution in parent education, as well as an all around good agriculture instructor and community leader. THE VISITOR is proud and happy to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Hubbard for the fine work he is doing, and extends to him its very best wishes for continued success.

Mr. William Frey, agriculture instructor at Crosby-Ironton, who is widely known, not only in the ranks of agricultural education, but to all members of the Minnesota Educational Association as well, received his M.S. degree at the fall quarter commencement of this year. Mr. Frey is a good example of an instructor and community leader who has kept pace with the developments in educational methods and applied them in his work. To Mr. Frey, therefore, THE VISITOR extends its congratulations for the work he has done, is doing, and will continue to do in improving educational opportunities for farm youth.

Mr. Gordon I. Swanson, formerly director of the agriculture department at Alexandria, Minnesota, added another milestone in his path of progress when he received the M.S. degree upon completion of the requirements during the fall quarter of this year. Mr. Swanson, in addition to holding the master's degree from the University of Minnesota, also holds the rank of captain in the U. S. Marine Corp Reserve. Mr. Swanson is at present an instructor in the Department of Agricultural Education, University of Minnesota, and is working toward his doctorate. To Mr. Swanson THE VISITOR extends its congratulations and best wishes for continued progress along the path that leads to the PhD degree.

The three men mentioned above have set a fine example for other agriculture instructors to follow. That many an instructor is aware of the value of professional improvement is indicated by the fact that fifty-nine graduate students are at present working toward advanced degrees in agricultural education at the University of Minnesota. This interest in professional improvement is indicative of sound thinking and an active interest in the opportunities for professional advancement. One need not be a prophet to realize that professional improvement is of more importance today than ever before. It

will be more significant in the future than it is at the present. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the agriculture instructors of Minnesota are continuing the kind of work that will assure them of greater individual development and increase their ability to contribute to better rural education.

### CORRESPONDENCE COURSE IN FARM RECORDS

THE VISITOR has been informed by Dr. Truman Nodland, assistant professor of agricultural economics, that a correspondence course in farm records and accounts has been approved to receive college credit. The course is listed in the correspondence bulletin as Agricultural Economics 80. Students who leave the campus before completing their work in order to accept a temporary teacher's certificate may be interested in this. Others might be interested for the refresher value they would receive by taking such a course. Anyone interested in obtaining further information regarding this correspondence course in farm records and accounts should contact Dr. Nodland.

### Thirty-Five Years Ago in THE VISITOR

The directory of agriculture instructors for September 1914 carries a list of 114 schools. Here are the names of some of the agriculture instructors appearing on that list: "Lewis O. Jacob, Anoka; P. O. Johnson, Dassel; W.E. McComas, Dodge Center; Sherman Dickinson, Grand Rapids; D. C. Dvoracek, Montgomery; L. H. Fudge, Stephen; W. F. Stewart, Tracy; A. J. Olson, Waseca; A. J. Lashbrook, Fergus Falls; L. H. Thuerwachter, Kasson; E. S. Billings, Lewiston; G. A. Amidon, Litchfield; J. S. Jones, Madison; A. M. Field, Northfield."

### Fifteen Years Ago in THE VISITOR

The January 1936 issue carries a lead article which states in part: "The thrill that comes but once in a lifetime came to Donald Dailey December 13 when Dean E. M. Freeman, in the role of Santa Claus, presented him with the historic red oil can at the annual Christmas assembly for the students and faculty in the College of Agriculture."

The growth of the FFA is also noted in this same issue in an article which says in part: "The Future Farmers of America now has 3,500 local chapters in the United States with an active membership of over 82,000. The program of activity of the Future Farmers of America is centered around the normal activities of rural youth and the organization is destined to become one of the most significant forces in the American youth movement."