

# Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science

---

Volume 82 | Number 1 Part 1

Article 4

---

1975

## The Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm: A Dream About Tomorrow

Harry T. Horner Jr.  
*Iowa State University*

Copyright © Copyright 1975 by the Iowa Academy of Science, Inc.  
Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias>

---

### Recommended Citation

Horner, Harry T. Jr. (1975) "The Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm: A Dream About Tomorrow," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*: Vol. 82: No. 1 pt. 1 , Article 4.  
Available at: <http://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol82/iss0/4>

This General Interest Article is brought to you for free and open access by UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science by an authorized editor of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@uni.edu](mailto:scholarworks@uni.edu).

## The Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm: A Dream About Tomorrow

HARRY T. HORNER, JR.\*

A gift may be given for many reasons and what the receiver does with it may depend on many things. The Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm fits this situation and serves as an appropriate focal point to tell a story—a story with a beginning and a developing plot, but one whose ending is yet to be written, if ever. The Farm story represents a relatively small part of the Academy's first hundred years, yet its potential is great for becoming a significant and unique part of the second hundred years. Just like those who may excitedly look back in the year 2075 and reflect on what has come to pass, we who have experienced the birth and early growth of the Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm can excitedly look forward to what that future history may be.

Like most stories, this one has a beginning. On February 24, 1954, as the Academy secretary-treasurer, the late Jean L. Laffoon, was going through his mail and registering the dues-paid statements, one of the statements caught his attention. On the bottom of this statement was written a short note asking “. . . if the Iowa Academy of Science is incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa so they can own property.” The statement (Figure 1) was signed by Jessie A. Parish, a woman member of the Academy for 32 years. To my knowledge, no one has ever analyzed notes written to treasurers on dues statements; however, this one must have appeared quite unusual. Whatever moved Jessie to write what she did, her apparent illness, which was later diagnosed as carcinoma (1), caused her to finalize her thoughts and feelings in a will dated July 24, 1954 (2). Shortly afterwards, on August 10, 1954, Jessie passed away at her farm home near Reinbeck, Iowa.

Upon the disclosure of her will, the reason for her earlier written note became apparent. The Iowa Senior Academy of Science was to receive title to her 240-acre farm (valued at \$66,000 in 1954). The will also contained two other interesting clauses. The first is important but irrelevant and the second is important and relevant. In her will, Jessie left her entire estate to the Academy if her husband preceded her in death; however, the estate and its use went to her husband (who lived until August 10, 1960) to do with as he wished, with the exception of the 240-acre farm. This property would pass to the Academy upon his death. Jessie specifically gave the farm to the Academy, “for their use of and income for a period of 75 years from my death, during which time the land cannot be sold by them and they must maintain all taxes, insurance, and upkeep of the property. At the end of 75 years [2029 A.D.], they may sell the property to individuals” (3). In my reading through the Academy records and

my involvement with the Parish Farm beginning late in 1969, I discovered that this stipulation initially proved to be a problem to the Academy, but I now view it as a far-sighted vision.

The vision involves the giver, Jessie Augusta Parish, a woman, an Academy member, a professional dentist, and a lover of science. These human characteristics, as well as others mentioned here, provide an image which, to me, may be summarized by the words of Thomas Huston Macbride (4): “Like the upbuilding of Solomon's temple is the fulfillment of a successful human life. It rises silently before us and only as it nears completion do we begin to realize its worth and symmetry.”

Who was Jessie Augusta Parish and why did she act so generously toward the Academy? These questions have haunted me for some time now; unfortunately, there is little that we know about Jessie. Like the submerged part of an iceberg, the greater part of her thoughts and feelings about life, the sciences, and the Academy, all remain hidden, probably forever. But even with only a glimpse of her life, maybe we as Academy members and concerned individuals can develop a sense of something great, something unusual in who she was and what she represented.

Jessie was born on a farm north of Reinbeck on March 5, 1883, to Charles A. and Fannie M. Parish (5, 6). She apparently spent her entire early life on the farm with her parents and a sister, Ella, and thus developed a deep appreciation for life and nature in general around her in the farming community. Jessie completed high school in Reinbeck and then entered Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, where she obtained a Master of Didactics degree (7) in 1905. She then transferred to the State University of Iowa, Iowa City, finishing the requirements for a B.S. degree in 1906.

Music and general science were the two areas that interested Jessie the most at first, but apparently her love for science and her inquisitive mind caused her to continue on at SUI; she took courses in the sciences, especially in zoology and botany. Her interests were varied and intense; she worked under Professor C. C. Nutting in zoology and completed an M.S. dissertation, “The Horns of Mammalia,” in 1911 (8). Her interest in botany was probably equally compelling and was probably an outgrowth of her earlier experiences as an undergraduate. She became interested in slime molds and fungi and worked periodically with Professor T. H. Macbride. Although the M.S. thesis was never published, her basic interest in fungi surfaced many years later when, in 1928, she presented her work on the black fungi of Iowa at an Academy meeting.

Sometime during her graduate work for the M.S. degree (1906-1911), Jessie met John Thomas Hoar, who had received his D.D.S. degree from SUI in 1909 and was practicing dentistry in Iowa City. This relationship grew, and John and/or graduate work may have influenced Jessie to enter dental school in 1911. They were married on July 3, 1911, just after Jessie finished her M.S. degree and just before she started dental school.

Jessie P. Hoar spent the next four years (1911-1915) in

\* Dr. Horner presently is a professor on the faculty of the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, Iowa State University, Ames. He became a member of IAS in 1965 (G), and has served as secretary-treasurer (1968-73), Botany Section chairman (1972), chairman of the Finance Committee (1970-73), member of the Parish Farm Committee (1973- ), chairman of the Centennial Observance Committee (1973-75), and chairman of the Local Arrangements Committee (1975).

Enclosed find my \$1.00 check for 1954-55 dues.

Send to: Jean L. Laffoon  
 Dept. of Zoology & Entomology  
 Iowa State College  
 Ames, Iowa

Name: *Jessie A. Parish*  
 Address: *Cedar Falls, Iowa*  
*2416 Franklin St.*

A red check here Paid indicates you have not paid your 1953-54 dues.

A red check here      indicates your 1954-55 dues have already been paid. Enc. check #1

*I want to ask if the Iowa Academy of Science is incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa so they can own property. Do they own anything now. Kindly let me know.*  
*Jessie Parish*

Figure 1. 1954 dues statement signed by Jessie A. Parish.



Figure 2. Jessie A. Parish (Jessie P. Hoar); 1915 graduation photograph from SUI dental school.

dental school and graduated with the D.D.S. degree in 1915, the only woman in her graduating class. She appeared in her graduation picture (Figure 2) as an attractive and serious woman with large, soft, but penetrating eyes. Her aspirations and accomplishments at that time must be considered somewhat unique and enviable. Jessie was married at the age of 28 and received her dental degree when she was 32. Beyond her experience in grade school and high school, Jessie spent fourteen years cultivating her broad interests in the sciences, finally completing this aspect of her life with involvement in a practical science, dentistry.

It is not known what feelings and attitudes guided Jessie's thoughts at the age of 32, but she and her husband moved to Cedar Falls, where they established a joint dental practice which lasted until their retirement in about 1945. Then they moved to the farm near Reinbeck, which she inherited from her parents (2). John and Jessie had no children; whether by design or fate is not known.

