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# A HISTORY OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORK IN THE UNITED STATES

1785-1923

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BY

ALFRED CHARLES TRUE

Specialist in States Relations Work, United States  
Department of Agriculture



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## FOREWORD

By C. B. SMITH, *Chief, Office of Cooperative Extension Work*

For nearly 40 years A. C. True, the author of this volume, has been an employee of the United States Department of Agriculture and associated with the department and the State agricultural colleges in all their varied activities. As administrator, counselor, chairman of important committees, as a pioneer in new fields of agricultural education, research, and extension, he speaks from a wide and rich experience and on matters in which he has played a commanding part.

Doctor True brought to his tasks culture and broad scholarship and a knowledge of both country and city life. He has, therefore, throughout the years, dealt sympathetically and understandingly with agricultural problems, whether of the research laboratory, the college classroom, or the open country and rural people. This volume and its companion volumes, *A History of Agricultural Education in the United States* and *A History of Agricultural Research in the United States*, when completed, will constitute a fitting climax to a long and fruitful life of public service.

Doctor True was born in 1853. He was prepared for college at the old Boston Latin School, attended Wesleyan University, where he graduated as a bachelor of arts, with honor, in 1873, and received the further degrees of A. M. in 1876, and D. Sc. in 1906. After graduating at Wesleyan he was principal of the high school at Essex, N. Y., for two years, and teacher in the State Normal School at Westfield, Mass., for seven years.

From 1882 to 1884 he took graduate work at Harvard University, after which he became a member of the faculty of Wesleyan University, where he was associated with the famous chemist, W. O. Atwater. Professor Atwater became director of the Federal Office of Experiment Stations in 1888. Doctor True joined the staff of the office in November, 1888, as special agent to prepare a report on the agricultural colleges and experiment stations for the Paris Exposition. He became editor in 1889, vice director in 1891, and director in 1893. This latter position he held until 1915, when the Federal Office of Experiment Stations and the two Federal offices of extension work, the Office of Home Economics, and the divisions of Farmers' Institutes and Agricultural Instruction were merged to form the States Relations Service of the Department of Agriculture, and Doctor True became director of that service.

As Director of the Office of Experiment Stations, Doctor True exerted an influence throughout the years toward sustained constructive research on fundamental problems in agriculture and home economics and the building up of a strong central experiment station in each State as a department of the agricultural college.

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