

# 40 Years Of Agronomy

By R. S. Dunham

Experimental study of field crops began with the establishment of the Northwest Station. In 1897, two years later, the first results of crop trials were reported. The Agronomy department was organized as a separate division in 1911 at which time the experimental work with crops and soils was reorganized and an agronomist placed in charge. Numerous experiments covering various phases of field crops work had been begun before that time but owing to the lack of adequate drainage, the projects attempted between 1896 and 1910 had not been carried on with regularity. The inauguration of experimental studies that have continued without interruption since 1911 was made possible by drainage work done from 1906 to 1909.

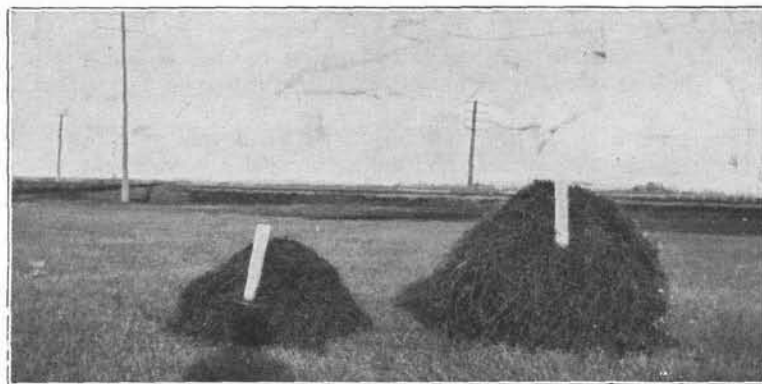
One of the earliest aims of the administration was to make the station a pure seed center for northwestern Minnesota. To this end hundreds of varieties of cereal and forage crops have been given comparative tests and thousands of bushels of seed of adapted varieties have been produced on the station farm and distributed to farmers of this region. Alfalfa was first planted at the station in 1906. The superiority of Grimm, demonstrated in variety trials, led to the distribution of 40,000 pounds of seed in 1914 to 629 farmers widely scattered throughout the northwestern counties. Adapted varieties and strains of corn were also given early attention. In 1918 the station purchased some Northwestern Dent grown at Fosston,



*Sweet Clover 1897*

Minnesota, to replace Minnesota 23 that had formerly been used. Selection practiced within this variety since that time has developed the Crookston strain now commonly grown in this district and regarded with favor in neighboring states and Canada.

Investigation of rust resistance in wheat dates back to 1913 when Iumillo, a parent of Marquillo, was first tested at Crookston. Such well known and extensively grown



*Alfalfa Fertilizer Trials*