Jessie's interests in the basic sciences resurfaced during her dentistry career. She became an associate member of the Iowa Academy of Science in 1922 (9), and a fellow in 1923 (10). She also carried a joint membership with AAAS. During her first eight years of membership, Jessie was listed as Miss Jessie A. Parish, Dr. Jessie A. Parish, and Jessie A. Parish, respectively. I point this out as the records show she and her husband dropped his last name sometime after Jessie obtained her D.D.S. She reverted to her maiden name and John's full name became John T. H(oar). Parish.

Jessie retained her interest in the Academy and attended the annual meeting each year from 1923 through at least 1931 (11). At that time the Academy had a policy of individually recognizing each member who attended the annual meetings, but this policy was dropped in 1932. It can be assumed that Jessie did continue to attend meetings later in the 1930's. It is a fact that she retained her status as a fellow

up to her death in 1954, thus making her a member of the Academy for 32 consecutive years (1922-1954).

Even though Jessie regularly attended the annual meetings, she apparently never entered into committee work or aspired to become an officer. It is only my speculation, but I suspect she had neither the time nor the desire to be involved with such responsibilities but, nevertheless, nurtured a very deep-seated attachment to the Academy. In 1928, at the age of 45, Jessie did present a paper at the 42nd annual session at Grinnell. The paper was titled *The Pyrenomycetes or Black Fungi of Iowa* (12), which she stated was begun in 1906 (the beginning of her M.S. work at SUI) with the help of Dr. T. H. Macbride of SUI's Botany Department.

It seems to me that Jessie now had the time to relive and partially express her early and continued interests in the sciences and to "do her thing," so to speak, by giving a paper on a topic which had been close to her heart earlier in life. Unfortunately, this represents the only outward evidence of Jessie's basic scientific and research capabilities that I know about, with the exception of her unpublished M.S. thesis.

However, her academic accomplishments, as represented by four degrees beyond high school and her professional life as a dentist and a faithful Academy member, attest to the fact that she was well-educated, keenly interested in the sciences, and had a deep respect for life. Her commitment to the Iowa Academy of Science may be viewed as her way of staying a part of that portion of life which she greatly cherished. In this relationship, there must be embodied everything that she felt about science, about herself, and about life in general. For it is clear to me now that these feelings are most evident in her generous gift of the Parish Farm to the Academy.

Twenty years have elapsed since the passing of Jessie Parish and fourteen years since the Academy first received the legal rights to the Farm after the death of Jessie's husband in 1960. As with Jessie's life, very little information can be found in the records regarding the Academy's view of her bequest. Most of the individuals initially involved (1954-1962) in this event have since passed away. However, the records do show that Jessie's gift was a new and somewhat confusing experience for the Academy officers. I assume that the officers knew the exact contents of the will, and some of the officers felt that Jessie's husband might honor Jessie's wishes set forth in her will by bequeathing a portion of the inheritance he received from Jessie to the Academy. This did not come to fruition.

Between 1954 and 1960, the officers discussed the impending bequest of the Farm. Don Lewis (Finance and Endowment [F & E] Committee chairman, SUI) suggested that a professional management service be enlisted to survey the Farm, with the added possibility of managing it. This suggestion was sent on May 9, 1957, to Jean Laffoon (IAS secretary-treasurer, ISU), J. J. L. Hinrichsen (IAS Board member, ISU), and Clarence Lindahl (IAS member). The consensus was that great care should be taken to avoid upsetting John T. H. Parish or his close relatives. However, the idea of renting the Farm and using a farm management service was at least supported by Hinrichsen.

Apparently the attitude of the Academy officers did not satisfy the desire of Don Lewis to see that some preliminary planning was done so that when the time came, the Academy could take immediate control and manage the Farm. Lewis enlisted Professor Charles Davidson at the SUI Law College to make suggestions about the Farm. These ideas are out-

lined in a letter dated April 4, 1957. Some of the ideas that were included were: "the Academy should do nothing for the time being"; no attempt should be made to question the 75-year limitation or sell the Farm, even if that were legally possible; instead, the Academy should cultivate John's friendship with the Academy, and the Farm might turn out to be a very good investment.

In March, 1958, Davidson suggested a lawyer who might act as a farm manager. During this same year Lewis was able to get the Board of Directors to create a "special committee" of three (George Huff, president; Clarence Lindahl, secretary-treasurer; and Don Lewis, F & E Committee chairman) to act in an advisory capacity about the Farm. It appears that little or nothing was accomplished in regard to Farm planning between 1958 and the death of John T. H. Parish on August 10, 1960 (the Academy was represented by two of its members at the funeral). It should be noted here that the IAS records contain an unsigned and undated letter which expresses frustration at the lack of IAS planning in regard to the takeover of the Farm. Portions of the letter lead me to believe that it was typed by Don Lewis shortly after John Parish's death. The letter did imply that Dean Loehwing (IAS president) shared Lewis' feelings.

Whether any preliminary planning would have made a difference in regard to the events which will now be described, is only a matter of speculation. On August 29, 1960, the IAS special committee (Huff, Lindahl, and Lewis) met with the lawyer who handled the Parishes' legal affairs, Mr. Blair Eugene Hunter, and the tenant on the Farm, Mr. Nelson Sager. This group met in Reinbeck and discussed the present status of the Farm and how the transfer would be handled. Mr. Sager already was committed to the 1960-61 crop year and agreed to pay rent to the Academy for seven-twelfths of that year (August, 1960, through February, 1961). A lease in the name of Nelson Sager had already been written for the following crop year (March, 1961, to March 1, 1962). The committee decided to honor this lease and retain Mr. Sager as the tenant on the Farm through February, 1962, and accept Mr. Hunter as the "farm manager." Early in 1961, Hunter wrote Lewis suggesting that his fee as manager should be ten percent of the gross income up to \$200. He also mentioned that Nelson Sager would prefer having three-year leases instead of annual ones.

Diverging from these early events for a moment, the Farm itself consists of 240 acres about 1¼ miles north of Reinbeck, in Grundy County, and is divided into two parts: 160 acres (W ½ NE ¼-16-87-15, W 5th P.M. and E ½ NE ¼-16-87-15, W 5th P.M.) and 80 acres (S ½ NW ¼-15-87-15, W 5th P.M.) (Figure 3). Most of the land was being used for crops, while about fifteen acres consisted of a woodlot and cleared area containing eight buildings and a silo (Figures 3-9). The farm house and other buildings were all in various stages of disrepair. It must have been obvious to the special committee that a great deal of work needed to be done, especially on the buildings. Nothing appears in the records concerning the upkeep of the remainder of the land. Since it was obvious that some of the buildings needed to be repaired, the special committee was immediately faced with these problems and that of obtaining the money. The 1960-61 lease was based on \$15/acre, which would gross the Academy \$2,100.

Sager and Hunter apparently strongly suggested that the house be partially renovated (by adding a bathroom) and that there was a distinct need for a two-car garage and a corncrib. Sager offered his own labor to help make these sug-



Figure 3. Aerial photograph of IAS Parish Farm (dots), courtesy of the U.S.D.A.-Soil Conservation Service and the Grundy County Soil Conservation District. Woodlot and buildings (1), and farmed land (2, 3) are distinguishable.

gested improvements appear more appealing and also strengthen his own position for obtaining a three-year rent/acre lease (1962-65; \$17/acre). The improvements to the farm house and the additions of the new corncrib and garage were carried out during 1961-62 and cost the Academy practically its entire net earnings for at least the next several years (Figures 10 and 11).

