

## HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRONOMY AND SOILS, WSU

1889-1984  
I EXORDIUM

This History has been undertaken by a number of faculty members who have been associated with the Department for 10 to almost 50 years. Each has been asked to cover a phase of activities within the Department with which he was most closely associated over the years. Perhaps this will give a personal flavor because the stories were narrated by those "who were there." The subjects and respective authors are listed in the CONTENTS. We are most grateful to the authors for the rich heritage given us in this History. We are deeply indebted to the secretaries who managed to sandwich the chores of typing and copying of this History among their countless regular duties.

We have attempted to cite dates of various episodes and developments. But most of these started in someone's mind long before the event was brought to fruition; therefore, exact dates lose some significance. The reader is encouraged to ponder the event per se and its impact upon the agriculture of the State rather than the specific time that it occurred.

May this History benefit colleagues as they continue to make the history of the Department. They can profit by a knowledge of past developments and accomplishments as they visualize current roles of people in the College and related industries. It is our hope that what is started here as a history of the Department may be continued by our colleagues as each one retires from this great Institution. We hold that the history thus far has been colorful, one of which we all may be proud. We expect future recordings of history will show from this noble beginning the Department and Institution has continued to flourish, to serve the State and mankind well.

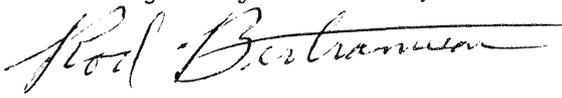
B. R. Bertramson, Editor

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\*See following memorandum which indicates the members involved.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Agronomy Colleagues--Hopefully fellow authors/contributors to  
 "History of Department of Agronomy and Soils, WSU".

FROM: B. R. Bertramson 

DATE: 21 Dec. 1982

SUBJECT: History of Department of Agronomy and Soils, 1889-1984, (95 years)

Drs. Jim Engibous, Walt Gardner, and others have urged the writing of subject history. The best approach might be to get separate bits of this history written by those who were closest to it. In pursuit of this idea of several authors/contributors, I have tried to visualize a general outline of what the history might cover and indicated those likely authors for the separate bits of the history. I have D. C. Smith's "History of Agronomy, U of Wis" and a formal article on "History of the Dept. of Chemistry, U of Wis. as samples. I have read the history of the College by Bryan 1890-1925 and Landeen's, "E. O. Holland and the State College", plus Leonard Young's, "History of the Experiment Station". From this, I drafted a rough beginning history as a background for Agronomy's origin and development here. This I have set up according to the "Advances in Agronomy" format and style.

Would you please read over this material, review it, edit it--if you wish--and then consider how your part of the history might fit. If we handle this like "Advances in Agronomy" each contributor will have considerable leeway and will be clearly identified for his part. I'd be willing to serve as an "Editor"--or one of several--to coordinate and collate this material and then wrap it up with a brief "Epilogue!

Does this make sense to you? Please ponder and then let us meet to discuss what we have and your ideas. I have arranged for us to have Jsn. room 233 at 10:00 a.m 13 January for our meeting. Coffee and donuts are on me.

P.S. If you care to discuss this anytime, call me at home 334-2431 and we can arrange to meet someplace and time at your convenience.

Encl. Rough outline.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Author/Contributors for History of Agronomy and Soils, WSU.

FROM: B. R. Bertramson- *Bob Bertramson*

DATE: 28 March, 1983

SUBJECT: Progress Report and Notes on History of Department of Agronomy and Soils, 1889-1984 (95 years)

Several copies of my first draft of: "IN THE BEGINNING" and "CAPITAL OUTLAY FACILITIES" are available. (Law, Gilkeson, Rasmussen, Vogel, and Gardner each have one--and I have an extra. These are all available to anyone who wishes to read, or see, a copy.

I have scanned the Experiment Station Bulletins #1 - #560 which are bound and on the south end of the last library stack NW corner of 5th floor of the Science and Engineering Library under the call number: S125 E22. I have also scanned all of the CHINOOKS FROM 1899 for information on personnel of the Department. These are available in French Administration Building next to Bob Smawley's office NW corner of top floor. From these and the rosters in the AGRONOMIST I have prepared a roster of agronomists which Sally Meyer now has in French Administration Building to complete the time frame of each agronomist.

I've also drawn from the Station Bulletins #1 - #80 for some of the very early writings and findings of the earliest "agronomist"--even before they knew they were "agronomists". This review, I drafted into a few pages (8) entitled, "RESEARCH--An Overview". This may serve as preface to the special articles by the "contributors". I found this superficial review of the bulletins very interesting. Some of you may wish to go to the fifth floor of the Science and Engineering Library for some study of these in connection with your area of writing responsibility. Experiment Station Bulletin #167, 1922, pages 61-64 gives a list of the titles of all the bulletins until that time for ready reference. I have a couple of extra copies of those lists--if you care to look at it. Subsequent Annual Reports among the later bulletins list publications by the faculty during the year of the report.

The draft of "RESEARCH--An Overview" is very preliminary. I had promised to make this available to you as soon as possible in connection with some of your writing contributions. I've enclosed a copy for your files on this project.

MEMO  
28 March 1983  
page?

The AGRONOMIST (Agronomy News-letters 1950-1982) provides a wealth of information. Perhaps some of what you have already written there would apply to the area of your contribution. I have indexed these and thus could expedite your location of the Newsletter with a specific article you might want.

I know some of you have already done some of your writing. And I hope all of you will find a way to keep at it until a first draft is completed. Then we can all take a look at it and see what we have and whether revisions and/or additions are desirable. If I can be of any help, please contact me.

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Encl. "RESEARCH-An Overview" draft

cc: J. C. Engibous