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**The Place of the Normal School in the Prepa-
ration of High School History Teachers**

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KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI

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First District Normal School

**THE PLACE OF THE NORMAL SCHOOL IN
THE PREPARATION OF HIGH SCHOOL
HISTORY TEACHERS**

REPORT OF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO THE MISSISSIPPI
VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

History and Government Series, No. 5

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The following report was prepared by a special Committee of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association on "The Place of the Normal School in the Preparation of High School History Teachers", and was submitted to this Association at the Nashville meeting held April 27-29, 1916. It was adopted unanimously.

In order that greater circulation may be given to the report than it will have thru the Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, the Division of History and Government of the First District Normal School at Kirksville, Missouri, issues it as one of its bulletins. Copies may be had on application.

THE PLACE OF THE NORMAL SCHOOL IN THE PREPARATION OF HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHERS

At the annual meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association held at Omaha in May, 1913, the Committee on Certification of High School Teachers of History, in the report which they submitted at that time, recommended among other things that a special committee be appointed to consider the place of the Normal School in preparing high school history teachers. The recommendation was acted upon favorably by the Executive Committee of this Association, and President James A. James appointed the following Normal School men and women to serve as a special committee on "The Place of the Normal School in the Preparation of High School History Teachers": E. M. Violette, Kirksville, Mo., Chairman; Sara M. Riggs, Cedar Falls, Ia.; Pelagius M. Williams, Emporia, Kan.; Edward C. Page, DeKalb, Ill.; Claude N. Anderson, Kearney, Neb.; S. E. Thomas, Charleston, Ill.; Carl E. Pray, Ypsilanti, Mich.

This Committee at once drafted a questionnaire and sent it to the 150 Normal Schools of the country that are supported in part or wholly by state funds. It was not sent to city Normal Schools nor to Normal Schools for negro teachers. A copy of this questionnaire is submitted in the appendix to this report.

By dint of persistent effort the Committee succeeded in getting returns from 97 of the 150 schools to which the questionnaire was sent. These 97 schools are located in 40 different states. Their distribution among the states is as follows:

Alabama, 2; Arkansas, 1; Arizona, 1; California, 5; Colorado, 2; Connecticut, 2; Georgia, 1; Idaho, 1; Indiana, 1; Illinois, 5; Iowa, 1; Kansas, 3; Kentucky, 1; Missouri, 4; Minnesota, 5; Maine, 1; Massachusetts, 7; Michigan, 3; Maryland, 1; New York, 7; New Hampshire, 2; North Dakota, 1; New Mexico, 1; Nebraska, 2; New Jersey, 1; North Carolina, 1; Oregon, 1; Ohio, 2; Oklahoma, 4; Pennsylvania, 7; Rhode Island, 1; South Carolina, 1; South Dakota, 3; Texas, 2; Tennessee, 1; Vermont, 2; Virginia, 1; West Virginia, 4; Washington, 1; Wisconsin, 5.

From an examination of the returns it was readily discovered that the Normal Schools of the country might be divided into three groups; first, those that confine themselves wholly to the preparation of elementary school teachers; second, those that

give practically their entire attention to the preparation of elementary school teachers and prepare high school teachers only incidentally; third, those that make a distinct effort to prepare high school teachers as well as elementary school teachers.

It was also found that the 97 schools that responded to the questionnaire were divided almost evenly among these three groups, 31 in the first group, 33 in the second, and 33 in the third. The geographical distribution of the 97 schools in these three groups is as follows:

I. The 31 schools reporting that they are confining themselves wholly to the preparation of elementary school teachers, represent 12 different states. The number of such schools in each of these 12 states is as follows:

California, 5; Connecticut, 2; Colorado, 1; Idaho, 1; Massachusetts, 7; Minnesota, 5; New York, 2; New Hampshire, 2; North Dakota, 1; Oregon, 1; Ohio, 1; Rhode Island, 1; Vermont, 2.

(The Normal Schools in California, Minnesota, and Vermont are compelled by law to confine themselves to the work of preparing teachers for the elementary schools.)

Of these 31 schools, 7 are in 3 Mississippi Valley States, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Ohio; 16 are in 6 Eastern States, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; 8 are in 4 Western States, California, Colorado, Idaho, and Oregon.

II. The 33 schools reporting that they are giving practically their entire attention to the preparation of elementary school teachers and are preparing high school teachers only incidentally, represent 16 states. The number of such schools in each of these 16 states is as follows:

Alabama, 2; Arkansas, 1; Arizona, 1; Georgia, 1; Illinois, 3; Maryland, 1; Michigan, 1; Maine, 1; New York, 4; New Mexico, 1; New Jersey, 1; Pennsylvania, 7; South Dakota, 3; Virginia, 1; Washington, 1; West Virginia, 4.

