The Early 1920's

In 1921, 77 farmers in ten counties of northwestern Minnesota, grew pure seed grain in cooperation with the Northwest Station. This large increase of favored varieties was worth millions to the area. The pure seed show held annually as a part of the Red River Valley Winter Shows reflected the interest and the quality of seed being grown.

At its annual meeting in 1921 the Red River Valley livestock Association held its annual purebred livestock show in February with high interest shown. The membership of over 2,000 consisted of breeders, county farm bureaus, county agents, and Northwest Experiment Station staff. Superintendent Selvig and O.M. Kiser, station livestock man, continued as officers of the association.

The staff houses were referred to as "cottages", possibly because they were small. Money for two houses in the 20's was stretched to build three, possibly causing them all to become smaller. This was known as "faculty row", no reason for school to be called off because of weather—students boarded at the school and all the staff was on campus.

A faculty society resulted. Families invited others for special dinners, some trying to out-do the others. When the superintendent's wife hosted, all had better be present and no excuses.

Superintendent McCall owned a section of land just north and east of the Station. When grain shocking time came, all the faculty pitched in and a "shocking bee" was held, the women providing a special banquet out in the field.

Raymond S. Dunham, a graduate of the University of Illinois, was appointed to the agronomy staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station in 1921. He headed the soils, forage crops, and farm management areas.

Dunham was head of a project to study proper application of barnyard manure to crop rotations. He regretted the loss of fertility caused by the burning of thousands of acres of straw in northwestern Minnesota. Straw spreaders had been introduced by this time and the Station promoted their use.

On campus, Dunham organized a crop sale to raise money for a grand piano for the main auditorium. He also led singing groups.

E.R. Clark came on the staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station about 1920. He had been engaged in small grain research and in a large study of farm weeds. Seeding rates for many of the small grains were studied. In 1921 many heavy rates were discontinued for lack of economy. Eight year averages for oats showed best results from seeding 10 to 13 pecks per acre.

Clark left for Lafayette, Indiana, in 1940 to become a seed technologist in the Federal Seed Laboratory.