The two early one-year leases and the three later three-year leases (1962-65; 1965-68; 1968-71) gave Mr. Sager control and free use of all the farm buildings and complete control over the entire farming operation. It is evident from the correspondence in the files that Don Lewis was concerned about the large expenditure of funds on the Farm with little actual return going into the general Academy funds. These feelings were expressed several times during 1963. At about this time, Irvin H. Gerks (IAS member, Collins Radio Co.) replaced Lewis as F & E chairman; however, Lewis stayed on the Farm committee in a supervisory capacity.

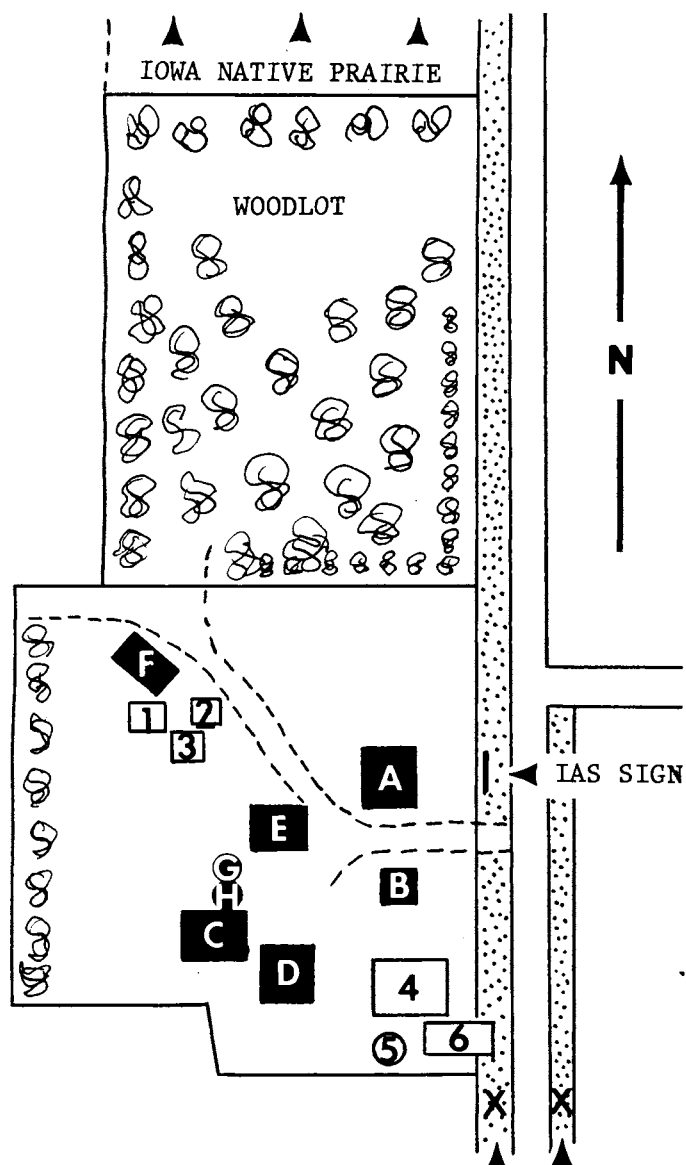
There is very little information in the files for 1963-65. Farm income stayed about the same (Table 1) and no major improvements were carried out. It can be assumed that during these years, Irv Gerks was trying to formulate some new plans in regard to the Farm, but the lease provisions and lack of general Academy interest may have stifled his efforts.

Between 1965 and 1966, Gerks apparently enlisted the

help of Arnold Haugen to develop a conservation plan for the Farm. This plan included a number of tree and shrub plantings in the fifteen-acre area around the buildings and was to be carried out by Haugen and an explorer scout group. The Board of Directors agreed to the plan, which was then presented to the IAS lawyer-manager, Hunter, and the tenant, Sager, late in 1966. Sylvan Runkel, Soil Conservation Service (SCS), agreed to help Haugen execute the plan, and together they obtained some financial support through SCS for this work. In April, 1967, Haugen, Sager, and a group of six explorer scouts from Ames planted honeysuckle, common lilac, white pine, and concolor fir on the Farm. In the spring of 1968 and in 1969, walnut and red pine seedlings were planted by Haugen.

No further improvements were made to the farm buildings or land during this time. Sager did carry out a small feedlot operation along with farming the land. He had a number of cattle and sheep which he allowed to graze in several confined areas, including the woodlot. In retrospect, this grazing operation and lack of upkeep of the woodlot area may have contributed to the general deterioration of the walnut stand that was partly sold for lumber in 1972. The farmhouse was lived in by Sager's son Larry and his family, who became a joint tenant with his father in the 1968-71 lease. The house was later rented to a Wilfred Eiffler. This rent went to the Sagers since they had control of it through the lease agreement.

During the mid to late 60's, Irv Gerks apparently became frustrated at the inability of his committee to accomplish anything related to the Farm. I feel his frustrations were due to the fact that the three-year lease agreement virtually gave all of the authority to the tenants and manager and left little



**STRUCTURES RETAINED AND ADDED:**

- A. HOUSE
- B. GRANARY
- C. HOG HOUSE
- D. CRIB - 1962
- E. GARAGE - 1962
- F. MULTIPURPOSE BUILDING
- G. STEEL CRIB #1
- H. STEEL CRIB #2

**EASEMENT AREA FOR ROAD BLACKTOPPING**

**STRUCTURES REMOVED:**

- 1. SHED - 1971
- 2. GRANARY - 1971
- 3. CRIB - 1971
- 4. BARN - 1971
- 5. SILO - 1971
- 6. CATTLE SHED - 1972

Figure 4. Diagram of woodlot, buildings, and road. Numbers and letters distinguish buildings retained, added, or destroyed.

room for the Academy to make changes. The three-year lease arrangements also placed the Academy at a disadvantage because farm values increased yearly. Gerks formulated a proposal in January, 1969, to try to sell the Farm and invest

income in stocks and bonds. This recommendation was made to the Board of Directors on April 1, 1969. The opinion prevailed that such a move would be legally impossible. Nothing else was done until October, 1969, when Robert Hanson (IAS executive secretary, UNI) wrote the lawyer-manager questioning the \$300 managerial fee and suggesting the desirability of increasing the farm rent.

In the summer of 1969, I took over Irv Gerks' position as F & E chairman due to Gerks' retirement and a change in the bylaws making the treasurer automatically the F & E chairman. During the fall of 1969, both Hanson and I reviewed the status of the Farm. It was obvious that the Academy was not deriving its due benefits because of the arrangements which were already set at the time of the bequest; the agreement to three-year, complete-control leases begun in 1962; and Academy apathy.

These problems appeared to be insoluble, especially since they had been perpetuated for almost ten years. However, the immediate problem of having to decide on a new lease agreement precipitated the following events. I decided to seek professional help outside of the Academy that could counsel the F & E committee about the legal aspects of the Farm, especially the income. Mr. Mack Maffett, an attorney in Ames, was given all the background information on the Farm and asked for his opinion about the directions which the Academy might take. Three alternatives were suggested by him early in March, 1970: consider selling the Farm, which would be difficult in light of the bequest; increase the rent per acre to at least \$40 and possibly consider one-year leases; or, if no improvements to the Farm were planned, disperse with the present manager and cash rent the fields for grain farming. The latter suggestion did include hiring a professional farm management service.