Of these 33 schools, 8 are in 4 Mississippi Valley States, Arkansas, Illinois, Michigan, South Dakota; 22 are in 9 Eastern States, Alabama, Georgia, Maryland, Maine, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia; 3 are in 3 Western States, Arizona, New Mexico, Washington.

III. The 33 schools reporting that they make a definite effort to prepare high school teachers as well as elementary school teachers, represent 17 states. The number of such schools in each of these 17 states is as follows:

Colorado, 1; Iowa, 1; Indiana, 1; Illinois, 2; Kentucky, 1; Kansas, 3; Missouri, 4; Michigan, 2; New York, 1; Nebraska, 2; North Carolina, 1; Oklahoma, 4; Ohio, 1; South Carolina, 1; Texas, 2; Tennessee, 1; Wisconsin, 5.

Of these 33 schools, 29 are in 13 Mississippi Valley States, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Kansas, Missouri, Michigan, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Ohio, Texas, Tennessee, Wisconsin; 3 are in 3 Eastern States, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina; 1 is in 1 Western State, Colorado.

From this tabulation it is readily seen that Groups I and II are made up largely of the Normal Schools in the Eastern and the Western States and that Group III is almost altogether made up of the Normal Schools in the Mississippi Valley. In other words the Normal Schools of the Eastern and the Western States are given largely to the work of preparing elementary school teachers, while the Normal Schools of the Mississippi Valley are undertaking to prepare high school teachers as well as elementary school teachers. It may be assumed that if the returns had been received from all of the 150 schools to which the questionnaire was sent, the proportionate distribution of the 150 among the three groups would be about the same as it is in the case of the 97 schools.

The marked variations among Normal Schools as regards this one matter is suggestive of the fundamental differences that exist among these institutions, and of the difficulty of giving a definition of a Normal School that will apply to them all. The definition of a college has long been agreed upon. A college must have a certain amount of endowment or fixed support; it must have a faculty of at least a certain number and an equipment of certain character; it must require of its students a certain amount of work, usually 120 semester hours during a period of four years. Every institution that purports to be a college can be readily measured by the standards that have been widely accepted.

But this is not the case with Normal Schools because there are so many different kinds of Normal Schools and because there is no agreement among Normal School authorities as to what the standards should be for such institutions. A few Normal Schools are virtually high schools with a department of education or pedagogy attached; such schools constitute one extreme type. A few are attempting to offer a four years teachers college course beyond the four years high school course; they constitute the other extreme type. The majority of them however fall between these

two extremes and are undertaking to do two or three years of teachers college work beyond the four years high school course. Moreover most of the Normal Schools have large preparatory departments covering or paralleling the entire high school course.

Since therefore there is no agreement among educational authorities as to the definition of a Normal School and since there is no uniformity among Normal Schools as regards their standards and requirements, it follows that the problem before this committee is a very complicated one. Fortunately however the problem is somewhat simplified by the fact that fully one third of the Normal Schools of the country confine their efforts exclusively to the preparation of elementary school teachers and another third give practically all their energy to the same work and prepare high school teachers only incidentally. With two thirds of the Normal Schools thus eliminated from our survey, the question before the Committee resolves itself into this form: 1. What preparation should be made by high school history teachers for their work; 2. To what extent do these Normal Schools that definitely undertake to prepare history teachers for high schools succeed in giving their students the preparation that conforms to the standards which this committee approves?

As regards the first of these two propositions, this committee would accept or approve no standard lower than that which has been set up by the Committee of this Association on the Certification of High School History Teachers. A brief restatement of the most essential parts of that report as made in May, 1913, may be well made here so that the position of this committee may be clearly understood.

The Committee on the Certification of High School History Teachers declared that the Mississippi Valley Historical Association ought not to countenance the appointment in our high schools of persons who have not completed a standard college course which later in the report was defined as one whose studies stretch over four years and aggregate about 120 semester hours or points. The Committee held that those who intend to teach history in high schools should give from 25 to 40 of the 120 semester hours or points to history. Altho there was no attempt to prescribe hard and fast regulations which should always be observed in detail, the committee suggested that these 25 to 40

semester hours devoted to history might be distributed as follows: 1. Survey or general introductory courses during the first two years—such as European or Medieval and Modern History in the Freshman year, and American History in the Sophomore year—to the amount of 12 hours; 2. Advanced or special courses, 20 hours; 3. Methods of teaching history, 2 to 4 hours; 4. Pro-seminary courses, 2 to 6 hours. In addition to this work the Committee recommended that prospective high school history teachers should devote some time to subjects related to history, such as political science, political economy, and sociology. It also took account of the preparation in psychology and pedagogy commonly fixed by university regulation or state law and required of all candidates for the teaching profession. (Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, 1912-13, pages 23-32.)

