

History of the Agronomy Farm, reprinted from Agronomy Farm, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, Kansas State Agricultural College Department, Report of Foreman. Written by W. E. Grimes, Foreman in Charge, 1913.

The Agronomy Farm was purchased by the State of Kansas sometime in the spring of 1909. It is the East ½ Sec. 1 Twp. 10 S. R. 7. E. The history of the farm is in two parts up to the time that it was purchased by the college, the north and south halves of the farm being handled separately previous to that time.

The south half of the farm, which now has all of the improvements, was entered by Mr. John Pattee sometime in the early sixties. The entire farm was in wild prairie at that time. Mr. Pattee broke twenty acres of the prairie almost as soon as he obtained it. This twenty acres is on the present field A and is that portion north of the grove and east of the pasture. He also built the old house which stood just back of the present farm house until the fall of 1913, and dug the well just west of the house.

Mr. Pattee soon sold the farm and it changed owners several times in the next one or two years. It was purchased by Rev. William Knipe sometime in 1863 or 1864. Mr. Knipe had lived on the farm for a short time about a year previous to this. At that time the only building on the farm was the old house, which was boxed and battened. In about 1864, Mr. Knipe hired the eighty acres which is now known as fields B and H, including the Soil Fertility Plots, broken. He fixed the house up and weatherboarded it.

The farm was owned by Mr. Knipe for forty two or forty three years. During that time the areas now known as fields A, B, and H were cropped almost continuously to corn with an occasional crop of oats and one or two crops of wheat. They never failed to produce a profitable crop of corn or oats except in years of crop failure. About 1890 or 1895, alfalfa was seeded on a small strip of ground about where the south half of the Soil Fertility Plots are at present. It was also seeded on the north part of field A. This alfalfa on field A was left until after the farm was purchased by the College. This was seeded in 1903 or 1904.

Practically all of the improvements on the farm at the time that it was purchased were made by Mr. Knipe. He set out hedges all around the farm and between fields A and B, A and I, and H and I, making a total of about two and three-fourths miles of hedge. All of this was removed after it was purchased by the college. An orchard was set out just east of the house occupying all of field A east of the house to the central road and north to the grove with a small strip extending north of the grove along the east side of the field. The present house was built between 1885 and 1890. It was let by contract, the entire cost of the house being \$1350.00. The new house was built where the old one had been and the old one moved back to where it stood when the farm became the property of the college. At that time all buildings were just north and west of the house. The small area just west of the house being covered with buildings and used for feedlots, until after 1909.

This part of the farm was sold by Mr. Knipe to Mr. O. A. Hutchings in 1904. In 1904, the cropping of the fields was practically the same as it had been for the previous forty years. In 1905 fields B and H were in corn and produced about forty-two bushels to the acre. The orchard was grubbed out in the summer of 1905 and seeded to wheat that fall. It was in wheat for three years and averaged about thirty bushels to the acre. Zimmerman wheat was grown on the east side of field H in 1906 and averaged about thirty-seven and a half bushels to the acre. This was seeded in the corn stubble. This was the beginning of three years cooperation by Mr. Hutchings with the Agronomy Department under the direction of Professor Ten Eyck. The remainder of

field H and all of field B was in Macauley corn in 1906 and yielded thirty eight bushels to the acre. In 1907, all of field H and part of field B were in Kharkof wheat which yielded about twenty six bushels to the acre. The remainder of field B was in corn and yielded about thirty-five bushels to the acre. In 1908, which was the year preceeding [preceding] the purchase of the farm by the College, the cropping of fields B and H was practically the same as in 1907 excepting that cane and cowpeas were grown where corn was grown in 1907. The wheat on fields B and H in 1908 yielded thirty to thirty-five bushels to the acre.

Beginning with 1906 manure was applied to the east side of field H. This was continued in 1907 and 1908 each year covering a new strip of ground just west of the one covered the previous year until approximately thirty acres had been covered.