Because the deadline (July 1, 1970) was drawing near for signing the new lease (to begin on March 1, 1971), I decided to hire, with the Academy's permission, a professional farm manager, Mr. Jack M. Alexander of ISU, to accompany me to the Farm for one day and assess the situation. We traveled to the Farm area on April 2, 1970, stopping first in Grundy Center to collect information about the Farm at the SCS and Soils offices and the county courthouse. Our next stop was at the office of B. E. Hunter, the Parish Farm manager-lawyer, in Reinbeck. We were met there by Nelson Sager (tenant) and Verner Jensen (a second representative for IAS, besides myself). We discussed our basic reasons for the visit, which included the desire of the Academy to take a more direct role in running the Farm. Little useful information was gained from the meeting except that our ideas were coolly received. We did visit the Reinbeck fertilizer elevator and Pioneer Seed Plant to obtain more information about crop production in the Reinbeck area. Our visit to the Farm site was the most revealing aspect of our trip, and, along with the information gathered from the other sources, an extensive report was developed by Alexander. The report, sent to me on April 22, 1970, confirmed my own feelings that the Academy should become more directly involved in every aspect of the Farm.

The report included fourteen recommendations which were, in condensed form: cancel cash rent lease before July 1, 1970; formulate Academy objectives for ownership and operation of the Farm; consider alternative operating arrangements such as sharecropping or field renting; restrict the lease to one year; and consider a variety of conservation improvements, including tiling, terracing, weed spraying, and

removal of trees, fences, and obsolete and unused buildings. The report closed by stating that the Farm had excellent land resources and, by following the recommendations, both the appearance and earning potential of the Farm could be improved and a significant contribution could be made to the cause of conservation.

Max Hawk, SCS soil conservationist in Grundy Center, submitted a report shortly after Alexander submitted his report, which substantiated the recommendations regarding the need for soil conservation. He emphasized that the Farm drainage areas had been severely affected by the use of atrazine and considerable soil loss had occurred by running the crop rows down the sloped land. Hawk also included fourteen recommendations of his own, some of which complemented those presented by Alexander. Some of them were: continue planting new seedlings in woodland areas; add wild-life clumps; cross-slope or contour plow; and make sure the tenant would comply with conservation practices.

These reports and my own first-hand experiences left only one alternative in my mind, and that was to recommend to the Board of Directors that the Academy take a direct role in running the Farm. A proposal, consisting of various alternatives for such an action, was presented to the Board in April, 1970. After considerable discussion, the Board approved the general principles of the proposal and gave permission to execute it in the most reasonable way.

On May 12, 1970, two certified letters were sent, one to Nelson and Larry Sager terminating their lease on March 1, 1971, and the other to B. E. Hunter, terminating his management services on July 1, 1970. Thus, the Academy was then presented with the task of formulating its ideas about the Farm. On May 18, 1970, a meeting to begin this planning was held; it included Arnold Haugen (IAS Board member), Sylvan Runkel (IAS Conservation Committee), Max Hawk (SCS), Robert Hanson (IAS executive secretary), Harry Horner (IAS treasurer and F & E Committee chairman), Roger Landers (IAS Conservation Committee), and Ralph Bean (ISU Experimental Farm Group).

Out of this meeting developed the present model farm concept and specific steps which needed to be taken to improve the Farm physically. Our task was to find a farm management service which would be able to work with the Academy to develop the Farm along the directions we had established.

A review of various managers and management services led Landers and me to have a meeting, on June 2, 1970, with the Hertz Farm Management Service in Nevada. Mr. Jim Frevert represented the service at this meeting, since he was their farm manager in the Reinbeck area. Our visit was very productive and it was apparent that the Hertz Management Service was willing to accept managing the Farm within the guidelines set by the Academy.

On June 15, 1970, the F & E Committee agreed to submit a formal recommendation to the Board of Directors "that the Hertz Farm Management Service, Nevada, Iowa, be hired to manage the Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm beginning on March 1, 1971, and that the specific goals of optimum income according to the best conservation practices with Academy approval, be incorporated into such an agreement." It was further presented that, if the recommendation passed, the Management Service would seek a new tenant for the Farm. The Board approved this recommendation and the machinery was set into motion for formulating a Parish Farm Proposal.

Initial steps were taken on August 27, 1970, when a detailed Planned Land Use and Conservation Treatment Plan No. 691 for the Farm was submitted by Max Hawk to SCS, Grundy County. It included a number of items discussed at the spring meeting. Since the direction in which the Farm plans were now going was fairly clear, a final letter was sent to the Sagers (September 28, 1970) informing them of the Academy's plans and that Hertz Farm Management Service would begin its duties on March 1, 1971.

On October 31, 1970, the application to Hertz Farm Management was submitted, with management responsibility beginning on November 1, 1970. The reason for this early date was to allow Hertz enough time to survey the Farm, find a new tenant, and begin plans for the 1971 crop year.

With the new direction in the Farm management now established, the F & E and Conservation committees submitted to the Board of Directors the formal Parish Farm Proposal, which was a compilation of goals and ideas worked out by various individuals during the several spring and summer meetings. This proposal, published in its entirety in the *IAS Bulletin* (November, 1970), established the Parish Farm as a model farm with these goals:

To practice total environmental management and operation in order to demonstrate the most modern agricultural practices along with other acceptable conservation practices for establishing wild life habitats, grass areas, and woods; and provide a quality environment for people;

To provide for an optimum yearly income within the framework of total environmental management.

The proposal also included a schedule for Farm improvements and realistically stated that the speed at which the goals were carried out depended on three important factors: the concern and interest shown by the IAS membership; the relationship of IAS with the Management Service; and the availability of money derived from Farm income. Even though it will be emphasized again, the first factor (IAS interest and involvement) was, is, and will continue to be the single most important contributor to what happens to the Farm.

Digressing for a moment here, I want to summarize the Farm situation as it appeared to me in November-December, 1970, when, for the first time in ten years, the Academy was psychologically and physically ready to launch into a new experience. Everything was set: Hertz was to take over management with direct Academy input; there were many specific jobs to be done on the Farm, hopefully by volunteer help; and the climate for environmental endeavors was perfect.

With this overview, the remaining history of the Farm covers only the last four crop years (1971-74). The future will be the judge of the efforts which have been expended during this period, because what has been accomplished since 1970 depends solely on the Academy's continued support of these efforts.

Figure 5. Farmhouse (west view).

Figure 6. Barn, pole cattle shed, and silo (east view).

Figure 7. Old corncrib, cattle shed, and granary (south view).

Figure 8. Hog house (north view).

