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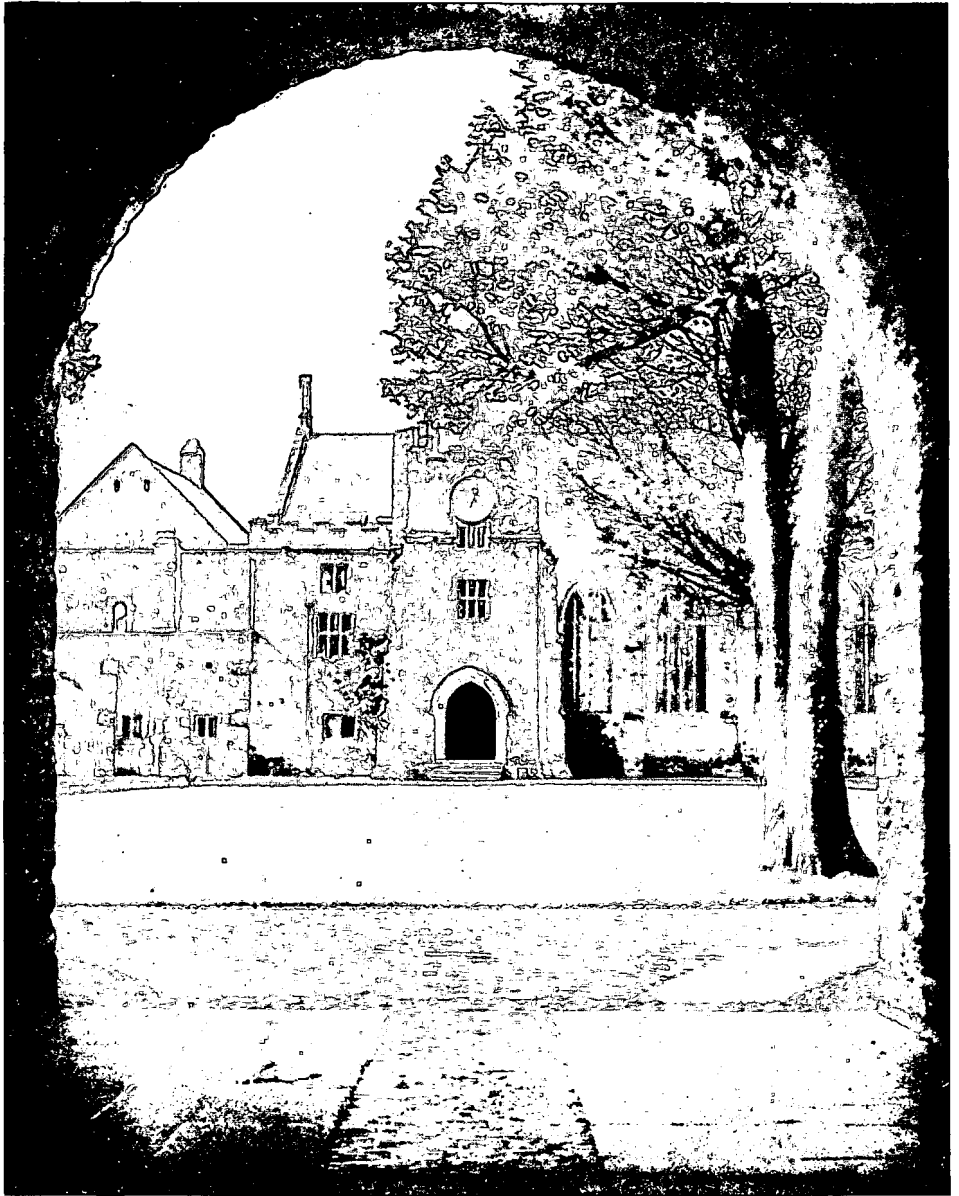
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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS





THE COURTYARD, DARTINGTON HALL

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS

HELD AT
DARTINGTON HALL
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28 AUGUST TO 6 SEPTEMBER 1947

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PREFACE

THE writing of a Preface to the *Proceedings*, as I said on the occasion of the previous volume published so many historical years ago, provides a welcome opportunity of acknowledging some of the many debts owing to those who contribute in a variety of ways to the success of a conference. The Sixth Conference of Agricultural Economists held at Foxhole School, Dartington, Devon, from August 28 to September 6, 1947, incurred many such debts.

This Conference, the first to be held since hostilities ended, returned to the scene of the First Conference which met here in 1929, though to a scene which had undergone many changes. The members were accommodated in Foxhole School, which had not been built when the First Conference was held. The Conference recorded its gratitude to the Dartington Hall Trustees and to the Headmaster of the School, Mr. W. B. Curry, for placing the School and the many facilities of Dartington Hall at the disposal of the members. The sincerest thanks of the Conference are also due to Mr. Ray Lance, School Bursar, Mrs. J. Bell, School Housekeeper, and all the domestic staff of the School for the goodwill with which service was provided in every detail at all times.

