

RURAL EDUCATION NEWS LETTER

Teachers College, Columbia University
New York

January 1, 1935.



Dear Students and Friends:

Santa Claus has just presented me with the most welcome gift imaginable this Christmas in the form of half-time help from an additional and competent secretary. This means, with Miss Sandler's continued service, that we shall now be able to conduct our Rural Department much more efficiently than heretofore, that we can answer your letters more promptly, and above all that I shall be able to realize my long-cherished plan of issuing a quarterly news letter to former students. So I am making a prompt beginning with the arrival of the New Year and this letter, as you will note, is hopefully labelled Number I. Eventually it may appear in printed form, but not until the old depression has retreated somewhat farther.

THE YEAR 1934 IN RETROSPECT

Students. Upon the whole 1934 with its fall semester of 1933 has been a good year for our Rural group here at the College. Much of this we owe to Dean Russell and Dr. Del Manzo (now our Provost) for their splendid support in assigning special rent scholarships to a few highly selected graduate students who entered the department in September 1933. This group, though small, constituted some of the very ablest students in the College last year and put our department on a distinctively high plane. Moreover, several of these scholarship students have remained this year to complete work for the doctorate and are still contributing to the quality of the group while those who took positions in the field (and most obtained very good positions) are reflecting much credit upon the College and rendering noteworthy service to the cause of Rural Education both at home and abroad. Enclosed here is a list of the students majoring in our group since September 1932 (exclusive of Summer Sessions) with their present locations. As you read this list think of the contribution our little department is making throughout the world and how much more it might do if some kindly-disposed foundation or persons of wealth could be induced to grant us additional scholarships and loan funds!

Courses. With the special group of students enrolled last year we withdrew our first major course (Education 245M-246M) and gave instead our second major or advanced course, Education 345E - 346E. Through this course several of the group prepared material of publishable quality some of which is now available either in printed or mimeographed form. In addition to this change I gave my course on education of Negroes for the first time in a regular session while Dr. Dunn and Dr. Cyr offered a new course each in auditory-visual instruction and in the administration of the small high school. This past fall the old fundamental course or first major has been re-instated but is now given in Units so that students in other departments may take parts of it more conveniently. Another change this year has been the withdrawal of Dr. Brunner's foreign course, Education 209F, as a separate course and its subordination as a discussion group of the main course in Rural Sociology - a regrettable loss necessitated by his heavy teaching schedule.

Club Activities. The Rural Club, though never large in membership, continues to flourish with its accustomed vitality. Its most interesting project during the past two years has been the furnishing and decorating of Room 275 Annex (the small classroom at the head of the stairs) as headquarters and Seminar room for the department. Those of you who remember this room only in the bare austerity of its former neglect would never know it now! Book shelves, blackboards, bulletin boards, letter files, window drapes, pictures, ornaments, and even a china cupboard and tea service, now grace its walls. Rural classes meet here regularly and teas, held every other week in the late afternoon, have proved a convenient and inexpensive means of social contact and professional stimulus. Tea is served promptly at four o'clock after which we have a guest speaker and discussion. Occasionally we expand a little and go in for special "eats" and decorations as at the recent Christmas party when Helen H. Heyl of the New York State Department was our guest or early in the fall when Dr. Strayer talked for us.

Aside from these departmental teas Rural Club activities have run about as usual. Market trips are still in vogue and more popular than ever. Bus trips are taken annually, also, to some of the near-by counties and teachers colleges doing good work in rural education. Delightful visits of this type were made last year to Warren County, New Jersey, and to the Normal Schools in New Paltz, New York, and Danbury, Conn. The Club also sent representatives to the meeting of the American Country Life Association in Washington last November, and just previous to this entertained a group of Yale students at luncheon who were on their way South to visit colored schools under the direction of Dr. C. T. Loram. Meanwhile the usual programs on rural life and education, both at home and abroad, have been given by members themselves, often with notable excellence and charm.

The Negro Education Club though not restricted to the Rural department is still under my advisement and a chief interest of many of our group. This Club made an outstanding record last year, the high points of the year being a program on progressive developments in Negro education, a special tea in honor of organizations and individuals in New York City doing interracial work, a trip to Washington to attend the First National Conference on Negro Education called last May by the U.S. Office of Education, and a program on Africa held at International House, April 11. The African program referred to was a most ambitious undertaking which attracted such favorable attention in both the University community and in Harlem that it was voted to recommend similar programs every two or three years. (Printed copies of this program are still available and may be had upon request). In addition to the activities mentioned the Negro Education Club assists in conducting the annual series of Rosenwald lectures on race relations and in the development of the course on Negro education.

Research and Writing. The department has been fortunate during the past year in securing the help of a number of competent research workers under Government auspices. With this assistance each member of the staff is developing research in his special field - Dr. Cyr in rural school administration and secondary curricula; Dr. Dunn and Dr. Bathurst on rural elementary curricula and visual education; while my own activities of this type relate to rural teacher-training, Negro education, and the foreign

field. With this we have had the good fortune to procure one or two workers proficient in the making of graphs and as a result we now have a fine collection of charts and maps for the teaching of our various courses.

