

Need for capital and jobs is main obstacle to co-ops

Two factors constantly enter into the co-operative movement tending to prevent expansion and tending to make it forever impossible to develop rooming groups. In the first place, the capital outlay for a rooming house is too great for the students of meager financial backing to maintain. And second, it is essential that practically every student who is a member of a co-operative hold a cash job or have a sizeable cash reserve, two things which the majority of boys do not have.

Need banker.

To have a co-operative rooming house, an outlay for furniture and the large initial rent for the dwelling is on the whole too large for a group without financial reserves to raise. Unless a banker or some graduate is willing to advance the money on easy terms for a long period of time, the chances of securing a house are nil.

This obstacle is exemplified, Dean Epp explained, by the experience of several members of the Cornhusker Co-op, when they tried to get hold of the house at 1327 R this fall.

Their efforts resulted in no success in as much as a fraternity with stronger financial backing was able to nab the house out from under their noses.

Long term investments.

This obstacle can be dealt with in the opinion of Prof. L. B. Snyder, assistant professor of rural economics, only by large investments by business men. In his experience with the Graduate Student club of which he is a member, he declares that he has put

large quantities of money into the venture—quantities which he can only hope to recover over a period of years.

Coupled with this financial deterrent, if the fact that student members with prospects of leaving the campus within four years are unwilling to purchase the equipment necessary to run the houses.

Perhaps the reasons for the greater number of co-ops on the ag campus than on the city campus is due to the greater number of cash jobs at the ag barns, Dean Epp suggested. A majority of fellows in all the clubs are employed at the present time and in the case of ACBC practically all are employed on the ag campus.

NYA jobs.

It is impossible for students who can secure waiter jobs, or other employment in which wages are paid in meals to belong to such a group. Mrs. Wilson of the ACBC explains one of the major stimuluses to the growth of her house membership was the introduction of a great many cash NYA jobs at the college.

The subsidiary to the financial obstacles, a third factor is the attitude of the students' minds. Dean Epp in his summary report of the movement declared "No co-operative group can long endure if its existence is dependent upon the coaching of a person or persons not directly connected with it. Enthusiasm for co-operation must be generated within the group; the initiative and resourcefulness of its own members must constitute the will and means for existence.

NU projects thrive

Mother of co-operatives



DAILY NEBRASKAN staff photo.

In her cozy second floor room at ACBC, Mrs. (Mother) Wilson, pioneer of the cooperative movement at Nebraska spends a good part of her time, both alone and with her boys.

For ten years Mrs. Wilson has been a guiding hand in this movement, coaching and giving her support to all efforts made by other groups to get a start. Her house alone survived from the

various houses which were organized as the movement got under way in 1929.

Middle-aged and ultra-goodnatured, the mother of co-operatives continues to assist the stewards in planning the meals and in purchasing the food. In her own words, Mrs. Wilson expressed great joy over her work at ACBC.

Co-op clubs pass tenth milestone

(Compiled in part from a survey conducted by the office of the dean of student affairs.)

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the first student co-operative on the Nebraska campus.

The dream of Professor Goodding back in 1929 that in some way out-of-town students might be seated at well-provisioned tables and that they might participate in common social activities has at last born fruit.

On this tenth anniversary, the movement can boast four strong men's organizations encompassing over 150 men on the city and ag campuses and an equal number of women's groups with memberships topping 70.

Behind every attempt to form cooperative houses, but through experience skeptical about pushing students into them, the office of the dean of student affairs is now proud of the work that has been done. This office has recently prepared a summary of the hardships and successes of houses in the past decade. Omitting for the moment the early growth of the movement at the ag college, Dean Epps report began,

"To give a perspective of student cooperation at Nebraska (the city campus) we first go back to the fall of 1932. That fall John Coupland, a sophomore in the arts college, with the help of a few other students rented a furnished house at 3222 Vine street to board and room on a share-expense basis. They hired a lady to do the cooking and cleaning for them. The group was small, containing only about eight students. It functioned for the school year, but was discontinued thereafter.

"The reason for discontinuing was the fact that they found it difficult to rent an appropriate house sufficiently near the campus so that the distance would not be a burden to the peripatetics. Another reason for abandoning was the fact that Coupland found his burden in operating the house was greater than what he gained by it.