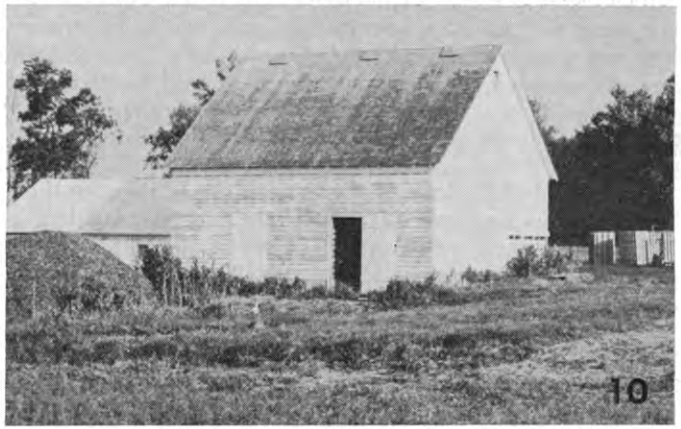
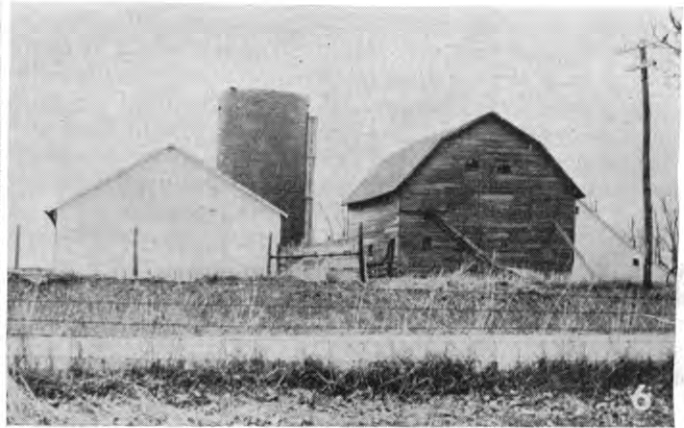
Figure 9. Woodlot north of buildings (southeast view).

Figure 10. New corncrib (southeast view).

Figure 11. Two-car garage (southeast view); Dr. Roger Landers and Tom Blewett, ISU.

Figure 12. Planting Iowa native prairie north of woodlot (east view); Melvin Schildroth and Kevin Horner.

PARISH FARM





During the winter of 1970-71, Hertz inspected the Farm, fertilized the land for spring planting, and prepared a budget report showing the anticipated crop expenses, plus taxes and insurance prior to fall harvest, 1971. Since the net Farm income from previous years had gone into the general fund to help operate the Academy, a short-term bank loan was obtained to finance the Farm expenses. The Farm was officially designated as No. 326 Parish in the Hertz records.

By April 1, 1971, Hertz had rented the Farm to Melvin Schildroth and his wife, a young couple living in the area who appeared to be progressive operators with a modern line of equipment. The lease was the customary crop-share lease, written for a one-year period with an automatic renewal clause, unless written termination was made prior to November 1 of each year. This lease agreement basically meant that all crops and crop expenditures would be divided equally and that other expenditures would be proportionally shared. The Academy, of course, would continue to pay for the taxes, insurance, and upkeep of the property, and ten percent of the Academy's gross income would go to Hertz for its yearly services.

Spring planting was begun, but a planting arrangement similar to those of previous years had to be used since most of the fields had a residue of the herbicide atrazine in the soil. Because this herbicide had been used extensively during the past three years with the seed corn production program, it prevented shifting idle acres and reestablishing grass waterways. However, the direction of crop rows was changed in several fields in an attempt to reduce the soil loss from erosion which had occurred in previous years.

The old farmhouse was rented to Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Neuman (who are still living there). A number of repairs were made in the house and the Neumans made numerous improvements to the interior, including paneling the walls in some of the rooms and installing false ceilings. Their presence on the Farm was expected to deter damage and pilferage to the buildings and land. For the first time in ten years the rent went to the Academy.

It was decided that one of the initial steps to improve the Farm's appearance was to remove the various buildings which were beyond repair and gave the Farm a run-down appearance. The Reinbeck fire department was hired to burn down the old barn, one of the two cattle sheds, the double corncrib, and a granary, on the evening of May 26, 1971. The silo near the barn was also razed. On the next day, the debris from these structures, a number of old trees and stumps west and south of the buildings, and a large junk pile in the northwest corner of the woodlot, were all buried by a bulldozer. The buildings left standing were the farmhouse, double garage, small granary, corncrib, and hog house.

Little more was accomplished in the way of improvements during the summer and fall. After several visits to the Farm it was decided that two non-farming conservation projects could be initiated. The first involved improving the woodlot area in order to develop it into an outdoor classroom for use by secondary schools and colleges in Iowa. The second project centered around extending the outdoor classroom area to the seven acres north of the woodlot and converting this acreage into native prairie. Several people became directly involved in carrying out the outdoor classroom concept. I contacted Roy Hatcher, the District Forester in Marshalltown, and obtained his services to evaluate the six-acre woodlot north of the buildings and the windbreak west of the buildings. He submitted a report on November 12, 1971, which

included a survey of the variety of trees present and the quality of the predominant walnuts. His assessment was that the condition of the walnuts was quite poor, probably because of the past history of grazing and trampling. The trees would provide little veneer, mostly lumber. It was decided to sell these trees and begin a replanting program. Hatcher was asked to mark the trees and set up the sale. Five companies bid on 42 black walnut trees (14" to 18" dbh) which contained about 4,180 board feet. The trees were sold to the highest bidder for \$1,867 and were removed during the next winter.

During the fall, 1971, conservation workshop, Roger Landers visited with George Davis, head of the Science Department at Reinbeck High School. Davis became enthusiastic about the idea of helping to develop the outdoor class area on the Farm and proceeded to prepare a master plan for it.

In the spring of 1972, Landers submitted the plans for establishing the native prairie north of the woodlot. On June 15, Landers and I met at the Farm. Landers transported the Nisbet drill (the seeder) and the grass mixture to the Farm with a flatbed truck. With the volunteer help of the tenant, Melvin Schildroth, the seven acres were planted (Figure 12) with a mixture of native Iowa grasses which included big and little bluestem, Indian grass, switch grass, sideoats grama, Canada wild rye, and slender wheat grass. Landers said it would take about three years for the prairie to become well-established, assuming the Canadian thistles prevalent on the Farm did not adversely affect it. While the prairie was being planted, volunteers worked to clean up portions of the woodlot. This latter task continued through the summer and into the fall. A view of selected parts of the farm during the summer of 1972 can be seen in Figures 13-16.

Sylvan Runkel (SCS) procured the help of the Conservation Service to make a large wooden sign to be installed near the farm entrance signifying the area as the "Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm." The sign also outlined the purpose of the Farm and listed the individuals and organizations cooperating with the Academy in the venture. The sign was to be ready sometime in the fall.

We must briefly go back to the Hertz Farm Management Report of April 26, 1972, since this report outlined two suggested improvements to the Farm that would actually be carried out in the fall of 1972. Hertz and the tenant had one year's experience on the Farm then and several problems were apparent. There were a number of poorly drained areas in some of the fields which created wet spots. One area that

Figure 13. East eighty acres planted in soybeans (northwest view; July, 1972).

Figure 14. July corn on 160 acres just west of buildings and woodlot (southwest view; July, 1972).

Figure 15. Windbreak of walnuts west of buildings (east view; July, 1972).

Figure 16. Northeast corner of 160 acres showing area of future native Iowa prairie in foreground, woodlot north of buildings in background (north view).

Figure 17. Volunteer help removing wooden siding from corncrib in order to convert it to hold shelled corn (southeast view).

Figure 18. Converted corncrib with new metal siding (northeast view).

Figure 19. Filling converted corncrib with dried, shelled corn (north view).

Figure 20. Removal of fence posts and fencing with help from volunteers and tenant, Melvin Schildroth (south end of woodlot).

