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J.S. Dodds

Ames Forestry Club

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B. J. Firkins

WHAT forester doesn’t know that little man with the wrestler’s build called “Bugs?”

“Professor B. J. Firkins of the Soils Department” is his full title, though its owner does not recognize the “Professor” part. Perhaps at the beginning of a quarter some freshman studying under “Bugs” Firkins will make a bad blunder:

“Professor,” he will ask, holding up his hand, “what is —?”

“Never mind that professor stuff,” will come the smiling retort; “just call me ‘Bugs.’ ”

“Bugs” teaches two soils courses to foresters. He considers himself a member of the Forestry Department as well as of his own, and he is—by unanimous acclaim.

His classes are interesting from various angles. He is a brisk, thorough lecturer, and students must keep on their toes. “Bugs” is also fond of discovering how much his class understands about current events. If they don’t know what the Iowa Legislature has done the day previous, or what happened on the stock exchange, or who is playing whom in football, he will stop and tell them about it.

“We’re learning soils in this course,” says “Bugs,” “but we’re getting a little education along with it.”

J. S. Dodds

MEETING Prof. John S. Dodds of the Civil Engineering Department you wouldn’t think that he could ever be serious enough to fill a public office. He is a rather large, jovial man with a humorous outlook on life. His fund of ready wit and genial good nature places him in great demand as a master of ceremonies and speaker at many campus activities and national engineering conventions.

In spite of his intense interest in engineering, Professor Dodds likes the forestry students whom he has in surveying classes. “I believe they are more like the engineers than any of the other ages,” he says, with a twinkle in his eye.

He treats freshmen and other students with such a leisurely and disarming air that they are immediately drawn into his confidence and friendship. After a day in one of his classes students address him as “Jack.”
Explaining the construction of a transit to his students, "Jack" Dodds will very solemnly tell how "this little hickey goes through this gadget into that do-whackey."

Professor Dodds is kept very busy outside of school with his many other offices. He is a member of the State Board of Engineering Examiners, secretary of the Iowa Engineering Society, and director of the Iowa State civil engineering summer camp at Rainy Lake, Minn. He has been on the City Council for the last six years and holds many other engineering and public offices.

Professor Dodds refers to his many public offices as his hobbies. "I could quit work at 4 o'clock every afternoon and go to bed. But I'd rather do these other things—they are more fun."

J. M. Aikman

ONE section of a key to the personalities of the Botany Department might run something like this: Man; hair curly, blond; Dendrologist; Ecologist; jovial Scotsman: J. M. Aikman.

All these characteristics identify "Doc" just as his own analysis of the specimen before him pigeon-holes that particular plant in the correct category of botanical classification.

He is a staunch believer in the principle that botanical study can best be done by the making of keys to species, and this point is one which causes some forestry students to pin uncomplimentary, unprintable phrases behind his name. A quarter in one of "Doc's" classes is a succession of keys to everything that grows, but "Doc" sees their merit, even if many of the foresters-to-be cannot.

"Doc" in private life is married, has two children, smokes more nickel cigars (he is a Scotsman, you know) than any other member of the faculty, is a scout master, and is faculty representative on the Cardinal Guild.

"Doc's" secret pride is his Ford. In his V-8, fortified with cigars, he tears down the highway "about 45," admiring plant specimens on either side. He scarcely ever watches the road.

His pet peeve is smoking on the campus. "Just wait, boys, until we get in North Woods," says "Doc," racing along about 50 yards ahead of everyone, "and I'll have one with you." In the protective shelter of North Woods "Doc" produces his favorite stogy and surrounds himself and the choking class with a fog of smoke rivaling the Tillamook Burn.