Such writing as the department has achieved within the past two years relates for the most part to surveys, yearbooks and dissertations. Miss Dunn has contributed several articles to Progressive Education, completed her survey of Mountain schools, edited the 1933 Yearbook for the Rural Department of the N.E.A. and assisted with various other yearbooks and committee reports. Dr. Cyr edited the 1934 Yearbook of the N.E.A. Rural Department dealing with the enrichment of small high-school curricula and brought out a second bulletin this summer on correspondence study. Meanwhile, I have finished the rural section of the National Survey of Teacher Education which should soon come from the Government press and am now completing the next Yearbook for the Rural Department of the N.E.A. which is to deal with rural teacher-training. In addition to this Dr. Brunner continues to write prolifically and well with a new text in Rural Sociology almost completed, and several of our students have finished dissertations three of which, those by A.D. Helser on "The Education of Primitive Peoples", by Peter A.W. Cook on "The Education of a South African Tribe" and by Prem C. Lal on "Reconstruction and Education in Rural India" have appeared in book form and received much favorable comment.

SECOND VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

The most exceptional event of the closing year was my second visit to South Africa. Probably some of you have heard that I was invited down there during the month of July to participate in the South African Conference on Education. This conference was held under the auspices of the New Education Fellowship but was most ably organized and directed by Dr. E.G. Malherbe, a South African alumnus of Teachers College. My responsibility was for the rural phases of the meeting and I had a most delightful time working with their rural education leaders. We met first for two weeks in Cape Town and then again for a similar period in Johannesburg. Fifteen hundred school-folk attended the former meeting and over 3000 the latter. The speakers, about thirty in number, were chiefly from "over-seas" and listed several Americans including Dr. Dewey and Dr. and Mrs. Harold Rugg of Teachers College, also Mr. William McKinley Robinson of Kalamazoo, Michigan, who assisted with the rural work and made a very favorable impression.

This South African Education Conference was organized in eleven sections meeting from 9 to 11 each day and followed by an intermission for morning tea! Then came a period for general morning lectures followed by luncheon, special group meetings in the afternoon, more tea usually about four o'clock, a conference for social workers at 4.30, dinner about 6.30, and formal evening programs with two or more addresses at 8 o'clock. Needless to say every one was busy but to this the Rural Section added a number of extra meetings totaling nineteen full-time sessions in all and sharing honors with the Native Education Section for being the most energetic and enthusiastic group in the conference. This reputation seemed to me thoroughly deserved for never in my thirty years experience with educational gatherings have I met a finer, more devoted or keener group of men and women than those who constituted the membership of this rural division in South Africa.

At the last session of the Conference the discussions of each group were briefly summarized before the whole membership and I presented the summary for the rural education group at this time. Copies of this summary are now available in mimeographed form and will be sent to any desiring them upon request. It is revealing to note from this summary how similar the rural situation in South Africa is to our own with just enough contrast to make the two countries mutually helpful and interesting to each other.

The work of the Conference occupied practically all my time during the short month I was in South Africa but before leaving I managed to arrange brief visits with two of our former rural students. The first of these was with Mrs. Eva Mahuma Morake, or "Miss Mahuma" as we knew her, who is now principal of a school for Native boys and girls near Johannesburg where she is carrying forward a great work even though pitifully handicapped for funds. She inquired eagerly for old friends in America and would be pleased to hear from any of her former acquaintances. Incidentally she could use old clothing of every description, also elementary school texts and library books, children's magazines, extra towels or bedding and almost anything and everything else not to mention an extra dollar bill now and then. Her address is Mrs. Eva Mahuma Morake, Wilberforce Institute, Transvaal, South Africa, and letter postage is 5 cents a half ounce.

The other student visited was Sibusisiwe Makanya at Imbumbulu, Natal, South Africa. Miss Makanya will be remembered by many reading this letter as the energetic Zulu girl who studied in our department during the spring of 1930. Would that I had space to report in adequate detail the many unique and colorful events witnessed by my traveling companion (Annabel Snyder of Connecticut and a more perfect one never lived) and myself in the two days spent with Miss Makanya! Let me say only that she managed everything with her usual efficiency from meeting us at the train with a borrowed car to the interpretation of my farewell speech in the little mission church where I met her people. Sandwiched between these events were innumerable experiences in observing Native African life in the kraals, markets, schools, hospitals, missions, beer gardens, hostels, and high ways and by-ways of Zululand.

Miss Makanya is director of the Bantu Youth League, an organization similar to the Y.W.C.A. which she originated several years ago and which now enrolls some 600 young people with 25 branches scattered over Natal. Her activities include work for both adolescents and adults centering around a community house built under her direct supervision even to the making of the cement blocks. Unquestionably she is highly regarded in South Africa by both her colleagues and the Native people but like Mrs. Morake she needs all the encouragement she can get and would be glad to hear from old friends in "the States".