PARISH FARM

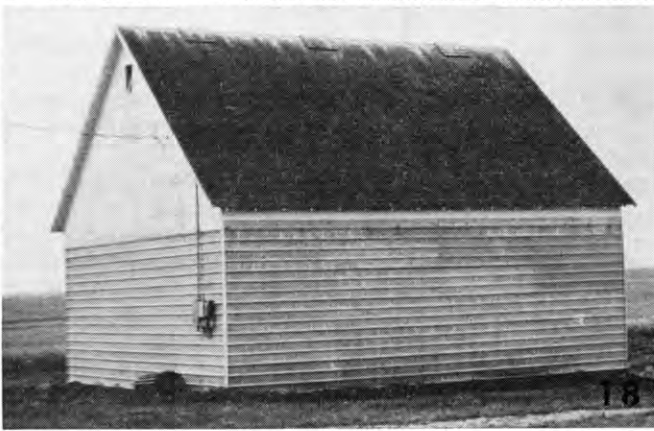
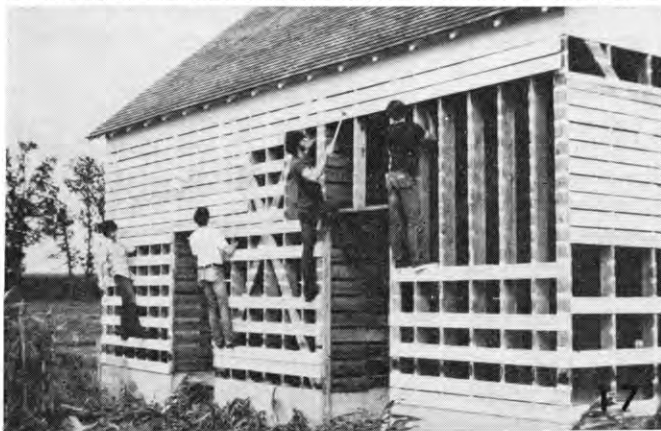


TABLE 1. PARISH FARM INCOME AND EXPENSE (1960-1974)<sup>1</sup>

Year	GROSS INCOME				EXPENSES				NET INCOME		
	Land	House	Sharecrop	Other <sup>2</sup>	Total	Crop-Related Improvements	House Expense	Crop Expense		Other Expense <sup>3</sup>	Total
1960	2,100.00				2,100.00					1,306.09	793.91
1961	3,600.00				3,600.00					3,221.08	378.92
1962	4,140.00			50.75	4,190.75		House Remodeling <sup>4</sup>		New Garage (1961); Gravel Driveway	5,802.12	-1,611.37
1963	4,140.00			49.50	4,189.50		House Remodeling <sup>4</sup>		Corncrib (1962)	2,483.20	1,657.92
1964	4,140.00			27.99	4,167.99					2,559.49	1,608.50
1965	4,320.00				4,320.00					1,834.76	2,485.24
1966	4,320.00				4,320.00					2,138.06	2,181.94
1967	4,320.00			75.00	4,395.00					1,849.59	2,545.41
1968	6,000.00			145.84	6,145.84					1,734.17	4,411.67
1969	6,000.00				6,000.00					1,592.15	4,407.85
1970	6,000.00				6,000.00					1,952.88	4,407.12

BEGINNING OF MANAGEMENT BY HERTZ FARM MGT. OF NEVADA, IOWA<sup>5</sup>

1971 (½)	220.00			220.00	760.50	211.84	3,626.35		4,598.69	-4,378.69
1971-2	400.00	12,114.08	1,867.00	14,381.00	344.00	80.45	6,565.52	259.55	7,249.52	7,131.56
1972-3	520.00	19,408.99		19,928.99	2,149.01	142.39	8,792.41	1,041.13	12,124.94	7,804.05
1973-4	440.00	30,736.70	1,984.40	33,161.10	51.42	216.66	9,451.27	4,286.45	14,005.80	19,155.30

<sup>1</sup> Crops in 1974 growing season were not sold as of the writing of this article.

<sup>2</sup> Sale of walnut trees, easement, government subsidy, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Any expense not income-related.

<sup>4</sup> Itemized expenses not included.

<sup>5</sup> Period of converting farm account from annual to fiscal basis. Change from rent per acre lease to a crop-share lease.

was especially bad was caused by an intermittent spring between the buildings and the windbreak. A Y-shaped tile line was suggested to run from the spring down to the southeast corner of the 160 acres, where a great deal of erosion had occurred in previous years.

The second improvement concerned converting the wood corncrib over to shelled corn storage, increasing the capacity from 5,500 bushels of ear corn to about 12,000 bushels of shelled corn. Two reasons prompted this: by storing the grain commercially in Reinbeck, the Academy lost the flexibility of selling the grain at the optimum price, and storage charges on the grain reduce the profit. Hertz was given approval to obtain estimates on conversion materials and labor costs.

The summer of 1972 went by very quickly, and with the various improvements that were either just under way or anticipated for the fall, a great deal of volunteer help would be needed. I sent out letters to the F & E Committee and Robert Hanson in August requesting such help for the corncrib conversion, which was scheduled for September 16 and 23. These dates quickly came, and by some "miracle" IAS volunteer help materialized and was swelled by the addition of about twelve students from the Fish and Wildlife Biology Club at ISU. This group worked two full Saturdays pulling off wooden siding, pounding out nails, and putting on the new metal siding (Figures 17 and 18). With the major part of the crib completed by this crew, the tenant, farm manager, and a hired carpenter completed the task just in time to fill it with 1972's corn harvest (Figure 19). During these two weekends, some of the volunteers also helped clean up more of the woodlot and remove fencing (Figure 20). The tiling was completed (Figure 21) and the large Academy sign was installed near the road (Figures 22-24). The Hertz man-

ager also sold the unused pole cattle shed, and it was removed later in the fall.

With all of these chores completed and with winter coming on, the one remaining task was to plan for improvements for 1973 and present them to the Board. Four possibilities were considered: continued improvement of the woodlot by further removal of trees and debris and by planting new seedlings; remove remaining fences; carry out some maintenance on buildings; and plan to install terraces on some of the land. After visiting with SCS, there appeared to be no financial support for terracing, so this plan was delayed. However, an order for 3,000 seedlings was placed with the State Forest Nursery in December, 1972, for next spring's planting; an Academy Field Day was planned then.

Up to this point little has been said about the actual farming operations, the income derived from the Farm, and the help of Hertz. Beginning with the new tenant and management in 1971, the Academy has had complete knowledge and control of what crops have been planted and the fertilizers and herbicides used. These plans and all related information about the Farm operation have been presented to the Academy in extensively written quarterly reports. In 1970 the cattle and sheep operation was stopped and corn and soybeans have been planted each year since then. A summary of the acreage use for the last four years is presented in Table 2. Because of the lease arrangements from 1960 to 1970, no records exist within the Academy files that show how the land was used. The gross and net incomes for each of the last fourteen years, however, are presented in Table 1. The change from a calendar to a fiscal year report on the Farm operation was made in 1971 and, therefore, a negative income is shown for that year. Table 1 does show the amount

of income put back into Farm improvements and reflects the tremendous change in Farm income due to different lease and management arrangements and rapidly increasing grain prices.