The Committee on the Place of the Normal School in the Preparation of High School History Teachers is in substantial agreement with the standards set up by the Committee whose report has just been summarized. There may be good reasons for differing with that committee in some of the details of its recommendations. For example, it may be better for those who are preparing to teach history in the high school to spend more than 12 semester hours upon survey or general courses in history. The Committee on Certification itself expressed some doubts upon that very point. Since nearly all the high schools are organized nowadays with three or four year courses in history, it may be quite advisable for those who are preparing to teach these courses to pursue college courses that cover in a general way the same fields that are studied in the high school courses. If instead of 12 hours being spent in pursuing survey or general courses, something like 18 or 24 hours are devoted to that sort of work, then the number of hours recommended for special courses would be correspondingly cut down.

Again, there may be some doubt as to the advisability or desirability of introducing any pro-seminary courses in the undergraduate work. Even admitting that such courses would be beneficial to the prospective high school history teacher, there would be no justification in considering them absolutely necessary. The function of the high school teacher is that of teaching,

and not of investigation. Pro-seminary courses in history are therefore not to be considered as indispensable in the preparation of high school history teachers.

Notwithstanding the difference in details, this Committee agrees in general with the Committee on Certification as to the requirements it laid down. The candidate for a position as teacher of history in the high school ought to have completed a standard college or teachers college course of four years whose studies stretch over four years and aggregate about 120 semester hours, and he ought to have devoted 25 to 40 of the semester 120 hours to history.

As far as general requirements for high school teachers are concerned, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools is in accord with the Committee on Certification and with this special Committee. The standard of the North Central Association which is published in its Proceedings every year says that the "minimum attainment of teachers of academic subjects shall be equivalent to graduation from a college belonging to the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This requires the completion of a four years course of study or 120 semester hours, in advance of a standard four years high school course, and includes at least eleven hours in education".

Gradually this standard of preparation is being adopted in the high schools and it is becoming more and more difficult for one to secure or to hold a position in the better high schools unless he has attained to this standard. But there are at present many high school history teachers doing very good and effective work whose preparation, both general and special, is less than that which has just been stated and approved. Many of these teachers prepared themselves for their work wholly in Normal Schools that require less than 120 hours for graduation, and are to be found not only in small high schools but also in some of the large city high schools as well. It must also be admitted that many high school history teachers who have formally complied with the approved standards of preparation for their work as stated above, are nevertheless failures. But in most cases inefficiency in history teaching is due to lack of adequate preparation, and the time has come when nothing less than the standards which have

just been stated will be satisfactory. The demands upon the high school teachers are becoming more exacting and the study of history is becoming more nearly scientific, so that if history is to hold its own with the other subjects that are crowding our high school curricula, the educational institutions that undertake to prepare high school history teachers must see to it that such teachers are given opportunity to qualify themselves according to the standards which have been defined by the Committee on Certification and approved by this Committee.

Having put ourselves on record regarding the preparation that should be made by high school history teachers for their work, let us turn now to the other proposition which the Committee have set for their consideration; viz., to what extent do those Normal Schools that definitely undertake to prepare young men and women for the task of teaching history in our high schools succeed in giving their students the preparation which complies with the standards just approved. Regarding this proposition the Committee are compelled to state that in their judgment not more than fifteen or sixteen of the thirty-three Normal Schools reporting to the Committee that they are definitely attempting to prepare high school history teachers, are able at the present time to give to their students the sort of preparation that will conform in full to the approved requirements. In other words there are only 15 or 16 Normal Schools that are offering the standard teachers college course of 120 semester hours and that are giving in such a course from 25 to 40 hours of college history.

This is at first glance a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. But those who know conditions in the Normal Schools and in the districts they serve, realize that things are not so unsatisfactory as they may seem.

In the first place, altho only about one half of the Normal Schools now preparing high school teachers have four years Teachers College course, there are many indications that most of the others will likely have such courses in the very near future. The most noticeable tendency in recent years among the Normal Schools that are given to the preparation of high school teachers has been the strengthening and the lengthening of their curricula. In fact most of the 15 or 16 Normal Schools that are now practically standard Teachers Colleges, have become so only in the

last ten years. It seems safe to say that if the Normal Schools that are endeavoring to prepare high school teachers and that yet fall short of being standard Teachers Colleges, are allowed to continue in their natural development unmolested by outside influences, it will not be many years until they will become such.

