

The Station News

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Geneva,N.Y.

1882

THE FIRST HALF CENTURY!

1932

"Arriving at Geneva February 28 (1882), I took possession of the Station property March 1," writes Dr.E.L. Sturtevant in his first annual report. "On March 1 my assistant, Mr.H.H. Wing, arrived, and very soon became of very material assistance...On March 17, Mr.E.S.Goff arrived to serve as horticulturist, and has proved a thoughtful, earnest, industrious man...On July 1, Mr.S.M. Babcock arrived to serve as chemist to the Station. Formerly assistant to Prof. Caldwell, at Ithaca, he comes highly recommended... On July 4, Mr.Robert Watson came as stenographer and confidential clerk."

To this little group of men whose task it was to organize, equip, and breath life into an agricultural experiment station in a day when little, if anything, was known of the function and purpose of such institutions, we pay our humble respects. They began operations with one small office and laboratory building, part of which was also used for residential purposes; with a farm of some 125 acres; and with an annual budget of \$20,000. The material growth of the Station during the half century is well known to most readers of the NEWS; and the growth of its research program is recorded in its reports and bulletins. Here, we are not concerned so much with the history of those fifty years as with the beginnings.

"The theory under which the direction of the Station is acting is the necessity of applying to agricultural research the principles which have accomplished so much in the pursuit of science, namely, the accurate ascertaining of facts, then the grouping of these facts in order to show the laws under which these facts are produced and modified, and finally the test or verification," writes Dr.Sturtevant in that first report, adding, "The province of an agricultural experiment station is not so much the discovery of new facts as it is the testing of applications and the theory of relations. Its ultimate object is to give expression to values which shall assist the farmer in the largest sense in meeting and overcoming the various obstacles which arise in the practice of his pursuit."

Surely, we owe much to Dr.Sturtevant and his associates in formulating and adhering to the far-sighted policies that were to guide the Station thru difficult times to a fulfillment of its true function as a research institution.

"FIFTY YEARS--ONLY A BEGINNING; AN EMBARKATION"-- Dr.Hedrick.

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JUST IN :

PASSING : We are tempted to quote just a few of the "Rules and Regulations" laid down by Dr.Sturtevant in his first report, for they are indicative of the changing times if not of "progress". The working hours, for example, were from 6:30 a.m. to noon and from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m., and "Every employee, from the Director down, will give his whole time and duty to the Station during working hours." Among the duties of the chemist were "To Maintain the laboratory in neatness, and to exercise due vigilance to economize and protect the laboratory supplies and fittings." The horticulturist was to report to the Director nightly, "leaving his note books and taking them again in the morning." He was also to "do all important and scientific work with his own hands, or have it done under his immediate supervision." The janitor was "To announce visitors, and exercise proper courtesy toward every caller." The matter of courtesy to callers seems to have been one of Dr.Sturtevant's special concerns, for he mentions it repeatedly in his "Rules" and elsewhere in his report. "We desire the farmers to understand," he writes, "That every intelligent visitor we have is a positive benefit, and that we never begrudge the time necessary for courteous entertainment."

And just one thing more, apropos of the telephone-on-every-desk movement, "Spring water, brought from a distance of nearly two miles, furnishes a good supply for the laboratory and one faucet on the first floor, and for two faucets in the basement."

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THE CANNERS :
SCHOOL :

-----: at 1:30 today. Following a word of greeting by Dr.Hedrick and remarks by Prof. C.B.Raymond of the College of Agriculture who is directing the school, talks by Messrs. Munn, Sayre, and Tapley will take most of the afternoon session. Tomorrow morning Dr.Gladgow will speak on cabbage insects, and in the afternoon Mr.Enzie and Dr.Horsfall will discuss particular phases of their work. Friday morning Dr.Horsfall will be heard again on pea root-rot and Dr.Hervey will talk on corn borer control. Friday afternoon Mr.Sayre will speak on fertilizers for tomatoes. The school will come to a close Friday afternoon.