The north half of the Agronomy Farm was first owned by Mr. Jno. F. Currier in 1858. The same year he sold it to Washington Marlatt who owned it for a long time until it was deeded to Mr. A. N. Marlatt. Mr. A. N. Marlatt sold it to Mr. M. W. Ingraham in 1906 and the College bought it of [sic] Mr. Ingraham in 1909.

No definite information was obtained on the crops grown up to about 1895 but evidently the larger part of it that was under cultivation was in corn, or some other cultivated crop. Ever since 1895 and up to 1906 the land has been rented. During this time cultivated crops were grown on the most of it. In 1898 the knoll which includes all of fields D and E, and parts of fields C and F, was not farmed because no one would farm it. It had been in corn so long that it would not produce enough to induce anyone to rent it and farm it. From 1898 to 1906 field G was in sorghums the most of the time, with some of the better portions in corn part of the time. In 1899 kafir and millet were grown on the knoll or higher part of the farm and this was kept up until 1905, excepting that the south half was sowed in oats in 1904 and wheat in 1905. This extended north to about the middle of the orchard. The north part of field C was in corn the most of the time with an occasional crop of oats, and one crop of millet. During this time field F was in corn continuously until it became 'corn-sick' when it was in millet for a year and then back to corn again. That portion of this farm in field B at present was in pasture and this pasture also included the extreme southern part of field C.

In 1906, this quarter section was sold by Mr. Marlatt to Mr. M. W. Ingraham. Mr. Ingraham began seeding alfalfa on fields C, D, and E and they were all in alfalfa when the farm was purchased by the college in 1909 as was also the western part of field F. The orchard formerly extended north to the road but was limited to its present area in 1901 or 1902. All buildings on this land were put on after 1906 and removed soon after the college bought it.

No manure was applied to any of the fields and everything possible was taken off of the land. After 1898, all corn stover was removed as was also the kafir fodder so that practically no organic matter was returned to the soil. Previous to 1898, it was the practice to rake all corn stalks and burn them.

Very little information was obtained in regard to this part of the farm from 1906 to 1909, other than that part was seeded to alfalfa and the remainder kept in cultivation.

The College took charge of the entire farm in 1909 and Floyd Howard was the first foreman. The buildings west of the house were straightened up and the most of them torn down, and the work of improving the farm began. No report was made by Mr. Howard. He was foreman until in the summer of 1910 when B. S. Wilson became foreman. The Soil Fertility and Wheat Seed-bed Preparation plots were laid out in 1909.

The accompanying maps show the cropping of the various fields after 1908. The improvement of the fertility of the fields has been one of the main objects in view in the planning

of the cropping systems [sic] on the farm.

In 1910, all of the roads on the farm were laid out and built, on the south half. All hedges were cut to two and one-half feet in height and some open ditch drainage done of field B.

During 1911, the fence along the north side of the farm was built, the concrete bridge on the central road was constructed, the work of straightening the ditch thru fields B and C was started, fields B and F were partially tile drained, the east half of the grove north of the buildings was removed and the seed house was improved a great deal.

Beginning with September 1, 1912, F. B. Lawton was foreman on the Farm. The 1912 report was made by him, while B. S. Wilson made the 1910 and 1911 reports. During 1912, the shop was built and also the horse barn. A water system was installed in the barn, field F was tile drained, and fence constructed on the south and west sides of the farm.

F. B. Lawton was foreman until July 15, 1913, when he was succeeded by W. E. Grimes. During 1913, the old horse barn was moved to the middle of the farm and rebuilt into a haybarn, The work of straightening the ditch between fields B and C was completed and some more tile draining done in the center of the farm along the road. A concrete culvert was built where the central road enters the farm. The work of moving and remodeling the farm house was begun. The old house that stood just back of the large house was torn down and the large house moved back about fifty feet. A great deal of improvement work remains to be done. It is the intention to make the farm a model farm and all improvements are made with that end in view.