The report explains that concurrently with the short life of this venture, the athletic department took a step in the support of the cooperative movement. Conscious of the inroads the depression was making on the students' opportunities to attend school, this department, the report explains, worked up interest and quite a little enthusiasm among business men for a cooperative house for athletes.

This house likewise lasted but a year. The business men furnished it with secondhand but usable furniture, and all efforts possible were made to fill it with 18 men. The program failed, however, first because it was started late in the fall after students had already gotten settled. Secondly, and perhaps more important, was the severity of the depression which forced a bloc of the members out of school entirely. One criterion of cooperatives and one that this house didn't meet, Dean Epp continued, is that bills must be paid by the members promptly either from accumulated reserves or from current jobs.

Despite the hardships suffered by these downtown co-ops the ACBC, founded ten years ago to instigate the movement, continued to turn back large profits to its members. In 1936 a second club, this one composed primarily of graduate students arose on the ag campus. Gaining impetus every year, this group has expanded to a much larger house and now claims the title of the only co-operative rooming house at the university.

Baldwin hall.

Last year overflow from the rapidly growing ACBC was turned over to Baldwin hall at 3268 Orchard. This group has now expanded to approximately 30 members and is worrying about how and where it is to expand.

While these successful enterprises were calling more and more members out at ag, city campus students sat tight, despite probings by C. D. Hayes of the Y. M. C. A. to get cooperative houses started. It was not until September of 1938 that the ACBC program was copied near the city campus in the form of the Cornhusker Coop, 1516 S. Other attempts have since been made and every indication points to a great increase in student cooperatives in the next decade of growth.

Boarding groups record late expansions

ACBC boasts colorful past

Ag College Boarding Club is the sole remnant of the first cooperative movement which started on the city and ag campuses better than ten years ago. Throughout its colorful history, wherein it changed location two times, battled for supremacy in all ag campus activities, and expanded to its present size of 57, Mrs. Wilson, house mother, feels that it has filled a needed place in each student's life.

"It was upon the suggestion of Mr. Goodding back in 1929 that I started the first student cooperative," Mother Wilson, pioneer and advisor to the movement exclaimed in explaining her interest in making a home for out-of-town boys. At that time, she explained, she was living a considerable distance from the campus and scarcely had the facilities to assist in such a program.

Get filled up.

Goodding's theory was that farm boys should have some place to eat where they could get a fill of good food for a very reasonable amount. "After finding all the women near the college skeptical about such a venture, the professor and I came to an agreement," Mrs. Wilson said. He had found a student named Copenhagen who he thought was a good business man and could get the cooperative movement started. "I accepted," Mrs. Wilson smiled, "and I have never regretted since."

The ACBC spent a four year embryonic period in the basement of Mrs. Wilson's house some eight blocks from the campus. Throughout this period a general skepticism prevailed and it was hard to get student interest aroused. Many thought that there was danger of having to pay out additional sums of money if the venture failed.

NYA program helps.

It was with the instigation of NYA which gave work to large number of boys and the realization of the advantages that might be derived from living close to the campus, that the house was moved first several blocks west on Holdrege and later to its present site at 1401 North 33.

Practically everything dealing with the management of the house is left to the boys to handle. At the first meeting of the year, the group votes on where to set the weekly dues and on what sort of program is to be followed. One from their members is elected steward to do all the purchasing and to collect the weekly dues.

Future expansion blocked.

"Possibilities for further expansion are definitely blocked," Mrs. Wilson sighed. "There are no

The only co-operative for men on the downtown campus, the Cornhusker Co-operative Boarding club, has increased from a group of 14 charter members in September, 1938, to 36 members this fall. Patterned after the ACBC, the Cornhusker co-operative, 1516 S, offers its members a schedule of hour dances, intramural sports events and regular Monday night meetings.

The weekly board bill charged to members is \$4. Purchasing food in huge amounts, the organization is in a position to offer better quality food than is obtainable for a similar price elsewhere. The member in charge of purchasing groceries and planning the menus receives his meals in return. Waiters are given one meal for each hour they work.

Financial setup.

The working capital for the enterprise is derived from the sale of two shares of stock at \$2 per share to each member. At the close of the semester these members receive \$6.00.

Representatives of the co-operative claim that rooming charges could be reduced 33 percent if the group were able to obtain a house large enough to make co-operative rooming possible. They tried unsuccessfully this fall to secure the house at 1325 R.

