A HISTORY OF

THE EXTENSION SERVICE

OF

IOWA STATE COLLEGE
PREFACE

The importance of agriculture and homemaking in Iowa, together with the interest now shown in adult education generally, would seem to indicate that it is worth while to publish a history of the Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics of Iowa State College. This is the state's largest and most active agency for the education of the adult farmer and homemaker. In 1930 it had a comprehensive program covering nineteen major fields of work; it maintained a personnel of 222 specialists and field workers; and its income from state and federal appropriations, and farm bureau membership fees totaled over one million dollars. Coöperating with farm groups in 1930, it held an average of 284 meetings each day of the year with a total daily attendance of 6,965.

Since "the very essence of extension service requires that a variety of relationships be established and maintained with both official and private organizations" (69, p. 498), it is necessary to include in this history more than the Extension Service alone. The United States Department of Agriculture, the Iowa State College, certain farm organizations, and extension activities in other states necessarily occupy considerable space.

Much valuable information and many important suggestions for preparing this history were obtained from personal interviews with such men as Herman Knapp, chairman of the College History Committee, and son of the second president of the College; P. G. Holden, the first head of the extension department of the College; R. K. Bliss, director of the Extension Service since 1914; Murl McDonald, assistant director and state leader of county agents; Paul C. Taff, assistant director and state leader of the 4-H club work; and F. C. Ensign, professor of the history of education of the State University of Iowa.

The most fruitful primary sources of information were the annual unpublished reports of the director of the Extension Service; the annual unpublished records and reports of the extension specialists; miscellaneous records and reports of the Extension Service staff; biennial reports of the Iowa State Board of Education; minutes of the meetings of the Iowa State Board of Education; annual reports of the Iowa State Agricultural
Society; Iowa Laws, Statutes, etc.; and the United States Statutes at Large.

The most fruitful secondary sources of information were Buck, Solon Justis, The Granger Movement; Kile, Orville Merton, The Farm Bureau Movement; Ross, E. D., "The First Iowa State Fair, the Pioneer Period," The Palimpsest; Smith, C. B., and Wilson, M. C., The Agricultural Extension System of the United States; True, A. C., A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States; and U. S. Office of Education, Survey of Land Grant Colleges and Universities. Vol. II.

The original manuscript from which this history has been taken was prepared as a doctor’s dissertation at the University of Iowa. It is one of a series of studies in adult education directed by Dr. C. L. Robbins of the College of Education. To Dr. Robbins the author is deeply indebted.

The author wishes to express his appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered by R. M. Hughes, President of Iowa State College, and by W. H. Lancelot, head of the Department of Vocational Education.
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