Getting back to the improvement plans for 1973, approval by the Board was given to proceed with the items previously listed. In January, 1973, the Grundy County Engineer contacted the Academy about acquiring a right-of-way on the Academy property adjacent to the North-South road (about 2.4 acres) for the purpose of installing an asphalt road. The county would purchase the easement to this land and pay for removal of the fencing along the road. The addition of a hard surface road would greatly improve access to the Farm and reduce road dust blowing on the buildings. Two problems, however, needed to be solved before any agreement could be signed.

The first problem was the possible violation of the terms of the bequest in the will of Jessie A. Parish in selling an easement to the property. Mr. Mack Maffett (the Ames lawyer) was retained to study both the contract and the will, and suggested certain changes in the wording of the contract. He also pointed out that such a granting of easement would not involve a conveyance of title to this land and, therefore, would not violate the will.

The second problem concerned the possible destruction of a forty-yard-long honeysuckle hedge planted by Arnold Haugen in 1967, which was in the future right-of-way. This problem was solved on May 18, 1973, when two workmen and I, using a front-end loader, spent the day relocating the hedge and cutting it back (Figures 25 and 26). To my surprise, most of it has lived.

During April, 1973, a Field Day on the Farm was planned with the entire Academy membership being notified. The help which showed up was put to work planting about 3,000 seedlings, removing more debris from the woodlot, and pulling out the fences along the road. This latter job was finally completed by the tenant and his tractor just before the July deadline, in order to receive county payment.

George Davis and his students from Reinbeck completed more plantings in the woodlot and staked out paths for a nature walk. Davis has also completed a study of the woodlot as part of a master's program at UNI. This will be used as a guide to further development of this area. It was obvious from the start that one of the major challenges in the Academy planning was to gain an edge on the weeds and debris found in the woodlot and windbreak, and around the buildings. These non-farming conservation improvements will continue to require volunteer help and continual care but will eventually provide more visible proof of the Academy's desire to create a model farm.

In May, 1973, the Academy was notified that a mobile prototype classroom was available for a very reasonable price. Those connected with the Farm felt it might serve as a meeting place, laboratory, and storage facility for the outdoor class area, and a general-purpose building. With the Board's approval, Robert Hanson, Executive Secretary, traveled to Guttenberg, Iowa, on June 7, to see the mobile classroom building. After inspecting the building, Hanson called Landers in Ames to say he did not want to make the decision about purchasing the building, and Landers and Clausen made a special trip to Guttenberg the next day to examine it. They were favorably impressed and felt the building was structurally sound, with only minor wear. It was agreed to go ahead with the purchase. The two-part building

was moved to the Farm in July, and during August a concrete foundation was built and the modular unit placed on it (*IAS Bull.*, September, 1973). Hanson made all the arrangements to get the building moved and situated on the farm, including contracting for all of the foundation work, set-up, and electrical service. The unit is 24 x 36 feet and has two doors and one row of windows (Figure 27). It has wall-to-wall indoor-outdoor carpeting, fluorescent lights, and electric base-board heating. Items yet to be installed or completed are water, sewer, sink, toilet, furniture, door steps, and landscaping.

A complete account of this multipurpose building was made to the Board on November 3, 1973, when for the first time the Board met on the Farm (Figure 28) in the building (Figure 29) and then spent some time hiking over the Farm. The Board also saw two additional steel grain bins which were purchased from federal government surplus in the summer to increase the grain storage capacity on the Farm (Figure 30). These three building additions, two bins and the multipurpose building, increased the number of farm buildings to eight.

Other changes and improvements were pointed out. Several field areas, too wet for crop production during 1973, were tilled on October 22 as a preliminary to any terracing; the north five acres of the native prairie planted in 1972 were plowed under in the spring of 1973 due to extensive colonies of Canadian thistle; and numerous recent plantings were observed in the woodlot. Various farmhouse problems such as well water quality, inadequate septic tank drainage, and maintenance were discussed.

The 1973 crop, even though not a record in terms of bushels per acre, gave the Academy by far its largest annual gross income, \$30,736.70 (Table 1). This figure reflects the unusually high grain market prices for 1973-74 and the improved management of the Farm since 1971.

Because of the many changes which had taken place up to that time, and the need for statewide publicity about the Farm and the Academy, the Parish Farm Committee approached the *Des Moines Register*. Veryl Sanderson, staff writer in the farm section, accepted the task. His article (13) appeared in the *Des Moines Sunday Register* on September 9, 1973, and was the first in what we hope will become a series of articles about all aspects of the Academy, including future articles about Farm progress.

One change in Farm management should be noted here. In the summer of 1973, I stepped down as treasurer and F & E Committee chairman. Paul Rider (IAS, UNI) took over these positions and, realizing the amount of work required to specifically oversee the Farm, he recommended the formation of a separate Parish Farm Committee. The Board of Directors approved the recommendation and Roger Landers became chairman; Ben Clausen and I were also asked to serve.

With 1973 drawing to a close, many improvements in the Farm had been made, it was beginning to be self-supporting and provide needed income for the Academy, and it continued to provide new challenges and problems for the future.

In the November 3, 1973, Report of the Parish Farm Committee to the Board, Landers outlined several recommendations for the remainder of 1973 and 1974: to improve the quality of the farmhouse well water and to connect water and sewage facilities to the multipurpose building; to continue to plant trees and shrubs in the woodlot and surrounding areas and to continue removal of fencing and other debris so that weed control can become effective; to establish a landscaping plan for the Farm buildings and multipurpose

building; to continue present farm management practices with advice from Hertz Farm Management; and to study more completely, with the Board of Directors, the long-term objectives of the Farm.

During the spring of 1974, another Field Day was carried out by volunteer help on the Farm, with the addition of 250 more plantings. Slightly later, the persistent Canadian thistle patches were sprayed and the fields were contour planted, again, in order to control soil erosion. Also during this time, both federal and state governmental funds became available for cost-sharing of both tiling and terracing portions of the Farm. Hertz was instructed to gather information on this and to proceed with preliminary plans. By August the Grundy County SCS office had approved the Academy's cost-sharing application for terracing the main waterway south of the buildings. Additional funds also became available through the REAP Program of the USDA, so that up to 75 percent of the cost for the tiling and earth work involved in the terracing would be refunded, up to a maximum payment of \$2,500 per year. Therefore, the terracing will be carried out during 1974 and 1975. On October 3, the tiling for the terraces south of the buildings was completed and the tenant, Melvin Schildroth, volunteered to close the tile ditches. During the fall of 1974, the SCS surveyed the area for terraces and the earth work was started.

The water quality problem in the Farm well was solved; however, the water and sewage facilities to the multipurpose building have not been installed yet and their addition will be reconsidered by the Parish Farm Committee. Painting

some of the Farm buildings this fall was also considered, but for various reasons it was not done. The road grading is completed and the blacktopping will probably be done in 1975.

Now it is November, 1974, and this year's crops have been harvested. The corn and bean yields were excellent (Table 2) for the conditions which prevailed earlier in the season, and the anticipated income should equal or exceed that from last year because of continued high prices. This positive outlook going into the 1975 Centennial Year is an excellent place to end the first fourteen years of history of the Iowa Academy of Science Parish Farm. Like all historical accounts, it falls short by leaving out the ending to the story. The story, so to speak, which was created and nurtured by Jessie A. Parish and has been expanded and developed by various past and present Academy members, now will be passed on to future individuals to continue the planning and development of the Farm as it meets the needs of the Academy.

