

FORT HAYS BRANCH EXPERIMENT STATION HISTORY 21

In 1907 a residence for the superintendent was erected at a cost of \$3,400. A cottage was built in 1908 on Section 10 for a station workman at a location where closer supervision could be given to farming operations on the east side of the farm. Another small cottage now used as a foreman's residence, and a small brick office building, costing \$1,230 and \$2,500, respectively, were constructed on the Station campus. The old stock sheds were enlarged and eight new ones added in 1908. All were

enclosed with a woven wire fence constructed with round cedar posts. This improvement cost \$5,000.

In 1910 two new cottages for the staff were erected at a cost of \$4,200. These cottages are now used as residences for the assistant to the superintendent and a technical staff member of the Station. Also in 1910 in an exchange of property with the Normal School the Station secured the old dwelling of the commanding colonel formerly stationed at Fort Hays.

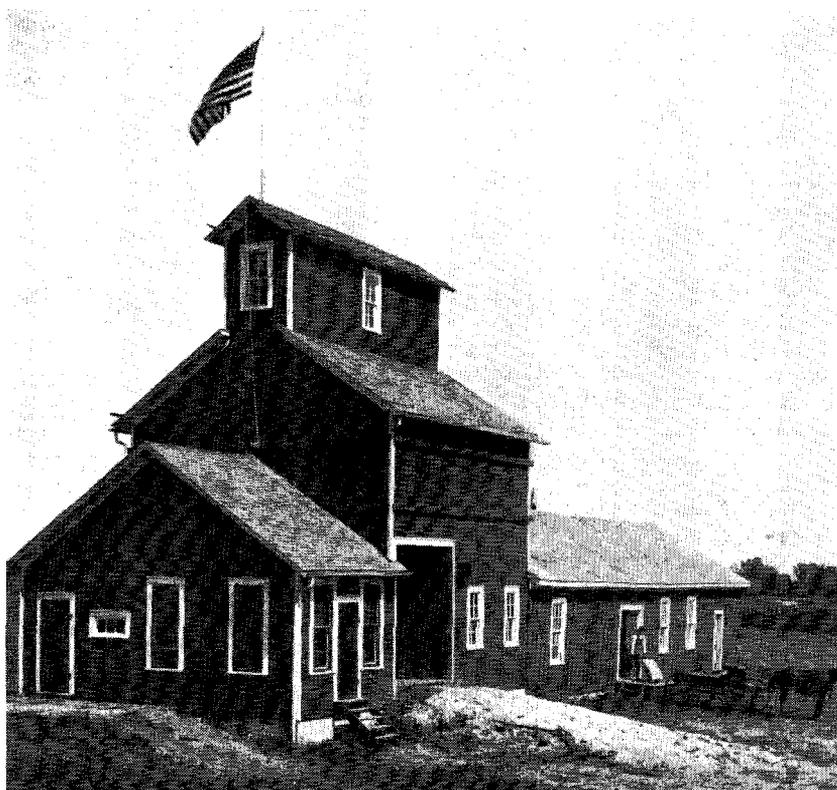


Fig. 15.—Elevator and seedhouse constructed in 1906. The superintendent's office was moved to the elevator building in 1907.

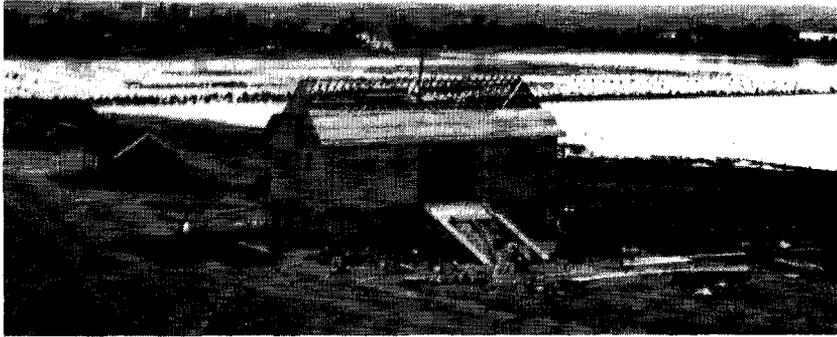


Fig. 16.—Barn under construction July 14, 1907, with Big Creek in flood. This building with stone basement cost \$4,400 and was constructed to replace the barn that burned.

