

HISTORY OF SCIENCE

Chairman: WILLIAM J. TINKLE, Anderson College

DANIEL DENUYL, Purdue University, was elected chairman for 1957

ABSTRACTS

History of Farm Planning in Relation to Soil Conservation in Indiana. S. E. BOWMAN, U. S. Soil Conservation Service, Bloomington.—No doubt there has been some degree of soil conservation practiced since the first settlers tilled the soil of Indiana.

Land had been abandoned due to erosion before the turn of the century. Purdue University experimented with terracing in the early 20's.

Little farm planning for soil conservation was done in the state prior to 1933 when the Soil Erosion Service was established. In 1935 this became the Soil Conservation Service.

In the early CCC camp days the impetus was mainly on gully erosion. Gradually, proven control practices to combat sheet erosion were introduced from older farming areas.

As a guide to farm planning for soil conservation the need for soil inventories became apparent. From a rather sketchy beginning this has developed into comprehensive land capability maps.

Farm planning since 1933 has developed from a single practice demonstration to a complete soil and water conservation program for the farm. There may well be a number of equally good conservation plans for a given farm.

Generally speaking, state wide, there has been some trend away from mechanical practices to a more intense use of vegetative practices for conservation.

Farm planners with the SCS now have the responsibility of layout and certification of mechanical practices with the ASC program.

History of the Richmond Scientific Association. LAWRENCE J. KING, Boyce Thompson Inst. for Plant Research.—A "History of the Richmond Scientific Association (1873-1878)" presents the cultural background of this Indiana community from the beginning, and the factors of that era which led certain of its leading citizens to the founding of this association. The role of staff members of Earlham College and of other Quaker schools, the local medical men together with prominent citizens is developed. In this post-civil war period with the echoes of the Darwinian controversy still strong in the ears of the public, the increasing activity of state surveys for the development of natural resources, the interest in geology and evolution, and particularly the study of fossils so well represented in the Whitewater Gorge strata, as well as the thirst for things new always so closely associated with the pioneer spirit—were all factors in the development of this group.

This, the era of the Greek literary societies, the various private schools and Female Academies, the Athenaeums, the private natural history collections or "cabinets," the magic lantern and the itinerant speakers and travelers all indicated the desire to be informed. With the leisure time afforded these good citizens they turned their efforts to cultural advancement.

In later years with the declining interest of medical men in natural history matters, more widespread public school education, improved newspaper, magazine and farm papers, and specialized societies in the local schools and colleges the need for organizations such as this one considerably diminished. Following the organization of the Indiana Academy of Science in 1885, with three Richmond residents as charter members, the outlet for more highly technical reports and for professional contacts was then established.