

PROSPECTUS OF
THE

COLLEGE

OF
AGRICULTURE



TRURO

NOVA SCOTIA

1905-06

The Early Years – 1905-1920

The Official Opening

Melville Cumming's official appointment as the first Principal of the College took effect on February 1, 1905. Class work, during those first two weeks of February, consisted of a comprehensive short course program in Field Husbandry, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Dairying, Poultry and Veterinary Practice. At the close of the program, the official opening of the College was held on February 14. Premier George E. Murray presided and a large representation of government members and other prominent persons were present.

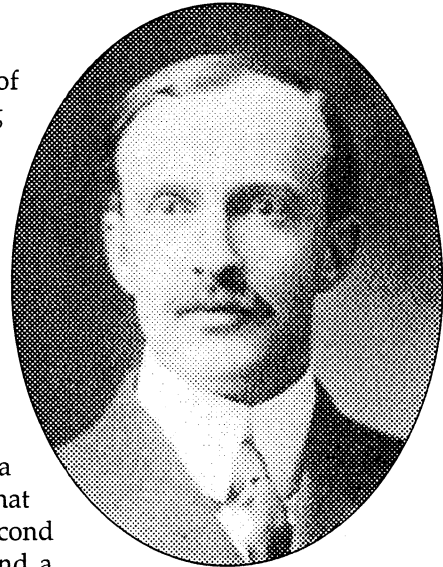
The new administration building provided much needed academic space. Four and one-half acres of land lying on the west side of the Provincial Farm, were acquired in 1903 for the building site. The first floor provided space for the Principal's office, two classrooms, a laboratory-classroom, a cloakroom and horticultural workroom that connected to a greenhouse which had three compartments. On the second floor, there were rooms for professors and students, a classroom and a large assembly hall. The basement was fitted with a large blacksmith shop, a carpenter shop and a boiler room.

The front section of the present Cumming Hall is the administration building built in 1904. This building was enlarged in 1913 when an extension to the back was added and again in the 1970s when Alumni Theatre was built, the windows replaced, a sprinkler system added and the roof replaced. During the 1970s renovation we nearly lost the building to a fire that started

from a plumber's torch. The quick action by the Bible Hill fire department stopped the fire before major damage was done. Again, in 1995-96, the building underwent major refurbishing to the structure and interior. I will comment more fully on these changes in chapters 7 and 9.

Many people are rightfully pleased that the archetype of the original building

has been maintained in the renovations of the 1990s. All the windows were replaced and made to resemble those in the original plan. New interior colours were developed from colours found on original pieces of the interior finish. The front section has retained its original character and as such remains, what has always been, a focal point of College identity throughout all of the institution's history.



Melville Cumming
From NSAC Agricola Collections



The opening of the College was front page news in the local press.

Programs of Study

Records for the regular two-year course in agriculture began on October 14, 1905. Of the twenty-five students who registered, two were designated as "seniors" and the other twenty-three as "juniors". Fifteen of the junior students were from Nova Scotia, four from New Brunswick, three from England and one from the West Indies. The two seniors became the first graduates to continue further studies at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph. Several others in the next graduating class followed their example. Transfers were soon possible to other agricultural faculties. The 1910 annual report indicated that students registered in the third year at the Ontario Agricultural College, Macdonald College and Cornell Agricultural College.

One of the seniors, Edgar S. Archibald, Yarmouth, already had a degree from Acadia University in Wolfville. Following only one year of NSAC study, he became the first graduate of the new College. After graduation from the Ontario Agricultural College, he went on to a career in research and eventually served as the Director of the Experimental Farm Service in Ottawa, a position he held from 1919 until 1951.² The other senior, Elton Lewis from Westbrook Mills, near Southhampton, Cumberland County, had other university courses before entering the College and was the other student who had advanced standing in that first session. He too graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College in 1908.

Mr. B. W. Chipman, Secretary for Agriculture for the Province, died suddenly on April 21, 1906, after eight years of services in that office. In addition to his role as principal, Mr. Cumming was asked to assume Chipman's duties on a temporary basis. This provided an opportunity to unify or coordinate the work of the College and the other more general government activities to advance agriculture. The activities included grants and extension information to 166 agricultural societies. There was also the challenge of importing horses, cattle, pigs and sheep for livestock improvement. Liaison activities with farm organizations included meetings with the Nova Scotia Farmers' Association and the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association. The various county exhibitions and the Provincial Exhibition also reported to the Secretary of Agriculture.

These additional programs put Mr. Cumming in the midst of all provincial government agricultural work. The dual role for him continued until 1925 and added to the ongoing activities of the College, the farm and the travelling dairy schools. In his reports he would often refer to the work of the College and the "department." His use of the term, "department," was to describe the work done through the office of the Secretary for Agriculture, which reported to the Provincial Secretary. In actual fact, the provincial government's agricultural work was not organized into a department headed by a minister and a deputy minister until the Department of Natural Resources was formed in 1926.