In the second place the Normal Schools that are doing only two or three years of Teachers College work are doing a very much needed service for the high schools in their districts. Unfortunately there are many high schools that are paying very meagre salaries for their teachers, especially their history teachers, and they cannot always command the services of the graduates of colleges or teachers colleges. When conditions in our towns and villages change so that better remuneration will be given for high school instruction than is now generally the case, then better prepared teachers may be commanded, and the demand for better preparation on the part of the teachers will react upon the Normal Schools that are not yet standard Teachers Colleges, and will serve to bring them up to that rank if they are but allowed to go on in their development unhindered. Until that good day comes, however, the Normal School with the two or three years teachers college course will continue to do a work for the small high schools of the country that no other institution can do or will do, and due recognition should be given for this service.

An examination of the 15 or 16 Normal Schools which are virtually standard teachers colleges, discloses the fact that in point of faculty, equipment, and course of study they compare favorable with the best of the regular colleges in their sections of the country, and that they are decidedly superior to a great many of these colleges. Only two or three of the 15 or 16 Normal Schools have less than two professors who devote most if not all their time to the teaching of history and allied subjects of college rank, while many have three or four such professors. As to the preparation which these Normal School professors have made for their work, there are very few of them who have done no post graduate work in history. Fully one half of them have the A. M. degree, and one half of the remainder have done graduate work beyond the A. M. degree.

The material equipment of these 15 or 16 Normal Schools for the teaching of history is apparently very good. In addition to

maps and charts and well selected libraries, there are stereopticons and lantern slides in abundance in many of them, and in some, historical museums are beginning to be organized.

Most of the courses in history offered in these 15 or 16 Normal Schools are of a survey or general character, but every one of them also offers several special courses covering restricted fields. No one of these schools offers less than 25 hours of history and several offer 60 hours or more. All of them offer work in political science, political economy and sociology, which ranges in amount from 10 to 30 hours.

There is one facility which every Normal School has that is frequently lacking in the regular college, and that is the practice school or the training school. The importance of this facility was almost overlooked by the Committee on Certification of High School History Teachers. In their report the subject was dismissed with a single short sentence to the effect that "when a practice course can be arranged, the best results can be obtained". We wish to give greater emphasis to this matter than did the Committee whose report has just been quoted. We hold that practice teaching under proficient supervision is not only desirable but practically indispensable in the preparation of teachers, not only for the elementary grades but also for the high school grades as well.

We wish also to insist that the Normal Schools that undertake to prepare high school teachers should maintain high school classes for practice teaching. As yet not all of the 15 or 16 Normal Schools that are practically standard teachers colleges have such classes, but from present indications it will not be very long until they will have them. However it is decidedly better that a prospective high school teacher should have some experience in practice teaching, even if that work is done in the elementary grades, than not to have had any practice teaching at all. If the position that has been taken is sound, it then follows that the institution that does not offer its students an opportunity to do practice teaching under competent supervision fails in a very important matter.

In this connection attention should be called to the special emphasis that Normal Schools put in some form or other upon methods of teaching. In some of them this matter is dealt with

directly in connection with the courses in history, and in others in separate courses on the teaching of history. It is rather easy to put undue stress upon methods and some Normal Schools have been charged perhaps justly with doing this very thing. But on the other hand many of the colleges have either ignored the matter altogether or have been content with a certain perfunctory effort which of course fails to be of any benefit to the prospective teacher.

In reaching the conclusions that have been set forth in this report, the Committee have been guided by the idea that the whole field of preparing teachers for the public school work from the kindergarten to the high school inclusive, should be open to the Normal Schools. Some Normal Schools may by choice prefer to restrict themselves to the task of preparing elementary school teachers. That is undoubtedly the biggest field in education and is in no way inferior to any other; and every Normal School worthy of the name will continue to render its larger service in that field. But the view is fast gaining ground that high school teachers receive the best preparation in those schools where elementary school teachers are also being prepared. A recognition of this principle is seen in the way the Teachers Colleges that have been recently established in connection with Universities are organized. Invariably they cover the entire field of education; they would fail in their mission if they did not do so. If it is right and proper that Teachers Colleges connected with Universities should cover the whole field of education, it is equally right for the Normal Schools and the Teachers Colleges that stand alone to do so if they choose. The idea that high school teachers should be prepared in one sort of school and elementary school teachers in another, is a vicious one. It tends to the "creation of different standards and ideals which result in a serious break in the spirit, the method, and the character of the work of the child as it passes from the elementary school to the high school". Moreover the preparation of elementary school teachers and of high school teachers in separate institutions begets a kind of educational caste which draws a rather definite line between the high school aristocracy and the elementary school commonalty. Such a condition ought not to exist, and it will disappear to a large extent wherever it does now exist, if whatever restrictions imposed upon

Normal Schools by legislation or by some outside controlling educational influences are removed, and these schools are allowed to enter freely the whole field of education.

