DR. JOHANNES BOUMA AND TEN YEARS: AN APPRECIATION

I have a picture of Johannes Bouma taken in my office in the autumn of 1964, on the eve of his departure for Wageningen, The Netherlands after completing 6 months of soil survey experience abroad, as required by his University. Behind Johann, the picture shows a mock-up of the Wisconsin State Soil Map, then in the final stages of preparation. Soon after that map was published (1968), Johann completed his doctorate at Wageningen, and was responding encouragingly to my letters asking if he could arrange to come to work for the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey’s Soil Survey Division. He did come in 1969 and has been with the University of Wisconsin for 6 years. In view of Johann’s work in Wisconsin, in the North Central Region and on a national scale, it is time for a note of appreciation. He accepted a research position in the Soil Survey Institute in The Netherlands and left the U.S. in May, 1975.

I have another picture of Johann, his wife Marianne, and delightful children, Jetske (age 4) and Hans (age 2), taken in 1974 in the Bouma home. A lot of good soil scientific work has gone on during the 10-year interval between those two picture-takings. Not only has Johann effectively attacked problems of movement of liquid waste in soils of representative landscapes with energy, imagination, and a flair for both theory and practice, but he has been able to communicate with soil physicists, soil chemists, soil survey specialists, bacteriologists, hydrologists, public health people, engineers, economists, and sociologists. He would be the first to acknowledge with gratitude the fine support that made possible the growth of a modest program of hydraulic conductivity characterization of soil mapping units to a large-scale interdisciplinary, interagency, and interinstitutional program.

Those of us who have shared in the excitement of working with Johann can’t help but express our appreciation of his leadership during these 6 years. The solutions he found to problems are so simple and elegant that only a person of unusual gifts could have led us to them so quickly. I won’t enumerate his published papers and bulletins, but will say that they are well worth reading. I don’t see how he had time to serve as treasurer and contributor to Soil Survey Horizons.

Johann Bouma will continue to be active in our profession! Communications are good between the Soil Survey Institute in Wageningen and the U.S. He will be doing research on soil structure characterization with respect to plant growth. The emphasis will probably shift from investigations