At the close of 1910 the physical plant of the Station consisted of the following: four old dwellings once a part of Fort Hays; six dwellings erected by the Station; two barns; elevator and granary; machine shed; field laboratory for dry land agriculture (erected by the United States Department of Agriculture); seed house; water system; 16 stock sheds each with its own fence enclosure; and various corrals and weighing pens.

The Station had also 25 miles of fencing including 7 miles of woven wire on cedar posts; 10 miles of graded roads and public driveways; and two bridges and a dam across Big Creek. The Station was also reasonably well equipped with horse-drawn machinery necessary to operate so large a farm.

#### Electrical Energy Supplied by Normal School. Arrange-

ments were made in 1910 to secure electrical energy for the Station from the State Normal School. A minute of the Board of Regents relating to this matter passed July 15, 1910, reads as follows: "On motion of Regent Taylor the Board appreciates the courtesy of the offer of the Board of Regents of the State Normal School to furnish such electric current at approximate cost, as will be required for driving the machinery and lighting the buildings at the Hays Branch Experiment Station, and are pleased to accept the same. Director Webster and Professor TenEyck are hereby instructed to confer with Superintendent Picken<sup>7</sup> in regard to the amount of power required etc." (19) Subsequent arrangements were made to purchase electrical energy from the city of Hays. The Station

7. Mr. Picken was principal of the Normal School.

has always purchased its electrical energy. The Legislature of 1911 appropriated \$2,000 for electrical wiring and power equipment.

**Horse Barn Fire.** A fire occurring the middle of September, 1912, resulted in the loss of one horse barn, 16 mares, and five geldings as well as harness, feed, and other equipment. The Station was reimbursed for the loss by a special appropriation of the 1913 Legislature which provided for the following: horse barn, \$2,000; horses, \$4,500; harness, \$500; equipment, tools, etc., \$500; total, \$7,500. A new stable was built on the site of the original barn at a cost of \$2,100.

**The Dairy Farm Unit.** A dairy farm unit located along the highway on the south side of the Station was started in

1913, with a dairy barn constructed at a cost of \$3,800 and two 100-ton metal plaster lath silos built costing \$500 each. In 1914 a cottage for the dairyman was built at a cost of \$780. This unit was converted into a beef cattle wintering unit and the dairy project discontinued in 1928.

The dairy barn was moved to the headquarters to provide facilities for experimental beef cattle feeding. Other sheds were built on the site of the old dairy units for the care of the beef cattle herd. All of the buildings except the residence on the old dairy farm unit were destroyed by fire in 1959. The cattle sheds were replaced with a steel building in 1962.

Between 1922 and 1928 major construction projects consisted of the completion of the



Fig. 17.—Superintendent's residence, erected in 1927. It was described as "a modern two-story building with complete basement, constructed of brick and hollow tile at a cost of \$15,245."

machine shed started in 1920, the erection of a new brick and hollow tile farrowing house, a seed house with work room and machine shed for the dry land agriculture project, a new greenhouse and service building for the forest nursery, and the rebuilding of the machine shed.

**Superintendent's Residence.**

A new residence was built in 1927 for the superintendent. The old residence was poorly constructed, in need of repair, and inadequate. It was replaced by a modern two-story building with a complete basement, constructed of mingle shade rug brick and hollow tile with red tile roof at a cost of \$15,245. It was paid for from Station fees.

Between 1928 and 1931 several of the older residences were rebuilt and modernized. A nursery irrigation plant was

constructed, a tractor repair shop built, and an alfalfa hay shed constructed. Work was started on a new office building.