FIELD COURSE IN MEXICO NEXT SUMMER

South Africa, though never superseded in my affections, is temporarily supplanted in focus of attention, because I am to go to Mexico this coming summer to conduct a Field Course in Rural Education under the joint auspices of our own department and the International Institute of the College. This Mexican project promises to become a most fascinating and profitable venture but since it is quite fully explained in one of the en-

closures accompanying this letter I need not go into details. Let me pause only to extend you a cordial invitation to accompany us and actually to urge any of you who may have a little time and money for travel (note that this trip will not require much of either) to give this suggestion careful consideration and write me for further details and printed announcements.

THE NEW YEAR - PROSPECTS AND PROMISES

Prospects for the New Year in Teachers College, as in most educational institutions, look increasingly brighter than for some time. Under the leadership of our active Dean the College is just now undergoing a big administrative re-organization as set forth in his last Annual Report. The phases of this re-organization most significant to our rural group are the new Doctor of Education degree, the provision for independent research or short-period study, and the closer integration and cooperation of the various departments or interest groups of the College.

Under the provision for short-period study, former students may return for two, three or four weeks at any time during the year and concentrate on some special interest or project of their own, enlisting faculty help and guidance in this work and receiving regular college credit toward any degree. This should prove convenient for those working on doctors' dissertations and even for others who merely desire a little refreshment and professional stimulation from a busy educational center with a good library. It may also be possible under this arrangement for our department to carry out a long-cherished plan of holding a short-course for Rural Education Specialists and Rural Community Workers some time next year if not before.

The new principle of integration being developed in the College is working greatly to the advantage of rural interests. Under this plan the whole student body is beginning to learn something of rural school needs - a consumation much desired and of great significance professionally. The four departments with which we are most closely associated in this development are those of Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Educational Administration and Teacher Training.

This letter could go on for pages, particularly on the inviting theme of our hopes and fears for 1934-35. In this, reference might be made to our writing, to research, to plans for the improvement of our student services and for closer contacts with alumni. But postage is limited and hopes are fleeting, so I will restrain my dictation and Mrs. Rodriguez her typing (she is the part-time secretary for whom I am grateful to Santa Claus) and leave the rest for later news letters.

With every good wish for a happier and brighter New Year than most of us have known recently, I greet you all in the name of the department and send you, individually and collectively, from nearby New Jersey to distant Africa, India, Korea and China, a full measure of my personal regard and friendship.

Sincerely yours,

Mabel Carney

Mabel Carney

EDUCATIONAL TOUR TO MEXICO

Planned for the Forthcoming Summer Session of 1935.
Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City.

Education s245Tx Rural Education Field Course in Mexico.
Credit II, IV. 2 to 4 points. Professor Mabel Carney.
August 1st to September 2 or September 17; also August
15 to September 17.

For the past several years Mexico has been attracting world-wide attention because of its distinctive and outstanding developments in education. These developments relate for the most part to the field of rural education, being concerned primarily with the adaptation of educational theory to the twelve million Indians constituting the agricultural population of the country. In this effort Mexican educational authorities have especially developed and employed the "cultural mission", the community-centered rural school and the rural-directed normal school. These agencies and practices are full of suggestion to American educators concerned with the direction of education in rural areas of the United States. A Rural Education Field Course in Mexico is therefore announced for the Summer Session of 1935, which may be taken either with credit or without.

This course is being developed jointly by the International Institute and the Rural Education department of Teachers College, Columbia University, in cooperation with Professor Rafael Ramirez, Miss Elena Torres and Senor Celso Z. Flores of the Federal Department of Education in Mexico. Professor Mabel Carney will act as general director of the tour assisted by Professor Maria E. Machin of the University of Puerto Rico and Miss Sara L. Patrick of Teachers College.

The party will travel in two groups, the first sailing from New York on Thursday, August 1st and arriving back in New York September 2; the second sailing August 15 and arriving home September 17. Others joining the party by automobile, train or boat from San Antonio, El Paso or New Orleans can estimate their own dates but should plan to arrive in Mexico City by August 7.

Each group will have three weeks in the City of Mexico and outlying areas with lectures and excursions emphasizing rural education, teacher-training, native arts and crafts, and social and economic problems. The lectures will be given by outstanding Mexican authorities, and a member of the Federal Department of Education will accompany the group on all educational field visits. Those who participate in this study will be in Mexico for three weeks or for five weeks taking the course for two, three or four points of credit or without credit.

The total expense of the three-weeks tour from New York and return by boat will be about \$300. Others departing from other points and joining the party in Mexico City may be able to make the trip at less expense, while to remain five weeks will cost proportionately more at the rate of about \$5 per day. Those desiring credit must pay extra for tuition at \$10 a point plus the regular University fee of \$7. To reserve a registration for the course or a sailing with the party send a check for \$30. This will be returned later in case of cancellation.

For further information write the Director of the Tour or the Secretary of the International Institute at Teachers College, Columbia University.

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