

Pine Cones Keep Students In College



(Barnes, Amherst)

Crew of Students at Work on Reforestation Project

Amherst, May 20—As the result of an idea which came to Charles A. Andrews, treasurer of Amherst college, while out gathering pine cones last fall, 28 or 40 students of the college were enabled to continue with their studies, instead of having to give them up because of financial difficulties. The college is now in possession of a cleared and reforested tract of land which promises to be an interesting and valuable addition to the campus holdings.

The fact that others were several students whose days in college were numbered, due to the prevailing economic disturbance, unless something was done about it, and that quickly, was worrying the authorities a great deal. Mr Andrews, whose job as treasurer brought him into close contact with such serious problems, and whose interest in the situation was intensified by his connections as an alumnus and trustee, had been looking around for some project which would yield employment for deserving students.

Mrs Andrews wanted some pine cones for the fireplace, so Mr Andrews thought they could easily be obtained by a walk through a woodlot which the college had bought some time before; also, he wanted to see just what that tract of land was like and what its possibilities were. The result of that little walk was a conservation and reforestation project, which gave employment to a large number of students and to several men sent in by the welfare committee of the town. As well, it provided about 60 cords of wood for families on the welfare lists and has given to the college a woodlot increased many times in value.

Project Authorized

After Mr Andrews conceived the idea, the trustees of the college authorized the project, the work was organized, a foreman employed and the boys were at work inside of one week. This was in early December. Prof Alfred S. Goodale of the department

of botany at the college was put in charge of all conservation work. His expert knowledge of plants, timber and forestry problems in general made him the logical choice of the administration for such a position. The thinning, cutting and pruning were done then, under expert supervision. Walter Markert, who has been associated with Prof Goodale for some years and has made a number of field trips with him, was his chief aid and was on the job all the time supervising the day-to-day labor.

Each student employed on the project worked three afternoons a week. A number of men, recommended by the emergency welfare committee of the town were put on the job, working chiefly at hours when students were not available. About 60 cords of wood were cut by men on the welfare lists and the corded wood was their pay. Only such wood as Prof Goodale had marked for cutting was used for this purpose. After the cleaning process had been completed, 4000 forest seedlings were set. The seedlings, which were mostly native evergreens, were obtained from the state department of agriculture.

Bought Some Years Ago

This 40-acre tract was purchased by the college some years ago, along with considerable land bordering the east side of the college property, merely as a protection from unsightly or noisy industry which might get possession of it. It is bordered on the east by Southeast street, south of the Belchertown road.

Some of the ground is high and dry, while part of it is semi-swamp land, so that most plants and botanical specimens could be made to live in its confines, and Mr Andrews looks forward to the time when it will serve the college as a botanical workshop. Twenty years from now, he says, it ought to be a place of interest worth miles of travel to inspect. But first of all it has served the college in a

crisis. And it probably stands as one of the most complete "depression" projects undertaken in the state, having been begun, carried on with unremitting expert supervision, finished within the time available to its workers, and without sacrifice in value to its owners.

*Springfield Union
and Republican*

May 20,

1933