

A College Follows Its Graduate . . . Mary

When Mary Brown of Georgia made her appearance in the February 1945 issue of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, readers were introduced to a new kind of pre-service education for county supervisors. Many persons wanted to know more about how Mary learned to be a supervisor, particularly whether there were plans to follow Mary into her first job with a program of in-service education. In response to this interest, Rachel S. Sutton, author of the first article and professor of education at the University of Georgia, has written "Mary Brown—Installment II."

AFTER MARY BROWN, a typical student in supervision, spends four quarters working with numerous educative agencies in the state she begins her task of helping to improve community living in one of the 159 rural counties in Georgia. She goes to a county with the assurance of help from the teacher-education institutions and from the State Department of Education. The new supervisor has already worked closely with the members of the state departments, health, education, wild life, and the like, and is aware of the functions and human and material resources of each; she knows, also, what the teacher-education institutions offer because she has spent from one week to several months on their respective campuses. She is ready to take advantage of the various types of follow-up sponsored by the various state agencies and coordinated by the University's College of Education.

Mary Brown Goes to Pinewood

Mary Brown went to Pinewood County in August 1943. She was given a hearty welcome there because teachers and administrators had asked for her. Pinewood had heard from a nearby county that a supervisor helped to get things underway. The State Department of Education had made it possible for Mary and Pinewood to get acquainted during her training period.

Mary had a busy first year helping communities and schools discover their problems. She was invited to the University campus during the fall to meet the new group of trainees and to share "first experiences" with

others on the job. It was fun to talk with old friends and find that some tough situations were really common ones after all. Sue, from the new group, went to Pinewood with Mary after the conference and spent a week helping in the schools. Sue was a sounding-board, too, for opinions and interpretations Mary had begun to form. Both dreaded to see the week's visit come to an end.

In January 1944, Mary went to the annual meeting of the Georgia Department of Supervisors where she met old friends from the field and college campuses. She was elected to a committee to study the organization of non-book materials that provided most help for teachers. She agreed to describe the extended use of school libraries in Pinewood for the News Exchange, a publication prepared by the Department and in reality the round-robin of the county supervisor in Georgia.

Later in the year the Pinewood Community Council, of which Mary is an active member, sponsored a clinic on health problems. Local and state health departments joined in the undertaking to improve the health of all persons in the county. Representatives from the college campus worked with Mary in conducting a play school, a week of planned recreation for youth and adults in the county. The clinic resulted in clean-up drives, more thorough-going programs of immunization, and plans of community recreation for twelve months.

Mary spent the summer as a participant at one of the summer workshops sponsored by the University in an adjoining county. She made tentative plans for her second year at Pinewood. Several weeks were taken up with last-minute preparations for the planning conference to be held during the first week of school before the children actually arrived. Every teacher in the county would be there and each school hoped to complete its list of TO DO'S started earlier. Mary was relying heavily on the colleges for consultant services.

During the fall of her second year Mary was invited to the University campus again,

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this time to study the apprenticeship period of supervisors in training. Mary believed strongly that for some persons the period of apprenticeship should come early in the training period. Many of the supervisors on the job agreed with her and she was able to take Nan, one of the 1944-1945 group, home with her for a month's stay.

A Laboratory on Teachers' Problems

Early in Mary's second year at Pinewood a request came from teachers to extend the before-school planning conference into a period of concentrated study on classroom problems. There were many new teachers in the county and most of them had very little pre-service education. Their calls for help were genuine and urgent. Mary and her superintendent carried the request to the University's College of Education and received a prompt reply. The first meeting was held at Pinecrest, the consolidated school in the county, and fifty-five teachers and administrators, largely from Pinewood, expressed a desire to become better school workers and enrolled in the laboratory on teachers' problems. Each talked about his own situation and possibilities for improvement. Stenographic notes of these discussions were used in setting up working groups. Special committees on housing, food, library, recreation, and schedule were elected.

From comments made at the first meeting three major areas for study developed: the individual child; pupil interest—how ascertained and used; and the place of the communicative skills in the school program. Each of the three major working groups elected its chairman, secretary, and consultant.

