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Chernihiv Province Primary Schools of Agriculture in Late 19th-Early 20th Century

In mid-19th-early 20th century Chernihiv province lay within 50°15'–53°19' N and 30° 24'–34°26' E latitude and longitude respectively, occupying the total area of approximately 52397 square kilometers. According to the first nationwide census in 1897 its population was 2321900 people.

Chernihiv province had long been known as a farmland, therefore it historically reflected in the development of agricultural education, training specialists in cultivating soil, horticulture and animal husbandry, as well as training craftsmen to be able to produce tools for the above mentioned types of work.

The first schools were as follows: Vozdvizhenska School of Agriculture (1885), Preobrazhenska School of Agriculture (1891), Borznyanska School of Horticulture (1898), Maynivska 1st degree primary school of Agriculture and Handicraft (1891), Novozybkivska Agricultural Technical Training School (1899), Slobidska female school of home economics and dairy husbandry (1900), Lyudmylynska female school of home economics and homestead farming (1903), Petrovska school for horticultural workers training (Pavlivka hamlet, Glukhivskiy district, 1903). These establishments appeared in the region based on the „Ordinary act of primary agricultural schools” dated December 27, 1883, which determined the procedure of starting a school, its financing, operations, ensuring management and control, as well as hiring qualified staff for educational process. Schools' goal was „to spread basics of agriculture and required handicrafts primarily via practical implementation” [*Ordinary...* 1888: 3].

Vozdvizhenska School of Agriculture in Glukhivsky district opened its doors on August 4th, 1885, being the first one according to chronology. 73 dessiatyna (measure of land = 2.7 acres) of land were granted to the school by its initiator and sponsor, local landowner M.M. Neplyuev (1851–1908, theologian, public figure, founder of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross Labour brotherhood).

School mission was to train qualified „educated farmers” and in particular to create a new ethical person i.e. free, conscious Christian, who possessed „strong will to share kindness, love to God and fellow creatures”; a person, who was capable „to establish life in new lands”. Students studied the Law of the Lord, the Russian language, Geography, Arithmetic, Geometry, Physics, Elementary

Chemistry, Drawing, Singing. There were two preparatory classes in the school. Orthodox applicants of various social ranks aged 13 to 16 years could be registered for the first preparatory class.

The academic year commenced on October 1st and finished on April 1st. The school received 3500 karbovantsy as government funding, out of which 3000 were paid as teachers' salary and 500 spent on text books. M. Neplyuev spent out of his pocket 6015 karbovantsy.

The number of students enrolled in the school by early 1912 reached 80 and out of 146 applicants only 26 of them were registered. As of 1912 school had admitted 524 students and 222 completed the course and graduated.

Preobrazhenska School of Agriculture for girls was as well established by M.M. Neplyuev in 1891. It was located 10 miles away from Yampol station of Kyiv-Voronizh railway, in his native Vozdvizhenskiy hamlet. Hamlet's area was 15 dessiatyna, which were divided into plots for school estate (2 dessiatyna), homestead land (7 dessiatyna), kitchen garden (3 dessiatyna) and orchard (3 dessiatyna).

School mission was „to foster young conscious religious ladies and to convey the practical knowledge about agriculture in general and dairy husbandry, homestead farming, home economics and sewing in particular” [*Chernigovskaya...* 1913: 8].

Orthodox girls of all social ranks aged 13 to 19 years, that were in good health and could perform physical labor were admitted to the school. Tuition costs and board were free of charge for the students.

As of January 1st, 1910 school had admitted 81 students and in 1912 there were 84. Over the twenty years 471 students had been admitted to the school and 184 of them successfully completed a course and graduated. 20 of graduates worked in their own farms and 113 were involved in miscellaneous areas of agricultural production. [*Chernigovskaya...* 1913: 8].

Borznyanska School of Horticulture was started on October 15th 1898 by Borznyansky district council. School mission was to convey the practical knowledge „beneficial for farming and gardening, and to pass valuable information to local community, as well as to provide affordable quality planting supplies, tools and equipment for farming and gardening needs”. School was transformed to Borznyanska 2nd degree school of Horticulture, Farming and Apiculture by „Act of Agricultural Education approved by Superior Authority on May 26th, 1904”. [*Chernihiv Region...*].

Under school's policies and procedures maximum number of students could reach 30, however if school could have provided required teaching aids and facilities, enrollment might have increased, yet maximum class capacity should not have exceeded 20. Boys aged 14 or older of all social ranks and any religion were admitted to the school. Applicants must have completed a single-grade rural school under the National Ministry of Education or should have success-

fully passed entrance examinations and were physically fit to accomplish all practical assignments, outlined by the school curriculum.

School had a three-year curriculum with 3 grades. One extra year was allocated for practical training and then students were awarded a certificate of graduation.

Gardening workshops, farming, fruit and vegetable processing, beekeeping, handicraft workshops related to gardening i.e. joinery and basket manufacturing were major foundations of school curriculum, including all general education and special courses.

School had accepted 171 students from 1898 till 1906, and after 10 years of its functioning number went up to 181. Full educational program was accomplished by 53 students in 1906 and 61 in 1908 [*Chernihiv Region...*]. In January, 1908 school had 40 students enrolled.

On November 30th 1891 a new 1st degree school of agriculture and handicraft was established in Shchastnivka village of Kozeletskiy district, Chernihiv province. School was named „**Maynivska**” in honour of landlady and colonel’s widow Oleksandra Maynova [*Maynovkaya...* 1914: 1].