Enrolled Attendance in Fall Term of the Regular two-year Course [both years]

1905 - 06	25
1906 - 07	30
1907 - 08	35
1908 - 09	48
1909 - 10	43
1910 - 11	62

From the Annual Reports of the Principal

Faculty During the 1905-06 Year

M. Cumming, Principal and Professor of Animal and Field Husbandry
 F. C. Sears, M.S.A., Professor of Horticulture
 W. H. Smith, B.Sc. A., Professor of Biology
 F. L. Fuller, Agriculturist
 W. J. Jakeman, V.S., Veterinarian
 J. P. Landry, Manager of Poultry Department.

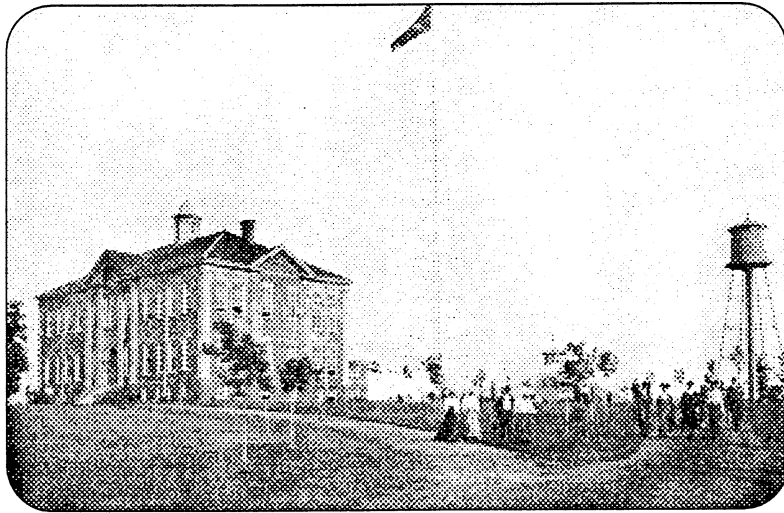
The NSAC Faculty were assisted by four staff members from the Provincial Normal School.

Principal Soloan, B.A., L.L.D., English
 L. C. Harlow, B.Sc., B.S.A., Chemistry
 E. W. Connolly, B.A., Mathematics
 F. G. Matthews, Principal, Manual Training School



This is a copy of the original seal authorized for the use of the NSAC by Provincial Order-in-Council dated 22 May, 1907, pursuant to s.4, c.58 of the Revised Statutes of 1900.

A Typical Day in 1906



This summertime photo was taken northwest of the main building on July 10, 1906, by Professor F. C. Sears.

Photo and original glass negative are stored in NSAC Agricola Collections.

Howard Trueman in his book on *Early Agriculture in the Atlantic Provinces*, includes a description of a typical day at the "Truro Agricultural College". He reports that this was taken from a newspaper, but doesn't name the paper or give a specific date. I believe the description refers to the fall of 1906 since the enrollment numbers correspond.

"Holidays at the Agricultural College are over and the regular course students have returned to work. Numbering 15 at the beginning of the term, the class has gradually grown until there are now 22 students enrolled. Several more have applied for admission, but have been advised to wait until the next term begins in October.

As I write I can hear the sound of saws and hammers in the basement classroom, where Mr. Fuller has ten of the students learning how to use carpenters' tools. Some are making saw benches, two are making a wheel-barrow and others are learning how to sharpen tools and do various kinds of carpenter work. Ten more of the students are in Prof. Sears' classroom studying Horticulture and two of the more advanced ones are studying Botany under Prof. Smith's direction. This morning a discussion of the care and management of dairy cows by the writer, and a similar discussion on poultry, by Mr. Landry, filled in the students' time. Practical work in the stables commenced today and five o'clock this evening will find a number of the boys at work feeding, milking and doing all sorts of work in the stables. Such is a day at the College, except for changes in the programme of classes. Some mornings they are at the Normal School, where Principal Sloan and other members of the Normal School Staff give instruction in English, Mathematics, and Chemistry. On Fridays Dr. Jakesman has them for the greater part of the day, teaching them how to treat animals in health and disease, as well as how to shoe and perform various operations on horses.

Numerous applications are coming in for 'Short Courses,' and it is anticipated that over 100 will be attendance from February 1st to February 15th, on which occasion the faculty will be assisted by leading agriculturalists, and more especially those who have made a success of the different lines of farming in our own province."

All illustrations and text for this folder have been drawn from *Shaped Through Service - An Illustrated History of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College* by Dale Ells. The author has developed a comprehensive story reviewing the relevant events since the founding of the first School of Agriculture in 1885. The book has 280 pages and over 200 illustrations. The book is available at the NSAC Bookstore.

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