**The Office Building.** An office building 50 x 43 feet, completed March 17, 1931, was constructed to conform in style with the superintendent's residence. On the first floor were an office for the superintendent and three rooms for the clerical forces as well as a combined reading room and lobby; on the second floor, seven office rooms for the technical staff; and in the basement two laboratories, a photographic room, five storage rooms, and a room for the heating unit. Large fireproof vaults were located on each floor. The building was steam heated with natural gas. It was constructed at a cost of \$20,477.



Fig. 18.—New office building, completed in March, 1931, at a cost of \$20,477.

**Construction with Relief Funds.** During the depression of the 1930's the Station cooperated with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and other relief agencies. It had much productive work to be done. One of the first projects undertaken in 1933 was road improvement. Thousands of loads of soil were hauled and a number of main roads on the campus, farm, and state park graveled. In 1934 road work was continued and a large drainage ditch constructed, changing the channel of the creek to protect valuable crop land from overflow and erosion.

The largest project undertaken was the construction of a battery of six pit silos 19 feet in diameter and 35 feet deep. Construction of these

silos required much labor during 1935 and 1936. The silos also provided the Station with 1,200 tons additional silage storage capacity, thus enabling the Station to carry surplus feed from good to poor crop years. Labor provided by the CCC boys was used to develop an attractive picnic site on Big Creek. A dam was constructed, a swinging footbridge and shelterhouse built, and rustic tables and benches constructed from native timber secured on the site.

**Crops and Soils Research Building.** The Legislature of 1931 appropriated \$12,000 for a crops and soils research laboratory. This appropriation was reduced by the governor to \$10,500 due to the acute economic situation existing at the time that the money became available. A fireproof



Fig. 19.—Soils and crops research laboratory, for which the Legislature of 1931 appropriated \$12,000.

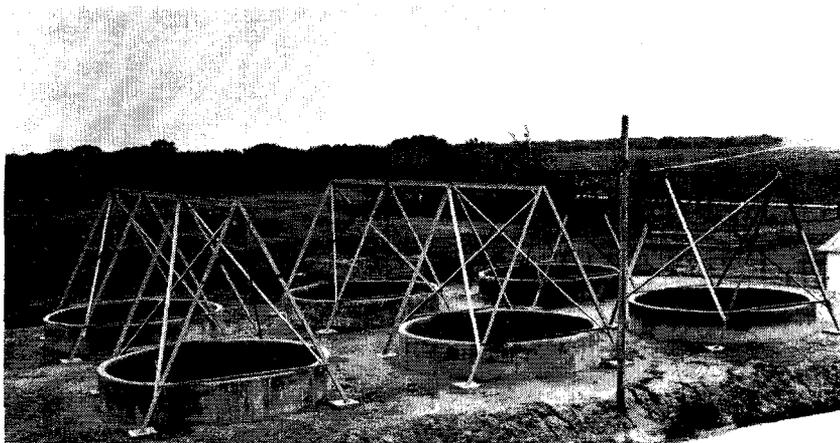


Fig. 20.—Battery of pit silos 19 feet in diameter and 35 feet deep built with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration. This construction “furnished much labor during 1935 and 1936.”

building 42 x 54 feet was constructed in 1932 but the interior was not completed until 1936. The building was constructed of concrete, brick, and hollow tile to match the office building constructed in 1931. The building had four main laboratory rooms, a boiler room, and lavatory in the basement, five work rooms on the first floor, and a large storage room on the top floor. The building, when completed, was provided with hot and cold water, gas and electric heat, electricity for power and light, and exhaust fans to remove fumes. It cost \$12,920.

**Water System.** The Legislature of 1937 appropriated \$6,700 for a steel water tank, tower, and four-inch water line. The tank was to replace a concrete tank erected in 1920. The old concrete tank leaked and had been repaired unsuccessfully several times

at considerable expense. A new 50,000-gallon steel tank manufactured by the Darby

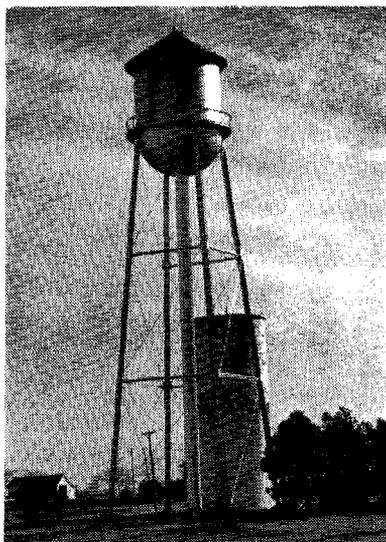


Fig. 21.—New water tank, with old concrete water tank in background. This 50,000-gallon tank was purchased in August, 1938, and erected during the winter months.