School granted scholarships to 20 students, others either had to pay annual fee of rubles 50 or work on school’s premises. Working students were provided with food from the farm. School had a four-year curriculum, being divided into 4 grades. Three grades were considered special and one preparatory. Applicants of all social ranks aged 13 were admitted to preparatory class and aged 14 could be admitted to the school.

Latvian and Estonian applicants from Ostzeiska province had demonstrated strong eagerness to enter the school, therefore school Council gradually increased student quota to 83 people in 1904–1905.

On August 1st, 1911 Maynivska school was transformed into College of Agriculture based on Act of Agricultural Education dated May 26th 1904.

Lyudmylynska Ladies School of Home Economics and Homestead Farming had been founded by landlord Pavel Stepanovich Korobka on June 1st 1903 and opened on November 2nd 1903 in Mryn town, Nizhynskiyi district, Chernihiv province [*Lyudmylynska...* 1906: 19]. Pavel Stepanovich was honorary school guardian since its opening.

School was named „Lyudmylynska” in honour of P. Korobka’s mother. It was located in a park and occupied 20 dessiatyna of land. Land was split into plots the following way: 4 dessiatyna were allocated to orchard and berry bushes; 4 – to kitchen garden, 4 – to the park, 2 – to buildings and yards, the remaining was used for hay and root crops planting.

The goal of the school was „to convey home economics and homestead farming knowledge, required to run the household on adequate level” [*Lyudmylynska...* 1906: 1]. The school had a total capacity of 60 students, 30 of them could live on the premises. Girls of all religions and social ranks aged 16 or

older, who had primary school education could be enrolled in the school. Fee for interns varied depending on their school entrance contract.

As of January 1st 1906 school had three full classes with total of 23 students, having 8 students in the 1st class, 9 in the 2nd and 6 in the 3rd one [*Lyudmylynska...* 1906: 5].

Education was free of cost, therefore students, who didn't live on school premises, didn't have to pay anything. A fee for accommodation on premises was rubles 100 per annum, excluding linen and dresses and rubles 130 for full board.

School subjects included the Law of the Lord, the Russian language, Arithmetic and Practical Geometry, Science, basic physiology of flora and fauna, gardening and farming, practical classes in orchard and farm arrangements, introduction to growing vegetables, flowers and some wild plants; care after farm animals, practical classes in poultry, swine and sheep breeding; cattle, feeding up livestock and poultry; dairy husbandry, beekeeping; accounting and business correspondence; home economics; needlework; hygiene and first aid [*Lyudmylynska...* 1906: 20].

Lyudmylynska School had been operating in years 1903–1911 and was re-organized into Ladies Teachers Training 4-grades seminary in 1911. It trained primary school teachers and functioned until 1920.

Slobidska female school of home economics and dairy husbandry opened in May 1900 in Sloboda village, Chernihiv district. All 26 students were pupils Chernihiv orphanage [*Chernihiv province...* 1901]. Educational process was based on students' involvement in self-service, taking shifts at various sites, hence they learned to process dairy products, cook, wash and iron linen, clean their rooms. Students studied dairy husbandry, household chores and in particular accounting, business correspondence, kitchen and laundry work, poultry and swine keeping [*Chernihiv province...* 1901: 100–101].

On July 1st, 1904 Slobidska school functioning was temporary suspended by province council until further notice from General province authority. School had total of 7 students on the roll, therefore five of them were transferred to Lyudmylynska School and two continued their education at Chernihiv province council clerk's G. Baldovskiy family [*Chernihiv province...* 1904: 100–101].

Petrovska school for horticultural workers training was founded by M.P. Bek in his estate of Pavlivka hamlet, Glukhivskiy district and started operations on October 20th, 1903. School had 10 dessiatyna of land in its disposal. School mission was to train workers for horticultural work. Curriculum had 3 years and school accepted all boys with primary education aged 14.

School was sponsored by General Directorate of Land Planning and Agriculture with annual contribution of rubles 2500, Chernihiv province council – rubles 250, Glukhivskiy district council – rubles 250, therefore education and school procurement were free of charge. In 1908 school expenses reached rubles 3831.

Proper school operations and functioning were secured by three executives i.e. superintendent, assistant superintendent and catechist. Superintendent of the

school taught general subjects, such as Arithmetic, the Russian Language, Botany, Basics of Land cultivation, Drawing, as well as specialist subjects like bee-keeping and gardening. Superintendent's assistant taught farming, greenhouse gardening, forest management and arts.

As of September 1908 school had 16 students. 7 of them were in the 1st class, 4 were in the 2nd, and 3 were in the 3rd. 14 students came from farmer's families of Glukhivskiy district, 1 was from Gorodnyanskiy district and 1 was from Novgorod Siverskiy district.

There was no date stipulated for the start of the academic year and theory lessons. Usually classes commenced in autumn after completion of garden work and ended with the beginning of new season's garden work. For instance in 1908 classes started on January 10th and finished on February 10th. Afterwards, summer practical training followed, so classes resumed on October 1st till December 15th.

Schools were of paramount importance in primary agricultural education development and manpower training in Chernihiv province in late 19th and early 20th century.

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Abstract

This article provides a brief analysis of the first primary schools of agriculture in Chernihiv province in late 19th and early 20th century.

Key words: Chernihiv province, schools of agriculture, late 19th-early 20th century.