New members for the group are selected from a large waiting list which is in turn made up of men who have been invited to the house for free meals and who have received the approval of two-thirds of the members. Two members of the waiting list are voted upon when a vacancy occurs and the one who wins is permitted to join the group for a six weeks probationary period. He becomes a member if he receives unanimous approval at the end of that time.

Bob Kubicek is president of the co-operative group; John Mercer, vice president and social chairman; Clement Anerson, secretary, and Lynn Landgren, steward.

houses that are larger and yet as conveniently located as the place in which we now board. The housing facilities apparently stand in the way of ever developing a co-operative rooming house of any size.

Actively participating in ag campus activities, the group boasts the winning of well over a majority of the first place cups in Coll-Agri-Fun over the last ten years. In addition they have been prominent in athletics, and have taken active parts in university social events.

Most unique of the university's co-operative rooming houses is the ag college's Grad club, which consists entirely of graduate men, now enjoying its fourth year of successful existence. Charging \$30 per month for board and room, the group now numbers 25 members, 10 of whom both room and eat at the house.

The club was initiated by 12 graduate students three years ago. For two years the club was located on No. 37th st. Before moving to its present address, 1301 No. 33, it stayed for a while at 534 No. 26th.

Pays dividends.

Last year the Grad club paid its members patronage dividends amounting to 12 per cent of the monthly bill. During the preceding year an 8 per cent dividend was paid. Half of these dividends are used to furnish working funds for the group from one year to the next.

The monthly bill paid by the club's members covers the cook's salary, food expenses, heat, payments to the equipment fund, etc. At the present time the fund provided for the replacement of equipment is about \$1,000.00.

Eating plan.

The menus served by the club are made out by the cook. Purchase of food is under charge of the treasurer. One of the methods by which the club effects savings in food costs is the purchase of food in large quantity. Moreover, the club butchers its own hogs at the ag college and places them in cold storage. Eggs are furnished at wholesale prices by one of the fellows living at the house, whose parents are farmers.

Dr. Lloyd B. Snyder, professor of rural economics living at the club, points out that one of the biggest advantages of the club is that it promotes more social life among graduate students.

Gives social life.

"Graduate study is exacting work," Professor Snyder declares, "and graduate students are inclined to forget everything else and get in a rut. Living at the club promotes needed social life. Besides, all the members are interested in the same type of thing. Consequently, these become the subject of bull sessions.

Another advantage of the co-operative to which its members point is that it brings fellows from many parts of the country into intimate contact. Students from Vermont, Michigan, Washington State, Utah, and Texas are included in the club's personnel, as are representatives of five undergraduate fraternities.

Grad co-op in Baldwin hall fourth year grows rapidly

From only an overflow unit for the crowded ACBC house of 1938, Baldwin hall, has grown to a membership of 29 and has developed an activity program which includes hour dances, intramural athletics, and several annual parties held jointly with the mother house, ACBC.

In the large one time home of Mrs. Baldwin, who now operates the house and helps with the food for the boys, the ag college group has expanded to near capacity. Though it is not a rooming house, "Mother" Baldwin turns over the parlor with couches and radios, and the large basement dining room for the use of her boarders.

\$4 per week.

Operating at cost and acquiring surpluses through the advantages of mass buying, the house operates for \$4 per boy each week. From this fund, a percentage goes to Mrs. Baldwin, another part is used for food and supplies, and five cents goes into a sinking fund which covers incidental expenses such as newspapers, magazines and social activities.

A percentage of the surplus which accrues during the year is turned back to the students of the club each spring on the basis of the amount paid in by them.

Started last year.

The 20 student group which started the venture last fall grew to 26 in the spring. During this same period the policy of the house was changed so that short term boys are now excluded. Despite these restrictions, however, Mrs. Baldwin explained, no difficulty has been encountered in filling the house this fall. Further, that they might be sure that only genial fellows will be included, an extensive probation plan of selection has been introduced.

The plan is not new to Baldwin hall. Students desiring membership or those asked by others to come into most any co-operative, are placed upon probation for six weeks during which time they are inspected by the group. If in this period friction arises, or if the newcomer is distasteful to the others he is at that time removed. Such a course has not as yet been followed however, in our club the house mother assured.

St. Paul hears Worcester

Dr. D. A. Worcester, chairman of the department of educational psychology and measurements, will address the university class of St. Paul Methodist church Sunday morning on the subject, "The Teacher's Attitude Toward Religion."