

# Survey of N. D. Education

By Dick Bernard

This year marks the 100th anniversary or, more correctly, the centennial of the creation of the Dakota Territory. Formal education has been around for this length of time and longer also, and with this in mind, this writer took some time to collect some tidbits of information on North Dakota education, particularly the historical and statistical pieces of information not usually included in more scholarly articles.

First things first, it is interesting to note that the first school in what is now North Dakota was established at Pembina in the year 1818. It was run by the Catholic church — being used for the education of the children of the French settlers at Pembina, and it lasted for only five years. The "classroom" was usually a settler's home, and no school building was constructed in Pembina until 1876.

The first territorial assembly in 1861 set up a system of education including establishment of school districts. The assembly provided for a school term of three months duration. The legislation enacted by this assembly, however, was little used as the only school in the entire territory abiding by the education acts was the school in Yankton, the territorial capital. As late as 1865, the year marking the end of the Civil War, there were only four legally organized school districts in the entire territory. In a territory of 150,000 square miles, only 382 attended school in 1865.

Women were first permitted to vote in school elections in 1879. Between 1879 and 1883 school population doubled due to increased settling of the Dakota Territory.

The first compulsory attendance law was passed in 1883 by the territorial legislature. The law made it mandatory for all children between the ages of ten and fourteen to attend school at least twelve weeks per year. There was little enforcement of the law, however.

North Dakota became a state in 1889. The public school system at that time included 1400 schools. The Enabling Act set aside two sections of each township as school land.

The first course of study was prepared in 1895 and was, strangely enough, the course of study for the high school. Also in 1895, the traveling library so familiar to the small schools was established, and laws providing for free textbooks were passed. In 1897, the elementary course of study was set up.

But the course of study situation was not the only curiosity of North Dakota education history. The innocent school district, which was established as a district in 1861, was abolished in favor of the township form in 1883. But in 1890, the township form was abolished and the school district was again adopted though district boundaries were to follow township lines if possible. Then came special districts, independent districts, etc. The list is endless.

As for today, it is interesting to note that, in 1960, there were 358 approved public high schools in North Dakota with a total enrollment of 41,500. This does not include 21 parochial high schools or two Indian high schools. One North Dakota city, Minot, has four high schools, two parochial and two public. Fargo and Valley City are the only cities with three high schools. The largest high school in North Dakota is Fargo Central with a 1960-61 enrollment of 2,015. Conversely, the smallest approved high school in 1960-61 was Medora with eight students in grades 9-12 and two high school teachers. In 1958, Tagus, a town located about 50 miles west of Minot operated a four year approved high school with five regular students. Conant's now famous report advocating that the high school should have at least 100 graduates to be efficient has interesting implications in North Dakota. For example, if all high schools in Barnes County, excluding Valley City, were consolidated, their total graduating class would fall short of 100.

As for North Dakota and teachers' salaries, past, present, and comparative, it is easy to see that we are both ahead and behind, depending on what an individual is looking for. In 1934, the average teacher's salary was only \$621 per year. By 1953 this had increased to \$2617, and in 1960 it had reached \$3800 per year BUT, even considering the rise, North Dakota ranked 46th among the states in teachers' salaries in 1960. The national average for all teachers was \$5215, with California high with an average salary of \$6700. Mississippi is low with teachers receiving an annual salary of \$3415. North Dakota ranks ahead of only South Carolina, South Dakota, Arkansas and Mississippi in salaries. Factors such as the differences in cost of living, and in teacher training regulations have not been considered, of course, but the comparison is still there.

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PAGE 3 Wednesday, July 5, 1961

## Students Receive Scholastic Awards

Scholarships and special awards will offer financial aid to 24 qualified STC students next fall.

Qualifications for the \$150 Edith Van Middlesworth Memorial Fund Scholarship are present enrollment at the college, good scholarship, special ability in some worthy field, and some degree of need. Winners of this award are Duane Baumgartner, Richard Bernard, George Gauler, and Norman Mills.

Marion Walth Rieth, a junior music major, is the winner of the \$100 Fannie C. Amidon Music Scholarship.

Winner of the EBC Society Scholarship is Richard Twete, a junior selected on the basis of scholarship, leadership, and need.

Zonta International, Women's Service Club in Valley City, has chosen Duane Lawrence as recipient of the annual award, which is purchase of textbooks for three quarters, on the basis of scholarship records and financial need.

Since 1955 the State of North Dakota scholarships have been awarded to 2% of the fall enrollment providing waiver of registration and student service fees totaling \$123 yearly. Award recipients are Judy Pfeifer, Zeeland; Curt Roth, Turtle Lake; Mavis Streefel, Minnewaukan; Ernest Arvidson, Wimbledon; Jeanette Lee, Luverne; Dawn Seavert, Forman; Mary Lou Wagner, Napoleon; Jim Anderson, Milnor; Leonard Wolff, Wimbledon; Barbara Sunde, Valley City; Roger Johnson, Grafton; Clyde Sheldon, Wheatland; Jerry Busche, Valley City; June Stempro, Casselton; Kent Miller,

## Loans Are Available To Assist College

Loans are made available to students from the State and Defense Loan Funds, the Student Loan Fund, and Educational Loan Fund.

Qualifications for the North Dakota State loans are need, scholarship, and work on a four-year program. The amount of the loan may exceed \$500 for each of the recipients.

Recipients of the National Student Loan Fund are selected by the Federal Government according to federal law governing borrower. A sum not exceeding \$1,000 may be borrowed or the sum of one year's expenses.

Information about the Student Loan Fund and Educational Loan Fund may be received at the College Bureau.

Adrian; Mary Kruschwitz; City; and LeRoy Anderson, River.

Only two of the award winners are presently attending, or have graduated from high school and will enroll here next year.

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