The International Conference of Agricultural Economists takes pride in cherishing its freedom from official ties with Governments or localities. It is all the more anxious, therefore, to record its appreciation of the warm welcome to this country and to Devon given to the members on the opening day by Lord Huntingdon, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, Lord Fortescue, Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Devon, Mr. Denis Phillips on behalf of the Chairman of the Devon County Council, Mr. W. E. Phillips, Mayor of the Royal Borough of Totnes, Mr. J. P. Newman, Dartington, Chairman of the Totnes Rural District Council, and Mrs. Dorothy Elmhirst, Dartington Hall Trustees. The members would also wish me to express their indebtedness to the Dartington Committee which arranged the reception on the first evening and the folk-dancing and singing on the Sunday evening, on both occasions on the lawns and in the Great Hall. The Committee consisted of Mrs. Elmhirst, Mrs. Currie, and Mrs. Starr, who were assisted by Miss Bartlett and Mr. Cecil Cope. Thanks are also due to the Dartington Press, Ltd. and to Mrs. Starr, the Editor, for the use of their facilities to publish the five issues of the *Conference*

News Sheet; to the groundsmen and the Dartington Cricket Club for the use of the sports-field and gear for the game, which initiated many, especially American visitors, into the mysteries of cricket; and to Mrs. Thomas for arranging the flowers which graced the platform daily.

During the ten days of the Conference several excursions were made in the neighbourhood of Dartington:

1. To the Old Parsonage Farm, Dartington Hall, where Mr. J. R. Currie described the progress of the economic experiment in dairy farming initiated here in 1929.

2. To Staverton Mill, a walk which combined historical, scenic, forestry, and industrial interest with its brief halts in North Wood to study the trees, at the old sixteenth-century bridge across the Dart, and at the joinery works at Staverton, where Mr. Malbon, Managing Director of Staverton Builders, Ltd. (one of the activities of the Dartington Hall Trustees), and his Works Manager, Mr. Matthews, acted as guides.

3. To the 260-acre farm of Mr. Douglas Mathews to see a typically progressive mixed farm of this district and to have its features and problems outlined by Mr. Mathews.

There were two longer excursions. The first was a trip down the River Dart to Dartmouth, followed by a brief tour of the Battle School area where 200 farms were evacuated to accommodate the training of the U.S.A. forces during the war, and a visit to the monument erected by the U.S.A. Government as an expression of gratitude to the people of the area. Mr. W. E. Gunningham of the Devon War Agricultural Executive Committee who was in charge of the agricultural evacuation outlined the problems of both evacuation and rehabilitation. The day ended with some hours spent in the showground of Dartmouth Fair, which recalled to some memories of a similar visit in 1929.

The other long excursion was eastwards as far as Cullompton, with, at its limit of distance, an inspection of the 250-acre mixed farm of Mr. Raymond Coles, who himself described his system of dairy breeding and management, and the grass-drying plant. The return journey included a brief glimpse of Exeter city and cathedral, with dinner at the Farmers' Club, kindly arranged by Mr. Porter, Secretary of the Devon branch of N.F.U. The final homeward drive was over Dartmoor with a twilight stop at Grimspound, estimated to be one of the oldest evidences of land dwellers in Britain.

Following the Conference, a tour lasting six days was organized through parts of midland and southern England. The people who

provided hospitality and in other ways helped to make the tour a success are so numerous and our indebtedness so great that it is impossible to express our thanks individually or in detail.

When, in pre-war days, Conferences were held in Canada, Germany, and the U.S.A. it was a pleasant duty to acknowledge the services of the members of those countries who had the arduous and exacting task of organizing the hospitality, tours, &c., while for the preparatory work and the overall administration we were indebted to Mr. J. R. Currie. On this occasion, both sides of the organizing fell on Mr. Currie and the staff of the Dartington Economics Department, including temporarily Mrs. Drew, who, as Mr. Currie's secretary, assisted at three of the pre-war Conferences and who returned from her domestic duties to render her experienced services again. Thanks are also due to Miss Barbara Jewell, Secretary to the Trustees, and her colleagues at the Central Offices for the valuable clerical assistance given, and to Mr. Paruig MacKinnon, who helped in many ways the smooth running of the Conference. Although the membership was smaller, the organizing of a Conference in these days was fraught with many extra difficulties due to the exceptional conditions. Those who attended will wish me to express appreciation of the services of this organizing team and admiration for the almost miraculous way in which all sorts of difficulties were overcome.

The recording and editing of the *Proceedings* has again been the work of Mr. J. P. Maxton and the staff of the Institute of Agrarian Affairs.

The undoubted success of this first post-war meeting made it certain that the work of the Conference would go on. Agricultural economics has been rapidly gaining an essential and secure place, not only in teaching, but in the growing amount of economic planning and administration. The number of professional agricultural economists is growing everywhere and an even larger body than those for whom it is a profession is following the development of the subject with great and intense interest. In all this there is a much larger awareness of the international significance of national policies, and of the national significance of international policies. The council at its meeting during the Conference at Dartington unanimously instructed its officers to proceed, not only with the organizing of future conferences, but also with means to establish and maintain regular contact amongst members between conferences.

At its Dartington meeting Council accepted the invitation from Hungary to hold its Seventh Conference there at the end of August

1949, but the invitation and acceptance were necessarily qualified by a number of uncertainties. As this Preface is being written, plans are being made for holding the Seventh Conference in Europe in 1949, although there are doubts about the possibility of holding it in Hungary.

L. K. ELMHIRST

President

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