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A Suggested Farm Entrance Sign for Advertising Purposes

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EXTENSION DIVISION

South Dakota State College of Agriculture
and Mechanic Arts and the United States
Department of Agriculture Cooperating.
C. Larsen, Director

A SUGGESTED FARM ENTRANCE SIGN

For Advertising Purposes

By

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and

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With the great increase in the number of farmers who are adopting names for their farmsteads there is an accompanying desire for the erection of appropriate sign boards, entrance signs or other devices of advertising value. The accompanying sketch and working plan are intended to show what may be done with ordinary building materials in erecting a sign that has good lines. Farmers who contemplate the putting up of two posts and a straight cross board may find in this suggestion something worth while. If the sign is worth erecting at all, why not put up one that is attractive?

Many farms quite appropriately make a neat display of the name on the barns. The advantage of this is that the name is legible for a considerable distance. One disadvantage is that the sign wears "ragged" if not kept repainted with first-class paint. Neither is the barn a suitable place for listing the lines in which the farm specializes. Signs on shingle roofs are especially likely to become advertisements of not the best sort.

Advantages of Sign Board Entrance

A symmetrical sign entrance permits of displaying not only the farm name but also the farm specialties. It dispels confusion and is a constant invitation to "come in and see what we have." A well balanced sign is a real advertisement. A prospective buyer knows definitely what farm to enter without asking too many questions. How much better it is for someone to direct a stranger as follows: "John Smith's farm? Why that's Oakwood farm, straight ahead three miles. You can't miss it. Look for the arched entrance—best sign in the neighborhood."

The Sign Should Be Well Designed

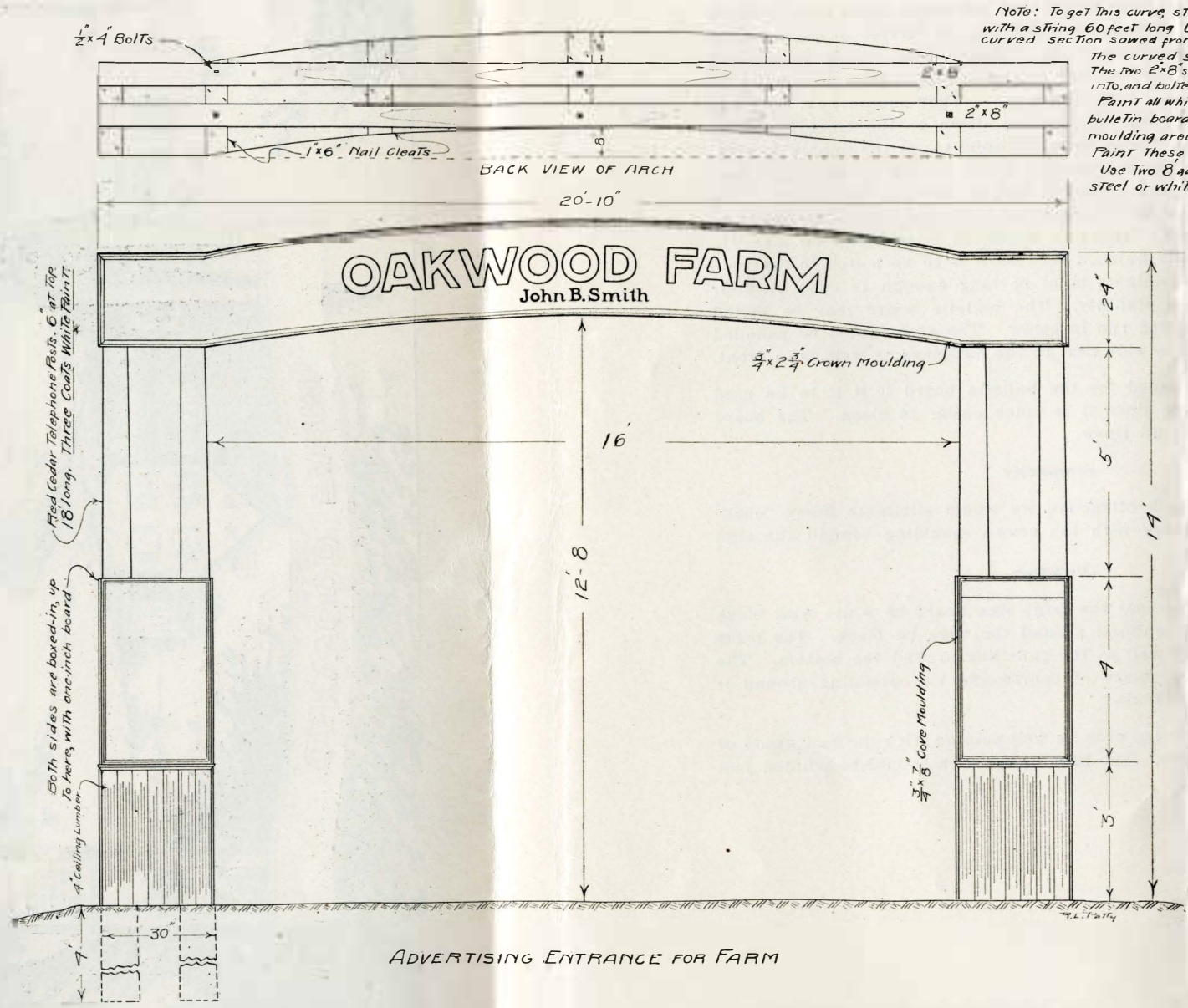
If a farm entrance sign is to be erected, it should be well designed, and fit in with the landscape setting. The accompanying sketch and working plan are intended to offer a suggested sign that would be effective on many farms. Note that the artist's drawing shows the farm name, "Oakwood," suggested possibly by the gnarled burr oak tree near the entrance, a list of the farm specialties in the panel at the reader's left, and daily offerings on the blackboard in the right panel. Being near the road, such a sign is legible provided too much matter is not lettered on the panels. Remember that in all forms of advertising it does not pay to crowd too much reading matter in a given space. Contrast between reading matter and blank space makes for legibility. Remember also that capital letters are not as legible as small letters, especially when crowded together. Avoid fancy lettering for the same reason.

