



The Farm on the North Talbot Road

Allan G. Bogue

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As the family farm of yesterday steadily loses ground to the corporate farm of tomorrow, pundits and plain folks alike bemoan the loss of the homely, down-to-earth rural life that few actually know or remember anymore. Allan G. Bogue is a notable exception. A legendary agricultural, political, and economic historian, and one of only three historians ever elected to the National Academy of Sciences, Bogue has for the last fifty years written about the political and economic forces shaping agriculture. And he himself has roots in the family farm—roots he traces in this memoir that is both a thoughtful tribute to the tradition that nurtured him and North America and an authentic, unsentimental portrait of the hard life that most have abandoned.

Through descriptions of neighborly good will, adverse climate, charismatic family relations, and the seasonal tasks demanded by dairy farming, Bogue imparts the rhythms of growing up in rural Ontario in the early years of the twentieth century. Tracing the family's fortunes through the ups and downs of the economy in the 1920s and 1930s, he draws an absorbing picture of how they and their neighbors farmed, the crops they raised, the livestock they kept, the technology they used, and the stresses, strains, frustrations, sadness, joy, and triumphs they experienced. Firsthand history of a rare and moving sort, his book is at once an elegy for a disappearing way of life and a deftly realized, meticulously reconstructed chapter of North American history.

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