In conclusion the Committee wish to express to this Association their appreciation of the opportunity that has been given for making this investigation and submitting this report. The data they have gathered and on which they have based their report, are available for the use of all who may be interested in the subject.

E. M. VIOLETTE
SARA M. RIGGS
P. M. WILLIAMS
E. C. PAGE
S. E. THOMAS
CARL E. PRAY
C. N. ANDERSON

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION ON "THE PLACE OF THE NORMAL SCHOOL IN THE PREPARATION OF HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHERS"

NAME AND LOCATION OF INSTITUTION.

COURSES.

1. Courses in history given in your institution. Mark with an asterisk those that are of high school grade. Indicate after each course, the number of times a week the class meets and the length of the course in number of months.

2. Courses in government or political science, political economy, and sociology. Mark with an asterisk those that are of high school grade. Indicate after each course the number of times a week the class meets and the length of the course in number of months.

3. Courses in the teaching of history and geography, or of history and government. Indicate after each course the number of times a week the class meets and the length of the course in number of months.

Do any of the courses mentioned in this question include any consideration of problems in the teaching of high school history? Are any of these courses required or are all of them elective?

FACULTY.

4. How many teachers are there in your entire faculty? How many devote their entire time to the teaching of history and allied subjects? How many devote only a part of their time to these subjects? (Student teachers and student assistants are not to be included in answering this question. The term "allied subjects" as used in this questionnaire includes government, political science, political economy, and sociology.)

5. Preparation of teachers of history and allied subjects in your institution. Indicate after the name of each teacher the Colleges or Normal Schools and Universities he attended and the degrees acquired, and what was his major subject in graduate work.

6. Books or monographs of historical or pedagogical nature that have been produced by teachers of history and allied subjects in your institution. Give name of author, title of work and date of publication.

EQUIPMENT.

7. LIBRARY.

Number of volumes on history and allied subjects. Are any of the books purchased in duplicate copies? If so, what kind of books are they?

8. FACILITIES FOR ILLUSTRATIVE WORK:

Maps, stereopticon slides, pictures, models, historical objects. Underscore once those you have. Underscore twice those you have in abundance and make special use of.

REQUIREMENTS.

9. What are your entrance requirements.

10. How much work beyond a four years' high school course is required for graduation from your institution?

11. What is the minimum requirement in history and allied subjects for graduation?

12. What authority to teach is conferred with the diploma that is granted on graduation?

13. Do you grant the degrees of A. B. or B. S. in Education? If so, what constitutes a major in history in each of these courses?

14. Are your students required to do any practice teaching? If so, do they have an opportunity to do any of it in classes of high school grade? If so, under what supervision?

NORMAL SCHOOL GRADUATES AS HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

15. Do your students on graduation secure positions as teachers in four year high schools? If so about how many on an average each year secure such positions as history teachers?

16. How many years of work in history and allied subjects have such high school history teachers had in your institution?

17. Is their teaching given equal recognition along with that of graduates of colleges and universities? If not, by whom is it discredited, and why?

18. Are your graduates taken into high schools as teachers because of a shortage of candidates who are graduates from colleges and universities, or are they chosen on their merits along with or in preference to such?

EFFORTS OF NORMAL SCHOOLS TO PREPARE HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

19. Does your institution make any special effort to prepare your students for high school teaching, or does it confine itself to the preparation of teachers for the rural and elementary schools?

What reasons would you give for Normal Schools undertaking to prepare teachers for high schools. What reasons would you give for them not undertaking this work?

20. Suggestions for promoting the efficiency of Normal Schools in preparing high school history teachers.

BULLETIN.

21. Will you kindly send at once to the Chairman of this Committee, E. M. Violette, Kirksville, Mo., a copy of the last catalog bulletin of your institution giving a syllabus of your courses in history and allied subjects.

ASSOCIATION OF NORMAL SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHERS.

22. Would you favor the forming of a national association of Normal School Teachers of history and allied subjects for the promotion of common interests?

Signed by.....

Position.....

Date.....