Corporation, Kansas City, Kansas, was purchased in August, 1938, and erected during the winter months. The total cost of the tank erected, including footings, was \$5,970. The bottom of the tank was 75 feet above ground, which was 50 feet higher than the old tank. The added water pressure from the higher tank provided more satisfactory water service as well as better fire protection. To connect the new water system with the pump, 1,591 feet of four-inch transit pipe was purchased at

a cost of \$830. A trench 42 inches deep, for the water line, was dug by WPA labor at a cost of \$364. The old well in the forest nursery, to which the water line was attached, proved inadequate. It was decided to prospect for water at a point near the new water tower. The first attempt produced a well 61 feet to shale, with 10 feet of water above the shale. This was an adequate supply of water, and a gravel-packed well was constructed. A four-inch water line connected the new well



Fig. 22.—Sewer line east from flush tank. When the city of Hays installed a new sewage disposal plant in 1935 permission was granted for its installation on Station land, with the agreement that the Station could connect its sewer to the city's.

with the water tower. The well under test delivered 190 gallons per minute and enabled the new 50,000-gallon tank to be filled in approximately 3 hours.

**Sewer System.** In the early days of the Station a sewer line was constructed leading to a septic tank that emptied into what was later the golf course of the state park. This location was objectionable; furthermore, the sewer line was not deep enough to service the basements of some of the new buildings. When the city of Hays installed a new sewage disposal plant in 1935, permission was granted for it to be installed on Station land with the agreement that the Station could connect its

sewer with the city plant. Work on the sewer line was delayed for lack of funds. However, a grant of WPA funds enabled the Station to make the connection in the fall of 1938. An eight-inch sewer line was run from the office building to near the forest nursery building, then east to Big Creek with a siphon under the Creek, then to the city sewer and disposal plant. The sewer tile and labor were supplied by WPA. The expenditure for the line was \$3,673 by WPA and \$860 by the Station.

**Bridges.** Two wooden bridges were constructed across Big Creek in the early years of the Station. These bridges were poorly con-

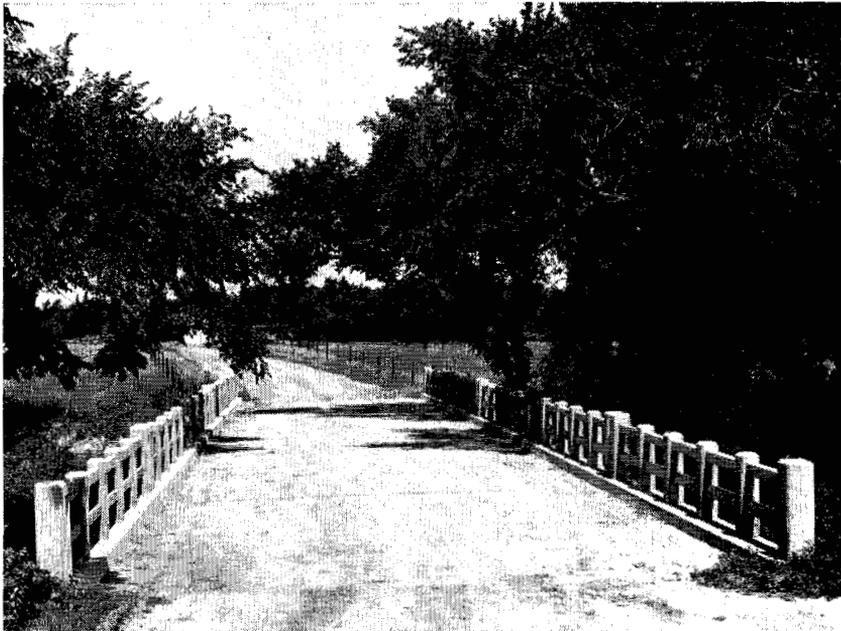


Fig. 23.—This high level reinforced concrete bridge was constructed in 1929 at a cost of \$12,858.