Thus the original terms of the bequest, as intended by Jessie, have been fulfilled. The income from the Farm is now being used for Farm land improvements, maintaining all taxes and insurance, and supporting Academy educational programs, conservation projects, and, perhaps in the future, research grants, to whatever extent the income permits. The Farm, as newly organized, provides the Academy with much needed income for its on-going programs and has provided an avenue by which the Academy membership can express its potentials and interests in the broad realm of conservation.

TABLE 2. ACREAGE USE AND CROP SUMMARY FOR 240-ACRE FARM

Year	Diverted	Corn	Bu/a	Beans	Bu/a	Native Grass	Timber Lots	Waste	Roads
1971 <sup>1</sup>	32.3	128.0	116.5	58.0	44.1	0.0	11.5	2.7	7.5
1972	39.2	110.2	144.7	68.9	47.2	0.0	11.5	2.7	7.5
1973	0.0	110.2	128.8	101.1	45.8	7.0	11.5	3.3	9.9
1974	0.0	106.1	128.2	110.2	38.7	2.0	11.5	0.3	9.9

<sup>1</sup> There are no crop records for the years 1960-1970.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

The information used to write this history has been derived from many sources: the IAS secretary-treasurer and F & E Committee records; the *IAS Proceedings* and *Bulletins*; correspondence with various individuals; other references to be cited below; and my own personal experiences. Several individuals have contributed their time and information to help make this history more complete. I especially want to thank Mrs. Marge Jansen, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City; Dr. Robert Hulbary, Department of Botany, The University of Iowa; Leroy A. Moser, Reinbeck Courier, Reinbeck, Iowa; Dr. Robert Hanson, Department of Chemistry, University of Northern Iowa; and Miss Carla Holbrook for typing the manuscript. The facts which are presented here are accurate as far as I know and they have been compiled in a way which I hope is readable. Any deletions or misrepresentations of

- Figure 21. Tiling southeast quarter of 160 acres (northeast view).
- Figure 22. Large Academy sign placed near entrance to Farm near north-south road (east view).
- Figure 23. Upper portion of Academy sign.
- Figure 24. Lower portion of Academy sign.
- Figure 25. Ditch made by front-end loader for relocating honeysuckle hedge at southeast corner of woodlot near road (south view).
- Figure 26. Replanted honeysuckle hedge (north view).
- Figure 27. Multipurpose building on concrete foundation (north-east view).
- Figure 28. Board of Directors and Parish Farm Committee began fall, 1973. Board meeting at Farm (left to right: front—George Knudson, Sylvan Runkel, Paul Rider, Roger Landers; back—Robert Yager, Arnold Haugen, Ruth Siemer, and Harry Horner).

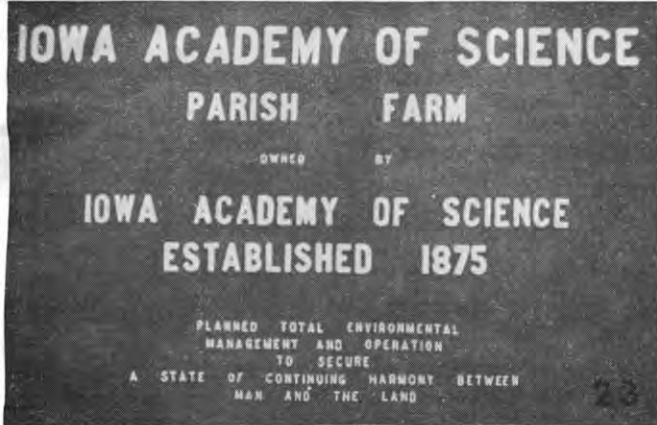
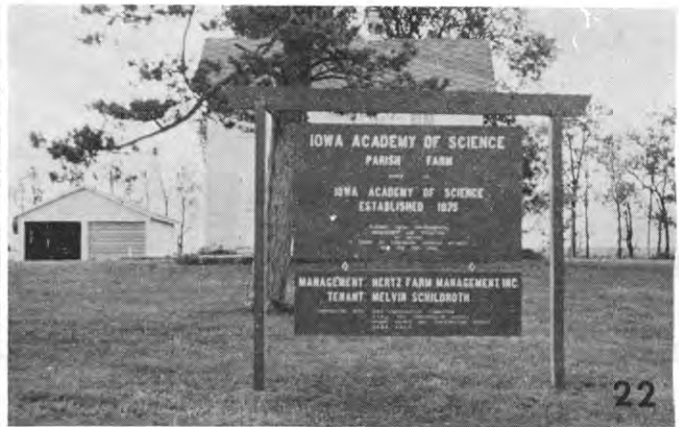
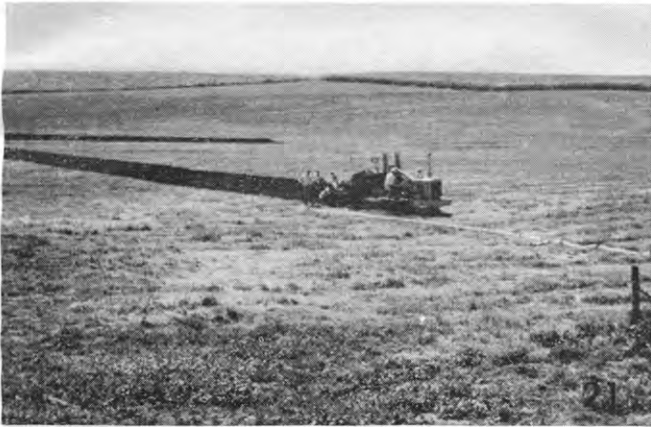




Figure 29. Board of Directors and Parish Farm Committee met inside multipurpose building for refreshments and business (left to right: front—Thomas Rogers, Ruth Siemer, Sylvan Runkel, Bernard Clausen, Arnold Haugen, Robert Yager, Roger Landers; back—Paul Rider, Robert Hanson).  
Figure 30. Two metal storage bins to hold grain (east view).



events or individuals are unintentional and any interpretations or specific emphases placed on aspects of the Farm history are solely my responsibility.

- (1) Obituary, *Reinbeck Courier*, August 12, 1954.
- (2) Abstract of Title to Parish Farm including Last Will and Testament of Jessie A. Parish, No. 2896, prepared by Willoughby, Strack and Sieverding, Lawyers and Abstractors, Grundy Center, Iowa.

- (3) Last Will and Testament, 52, I term II.
- (4) Macbride, T. H. 1937. *Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci.*, 44:33.
- (5) Parish, Dr. Jessie. 1954. Notice of death. *Iowa State Dental Bull.*, 40:238.
- (6) Getchell, R. W. 1955. Necrology: Jessie A. Parish, 1883-1954. *Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci.*, 62:81.
- (7) Art or science of teaching. The Master of Didactics degree was a three-year degree.
- (8) Parish, Jessie A. 1911. The horns of mammalia. A Master of Science Dissertation, State University of Iowa, Iowa City.
- (9) *Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci.*, 29:9, 1922.
- (10) *Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci.*, 30:7, 1923.
- (11) *Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci.*, Vols. 30-38, 1923-1931.
- (12) Parish, Jessie A. 1928. The pyrenomycetes or black fungi of Iowa. *Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci.*, 35:151-155.
- (13) Sanderson, Veryl. 1973. Science farm becomes conservation model. *Des Moines Sunday Register*, September, 9:2F.