Trees and Shrubbery

F. E. McCall, South Dakota extension horticulturist, suggest that this archway should be supported by irregular plantings at the sides, of such varieties of shrubs as dogwoods, elders, buckthorn and June berries. In the background may well be found some large spreading trees such as white elm or burr oak supported by several of the low-growing varieties such as hackberry, American linden and native hawthornes. These plantings should not be in regular rows but rather in irregular groups.

Proportions In the Sign

Good proportions for the farm entrance arch are of first importance to its attractiveness. This is true of any structure. The posts should be in proportion to the name board overhead, and the width of the name board must increase with the span or width of the gate, because its length must necessarily be increased. In short the whole structure must balance. If single posts are used to support the arch they must necessarily be of good size to prevent the structure from looking top heavy; and as the width of the gate is increased the size of the posts must increase. By using the double posts this matter is simplified. The same sized posts may be used and as the width of the gate increases the double posts may be moved farther apart. The minimum width for an arch is shown in the plan, and the double posts should not be over 30 inches outside measurement. This will leave 12 to 14 inches between them. These same dimensions are recommended also for an arch 18 feet wide, but for each additional foot of width more than 18 feet the posts should be set one inch farther apart and the width of the name board should be increased in proportion.



Note: To get this curve strike an arc with a string 60 feet long. Use the curved section sawed from below for the curved section on top. The two 2x8's are mortised into, and bolted to posts. Paint all white except bulletin boards and crown moulding around sign. Paint these black. Use two gates. Black steel or white lumber.

Red Cedar Telephone Posts, 6 at top 18' long. Three Coats White Paint. Both sides are boxed-in, up to eaves with one-inch board. 4" ceiling lumber.

OAKWOOD FARM
John B. Smith

ADVERTISING ENTRANCE FOR FARM

The Sign Board Entrance on Page 6 may be built from this plan.—Designed by R. L. Patty

How It Is Made

To construct this arch, select four red cedar posts with six-inch top. Red cedar is recommended because it carries a more nearly uniform diameter all the way up. These posts should be treated with creosote up four or five feet from the butt. The tops should be sawed to a peak so they will shed water. They should next be given three good coats of paint all the way down to the treated portion because the panelling around them will tend to rot the unpainted post. The posts should be set in concrete, being careful to get them perpendicular and the tops the correct distance for the sign board. The two-by-eights may now be mortised into the posts and bolted ready to receive the sign board. The sign board, of course, can be made in the meantime and fully finished because it is to be bolted to the two-by-eights. The two-by-eights must be long enough to span all four posts in order to add stability. The bulletin board may be bolted on next and the panelling run in below. The arch should be panelled at the sides and back or side next to the buildings as well as in front.