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THE KERTESZ' : Dr.Kertesz and his family arrived in Geneva a few days ago
RETURN : following a visit to their home in Budapest. The baby had a serious
-----: illness while away, but is well along on the road to recovery now.

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TALKED ON : Dr.Horsfall broadcasted from WGY last Monday noon on the control
DAMPING*OFF : of damping-off of tomato seedlings in the greenhouse. He also
-----: demonstrated his soil and seed treatment methods for several
greenhouse men under the auspices of the Schenectady County Farm Bureau.

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ANOTHER : Three Station trucks set out Tuesday morning for Long Island
DONATION : under the direction of Mr.Van Alstyne to collect the remaining
-----: specimens of ornamentals being donated to the Station by the Hicks
Brothers Nurseries. A conservative estimate places the value of these contributions
at well over \$2,000 when figured at retail list prices. That these trees and shrubs
will add materially to the attractiveness of the Station grounds goes without saying.

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THE STAFF : Remember that the March staff meeting is to take the form of a
SUPPER : supper to be followed by an inspection of the new building. The date
-----: is Tuesday, March 8; the time 6:00 p.m. sharp (and don't forget to
bring fifty cents for each member of the family who wants to eat); the place
Jordan Hall. Following the supper, Mr.Stewart will be introduced as master of cer-
emonies and will announce the plan that has been worked out for the inspection
trip. Every member of the Staff and his wife or her husband will be expected to be
on hand when the dinner gong sounds.

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THE UNIVER* : Monday, March 7, at the Hotel Seneca, the University Club will
SITY CLUB : hold its annual banquet with Prof. O.G. Guerlac of Cornell Univer-
-----: sity as the speaker. Prof. Guerlac's address will be on the subject
of "The French Academy in 1932".

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PLAN BREEDING : Dr.J.H.Parker who addressed the Staff recently on breeding
BIBLIOGRAPHIES : plants for resistance to disease and insects has sent to the Lib-
-----: rary comprehensive bibliographies on the subject. The material
is divided into the following sections: Physiological species in fungi; disease
resistance in cereals, sugar cane, field crops, potatoes, vegetable crops, fruits,
nuts, flowers, and trees; and resistance to insects.

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FROZEN : Several representatives of the canning industry, Mr.Fitzgerald of the
FRUITS : Frosted Food Corp., Dr.J.T. Cusick, formerly a chemist at the Station
-----: and now with the A. & P., and members of the Staff met in the Pomology
laboratory yesterday and examined a large collection of raspberry seedlings which
have been held in a frozen state since last summer. Also, Tuesday evening Mr.Well-
ington and Mr.Fitzgerald addressed the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce.

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BACK : Mr.Stewart, as custodian of the Station records, has uncovered the fact
AGAIN : that the new greenhouses are being erected (or perhaps we should say
-----: will be erected) by the same firm that built the present houses thirty
years ago. It has even been hinted by some that the excavating equipment on the new
job was also probably in use at the turn of the century, but this we regard as a base
libel.

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HELP : In the course of reading innumerable stories of high adventure and
WANTED : romance to a four-year-old our vocabulary is becoming greatly en-
-----: riched, if not enhanced, by the accumulation of words heretofore
entirely unknown to us. All of which would be quite harmless and might even be bene-
ficial, if it were not for the fact that we are called upon for the meaning of these
words from time to time by said four-year-old and find ourselves hard put to it to
maintain what little reputation we enjoy, for the present at least, as the fountain-
head of all knowledge. We understand that as time passes we shall reach the point
where our intelligence will be rated at exactly zero. But in an effort to delay that
evil day as long as possible we are appealing to our readers for help. In short, can
anyone tell us what the following words signify, if anything: Xie, quagga, guff,
Titivate? Of course we might look these up in Webster--they are sure to be there--
but we would welcome enlightenment from all sides.