

# 100 YEARS OF THE NORTHWEST EXPERIMENT STATION



Experiment Station and Northwest School campus in 1934. Note the research plots in the lower right corner.

## FORWARD

The "Historians' Committee" selected *Gleanings* as the title of this assembly of remembrances from the 100 years of The Northwest Experiment Station, Crookston. The word "gleanings" refers to looking at the remains after a rich harvest. The harvest has been 100 years of agricultural research, service and education. The history of the Northwest Station and the Northwest School of Agriculture is quite inseparable at the beginning.

A credit to Ruth Anne Stymiest who researched and published the information in Cycle – A chronicle of the Northwest School of Agriculture and Experiment Station, 1895-1968. She found the history of the station-school a fascinating one.

Today, on the 100th Anniversary of the Northwest Experiment Station, we are still bound in some ways to James J. Hill's premise, that we should research the land, crops, and livestock for answers - then tell others about the true nature of what we have found.

This relationship to the farmers on the land was the original "extension" concept, a practical communication of information before county agents and extension divisions were common. The mission statement of the University of Minnesota, Northwest Experiment Station, has deviated little since the first ground was broken at Crookston.

In many ways, when the Valley soils were still water bound, the crop varieties inadequate for this growing season, and the equipment still not invented to handle this vast country, the combination of the Northwest School and Experiment Station was the best answer to prepare young future farmers for the days ahead. In the last 40 years this has not been true in the same way.

The story of the Northwest Experiment Station starts to diverge from the school as our research came to be internationally used and copied. As research societies and industry became more sophisticated, they wanted to use our research even before it was finished – we had a world audience and we changed. Research multiplied in quantity and quality after the separation from the college in 1965. It is the hope of the Historians' Committee that we have captured some of the excitement of the ongoing research and personnel of the Northwest Experiment Station.