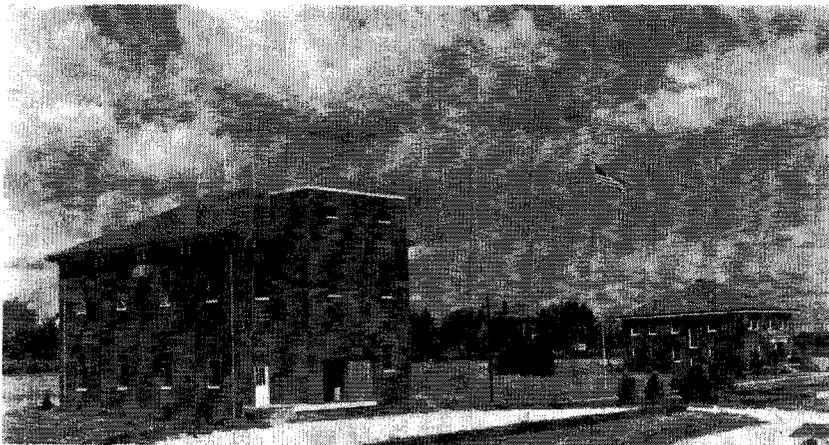


Fig. 24.—The new seedhouse with new office building to the right and the superintendent's residence in the background. Facilities for handling seed were inadequate until this seedhouse was built in 1941. The Legislature of 1939 appropriated \$7,500 for the purpose. The building cost \$13,455, with the balance being paid from fees.

structed and unsafe. The first bridge east of the stockyards collapsed in 1923, dropping a number of horses into the creek. The Legislature of 1923 appropriated \$2,500 for the construction of a reinforced concrete wash bridge across Big Creek to replace the collapsed bridge. The new bridge was constructed in 1925 at a cost of \$3,395 and is still in use but is not passable in times of high water.

The second bridge located on the east-end farm unit became unsafe. An appropriation of \$12,500 was made by the Legislature to replace it. A new high-level reinforced concrete bridge was constructed in 1929 at a cost of \$12,858. This bridge is still in use and should give many more years of satisfactory service.

**Seed House.** A service of the Station that increased greatly in importance between 1920 and 1940 was the production and distribution of improved and certified seed. Facilities for handling seed were inadequate until a new seed house was built in 1941, the Legislature of 1939 having appropriated \$7,500 for this purpose. A large two-story reinforced brick structure was built. This building harmonized in general construction with the superintendent's residence, office building, and laboratory. It was completed at a cost of \$13,455 in time to house the 1942 seed crop.

The seed house was built principally to clean and grade seed and handle sacked stocks. An elevator to handle large quantities of seed and feed grain in bulk was constructed in 1950. The modern elevator,

made of heavy metal, was installed on a concrete foundation and had a capacity of 24,000 bushels. It was constructed at a cost of \$38,021.

**Utility Building.** The Station had been handicapped in not having a building in which public meetings could be held during inclement weather. This need was met in 1948 with the construction of a utility building at a cost of \$43,500. It is reinforced concrete faced with brick, with a tile roof to correspond with

other main buildings on the campus. First floor of the utility building is usable as an auditorium when needed, and seats 900 people. It has been used to store buffalograss seed at other times, and other seed stock. The basement was devoted entirely to buffalograss seed processing.