Slate is recommended for the bulletin board if it is to be used to a very great extent since it is much easier to clean. The board should appear neat at all times.

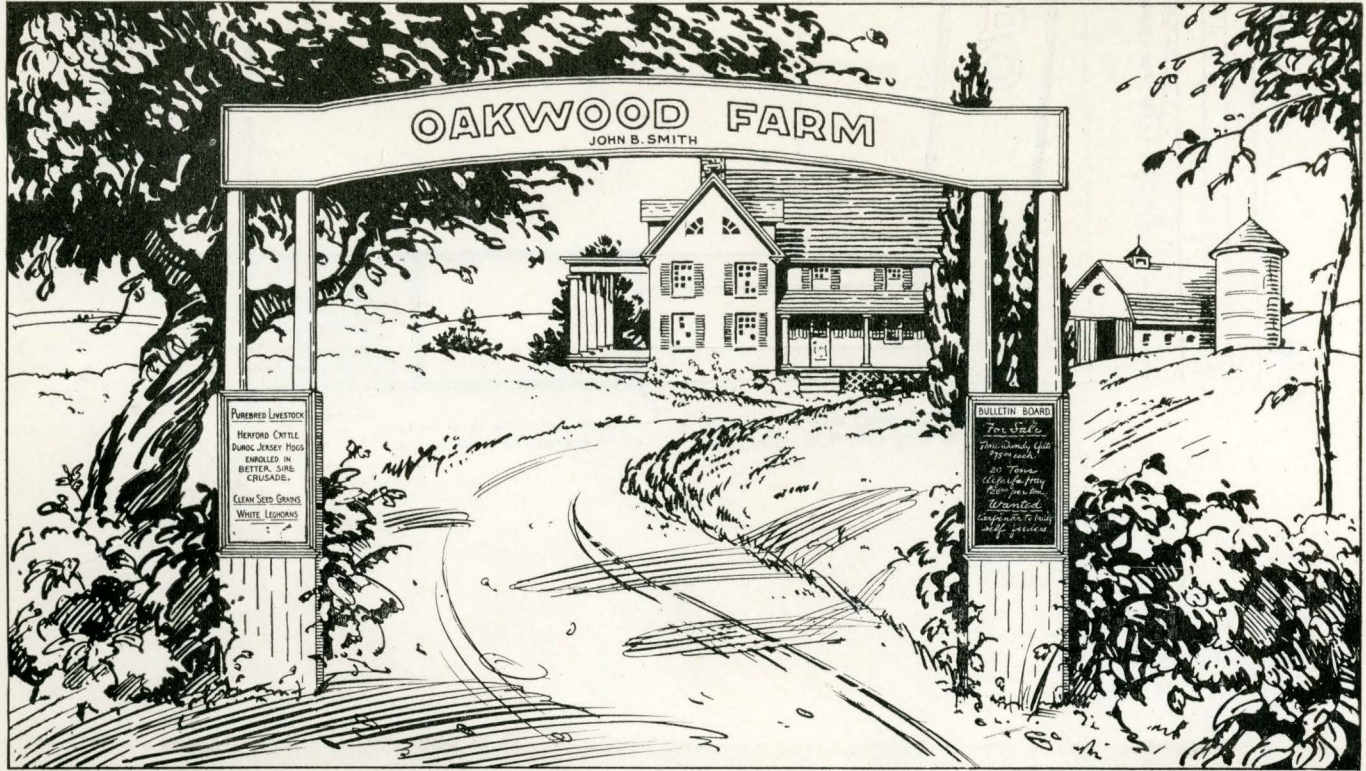
Simplicity

In making the arch attractive we would eliminate fancy "curlicues." The slight curve with the crown moulding around the sign will break the severity.

Painting

It is recommended that the large sign board be white with black letters and that the moulding around the edge be black. The posts should be all white as well as the panelling around the bottom. The bulletin board must be black of course and the moulding around it probably should be black also.

It is essential that the arch be well painted with the best grade of paint and kept that way. The back of the arch should be painted just as well as the front.



A Suggested Farm Entrance Sign to take the Place of Two Plain Posts and Cross Piece Occasionally Seen But Not Admired