The committees functioned effectively. The library committee was able to assemble and circulate books, monographs, and journals from the University of Georgia Library, the State Department of Education, and the county libraries adjoining Pinewood. The committee on food was responsible for planning delicious evening meals that did much to revive spirits on cold days. The committee on recreation planned programs



Courtesy West Georgia College, Carrollton, Ga.
Mary Brown gets acquainted with Pinewood

for the supper hour, group games, and brief periods of entertainment. A "big party" was planned for Valentine's Day. The trustees of local schools were invited, members of the State Department of Education, local representatives of the General Assembly, members of the University System of Regents, University officials, and representatives of other county agencies. The committee on housing was responsible for well-heated, clean, and attractive meeting places. Into these rooms the teachers brought many samples of pupils' work.

The schedule committee presented a plan of work and study adopted and followed one day each week throughout the three months' period. The three major groups began at 4:30 and worked until 6 o'clock. Between 6 and 6:30 the enrollees checked books in and out of the library, met individually with consultants or in smaller groups according to school faculties, teaching levels, or special interests. At 6:30 everyone adjourned to the school cafeteria for food, fun, and frolic. At 7:15 all members assembled in the library for seminars planned and conducted by the three major working groups and special committees. The seminar was a highlight of the day. Usually one major group gave a progress

report and the visiting consultants talked about questions presented to them. The meetings were scheduled to close at 8:30, but the group was loathe to leave much later.

The consultants from various departments of the University visited and worked in the schools during the morning and afternoons before the group assembled. Through demonstration lessons and follow-up conferences a vital contact was made with the teacher in the classroom. Here was an opportunity to see if words spoken at Pinecrest found a way into classroom practices throughout the county. Here, too, questions real and vital came to the consultants. As a result teachers and schools became better acquainted and instruction was greatly improved. There was a great stir over the county to improve the physical appearance of classrooms, to enrich the child's environment, and to adapt instruction to the particular needs of individuals.

After contact with several visiting consultants, there was a hue and cry to spend the day at the University and see the work of the art department, to test voices in the speech laboratory, to observe in the Demonstration School, the reading clinic, the dance theater, the band and music rooms, and to see the industrial arts shop. A day was set aside for this purpose and all schools in the county were given a holiday. The teachers left Pinewood before dawn and arrived early to get in a full day on the University campus.

At the beginning of the group study on teaching problems each person was asked to supply certain background information, such as a brief summary of professional experience, travel, hobbies and special interests, and reasons for participating in this study. The latter became individual objectives and a guide for constant evaluation. A cumulative folder was kept by each participant. This folder contained reports of readings, observations, conferences, and social travel. Personal reactions indicated growth in different types of experiences. Changes in thinking and classroom practice were described from time to time. Some of the changes most frequently mentioned were:

1. Individual pupils are keeping their own folders.

2. Each pupil is encouraged to evaluate his progress in terms of his own carefully defined purposes.

3. Pupils have established beauty spots in their classrooms which they change constantly.

4. Pupils have redecorated rooms, painted walls, furniture, made draperies, and tried to create homey atmospheres.

5. Teachers give attention to the pupil's thinking, his desires and aspirations, and his needs as he sees them.

6. In solving problems pupils are looking beyond classrooms.

7. High school pupils are using their own written work in such subjects as history, art, math, and science as "texts" in English classes.

8. One senior class has made a hotbed, planted bulbs, cleaned grounds, and set out native shrubs.

9. Pupils are planning together their group activities and assuming responsibility for carrying out plans.

10. Pupils have written their own reading materials in the form of experience charts, stories, poems, reports, and the like.

11. Pupils are divided into ability groups and instruction planned for each group. Ability groups are kept flexible.

Georgia needs well-informed educational leaders who will help communities acquire information and attitudes and build modes of behavior that enable democratic society to provide a healthful environment for all its citizens, to reduce to a minimum ill health and premature death, and to make available for all its people a finer quality of living. Toward this end the teacher-education institutions of Georgia offer assistance to the county supervisor when she begins her work in the field. The communities of Georgia become laboratories of social progress, and the school an active agent in the attainment of community well-being.

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our common purpose, and thus raise our education to its full stature." This would seem to argue for more in-service study, more help from the specialist with his deeper insights, and more group consideration of critical areas of educational experimentation and growth. Perhaps here we have the secret of providing each school system with a perennially growing edge.

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