**Shop Building.** For the successful operation of the Station a modern shop building was needed. In the early days the Station shop occupied a part of a machine shed. In

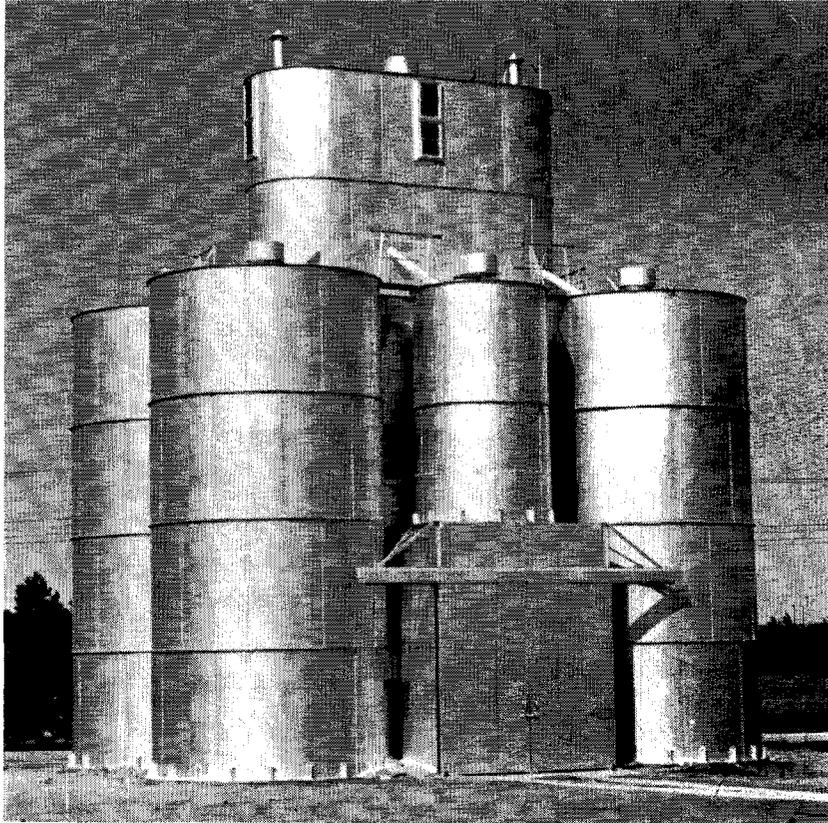


Fig. 25.—A seed elevator with a capacity of 24,000 bushels was constructed in 1950 at a cost of \$38,000.

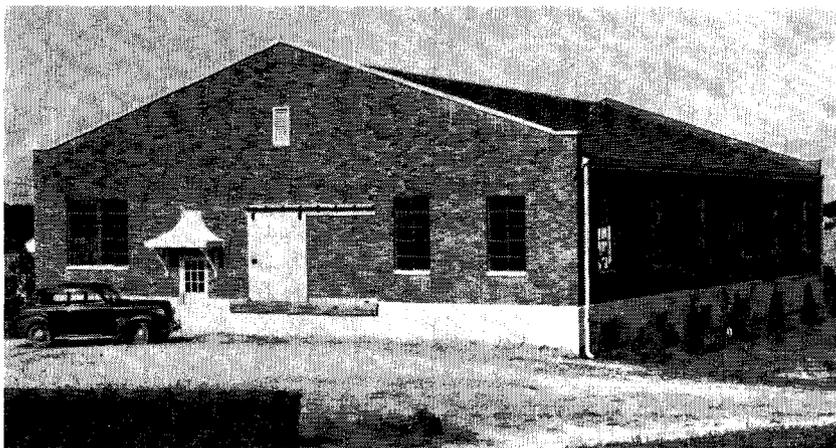


Fig. 26.—The utility building, which fulfilled the need for a place where public meetings might be held on the Station. It was built in 1948 at a cost of \$32,000.

1926 when a new wing was added to the machine shed, a shop was constructed in its east end. In 1930 a tractor repair shop was provided by moving an old shed to the east of the machine shop. The south two-thirds of the building was used as a tractor shop

and the rest of the building for storing oil and grease. A modern machine shop was built in 1951 at a cost of \$17,900. This building was constructed of brick to conform in design and construction with the other major buildings on the campus.



Fig. 27.—A modern machine shop was erected in 1951 at a cost of \$16,772. It was built of brick and conformed in design and construction with other major buildings on the campus.