

8/3/25

Agriculture

Extension Service

William G. Kammlade Papers, 1972

May 30, 1972

Tape recorded interview - one reel, 1201' at 3/4 IPS

1-4 Identification of tape.

12-27 Davenport comments on historical records. Eugene Davenport, dean of the College of Agriculture, would say in class that if "civilization ever perishes it will be smothered to death by its own records."

28-30 Son teaches agriculture. Although Kammlade tried to dissuade him, his son entered the field of agriculture and teaches at Southern Illinois University.

31-55 Interest in animal husbandry related to farm background. Kammlade's father was a farmer in western Wisconsin who raised about 400 pigs a year and milked between 20 to 25 cows. Kammlade entered the University of Wisconsin with the idea of majoring in dairy production work. While working on a farm during the summer he milked 35 Jersey cows in one evening. His hands became so swollen he decided to change his interest to horses and horse production.

56-77 Interest in horses brought Kammlade to Illinois. The assistant in the horse division left the University of Illinois in 1915. Professor Herbert W. Mumford sent a telegraph in June asking Kammlade to come to Urbana. Professors Mumford and James L. Edmonds interviewed him. In September Kammlade joined the university staff as an assistant in horse production (half-time) at a salary of \$41.66 a month. In 1916 the college promoted him to full time at double the salary.

78-103 Prepared horse skeleton. The Stock Judging Pavilion now houses the skeleton of a mare imported from France, and winner at the Illinois State Fair. When the horse died Kammlade did all the unpleasant work involved in making a skeleton to use as a teaching aid to show students. This was a "concrete contribution to animal husbandry" at the University of Illinois. In 1925 Kammlade's assistant fixed up the skeleton of a sheep.

104-121 Military Service. Kammlade enlisted in the army in 1917 and served as a 2nd Lt. for 14 months in France. He reported to Colonel Wilson at the Central Medical Laboratory. Although he had no experience and did not particularly like the work, Kammlade headed the photographic laboratory.

122-128 Returned to Illinois in 1919. Kammlade received a letter from Mumford saying that his job was available after the war. Kammlade decided to return only if his salary was \$1500. Mumford floored him by offering \$1800.

- 129-138 Entered field of sheep production. Professor Walter C. Coffey's assistant in sheep husbandry left in 1919 so Coffey asked if Kammlade would help him. Coffey himself left in 1921 and Kammlade "fell into the job."
- 139-149 Davenport's major interest was "thremmatology" or breeding. Davenport wrote a good book on animal genetics and livestock breeding. Kammlade said Davenport was a good teacher and went to Brazil before 1900 on a kind of foreign assistance visit.
- 150-166 Publications. Kammlade's first two publications concerned the raising of fillies and feeding draft horses. They were circulars of the College of Agriculture. He later wrote two circulars on sheep production and revised Coffey's book on Productive Sheep Husbandry. After World War II Kammlade wrote his own book on sheep husbandry and participated as co-author in two other books. More than any other form of writing during his teaching career, Kammlade wrote articles for the National Wool Grower, and some for the Prairie Farmer.
- 167-227 College acquired land for Dixon Springs Experiment Station. Henry Wallace and Rex Tugwell in the Depression of the 1930's thought farmers in southern Illinois should be retired and a national forest established. Back in Davenport's time a man named Snow from Vienna, Illinois, wrote the University saying that southern farmers needed help. A college advisory committee said the college would take action when money was available. Talk of a national forest led Dean Mumford to think that the University could get some land cheap for a demonstration farm. At his suggestion Henry P. Rusk, W. L. Burlison and Kammlade drove to southern Illinois and spent three days seeking a good location. They decided that one section of land would be enough. Rusk asked Henry Wallace for three sections with the expectation of receiving one. Wallace proved very generous and gave 16,000 acres.
- 228-245 History of Dixon Springs. At the request of the Dixon Springs Station and for something to do in retirement, Kammlade wrote a history of the station. One publisher returned the manuscript, which is now under consideration by the S.I.U. press.
- 246-286 Establishment of Dixon Springs. The University had land at Dixon Springs. Professor Henry P. Rusk, head of animal husbandry, asked Kammlade to get the work started. He spent 10 weeks there in the spring of 1935 dealing with federal agencies and arguing with university faculty who said the station was too far away from Urbana. Kammlade said the people in southern Illinois needed help. In 1939 when Rusk became dean of the college he appointed Kammlade chairman of the Dixon Springs station. The position carried "more pity than prestige" as far as the

faculty were concerned. Kammlade told Rusk that in 10 years Dixon Springs would be the most talked of part of the college. The prediction came true, but only because Kammlade considered Dixon Springs a "service institution to help farmers and not a vehicle for prestige." It gained the confidence of local farmers.

- 287-341 Mistake at Dixon Springs cost confidence of farmers. The first superintendent sheared 1500 sheep during the middle of April and did not protect them from the elements. On April 15 it snowed and 212 sheep died. Snow wrote Rusk and said the station might as well close because the sheep incident cost the confidence of local people. Kammlade brought in a new superintendent, R. J. Webb, and he did a great job.
- 342-364 Start in extension work. Shortly after coming to Illinois Kammlade was sent to talk to Farmers' Institute groups in the western part of the state. People thought he did a "reasonably good job talking" so he got invited to more meetings. Some meetings were not very satisfying. Three speakers were on the program at one and only five people attended.
- 365-433 Became state leader of farm advisors. When J. C. Spitler retired in 1949 and the college needed a new associate director and leader of farm advisors, Rusk asked Kammlade. Kammlade never dreamed of becoming an administrator in extension work and did not want the job. Rusk asked him because the man first recommended by the college was not approved by President George D. Stoddard because of the delay of one year the man wanted before taking the job. Kammlade tried to take the easy way out and asked for a salary he thought he could not get, but Rusk had no objections. He finally took the job on the bases that he be allowed to retain his title of professor of animal science so he had a refuge if he did not like the job as state leader.
- 434-465 High lights of career in agriculture. The greatest high light was the establishment and development of the Dixon Springs station, and the work done there to improve agriculture. Through research at the station men found that by following what was learned about soil fertility and productivity farmers could produce as much beef per acre on poor land in southern Illinois as they could on the highest price land in Champaign County. In 1935 farmers in southern Illinois had yields of only 3 1/2 bushels of soybeans and 13 bushels of corn per acre. Now they are not satisfied unless getting over 40 bushels of beans and 150 to 200 bushels of corn. This shows dramatic improvement.
- 466-548 High light of extension service career. The establishment of 4-H club work in the city of Chicago was most unique and rewarding, although it has not grown to the

extent Kammlade hoped. The work started when in Chicago Kammlade met Guy Noble, director of the National 4-H Club committee, which was a group of businessmen that supported extension work. Noble asked if the University extension service would accept a gift of \$10,000 a year for 5 years to establish 4-H club work in Chicago. Kammlade said yes and the Board of Trustees later officially accepted the gift for the University. Kammlade hired L. J. Beaver and his wife to head the work in Chicago. They are now completing their 15th year. Oscar Johnson, one of the club members from the worst ghetto, was chosen one of the 5 outstanding members in the country.

- 549-555 Relationship of the IAA and Farm Bureau. When you join a local farm bureau you also become a member of the Illinois Agricultural Association. Part of the local membership fee is paid to the IAA.
- 556-602 Early relationship between the College of Agriculture and the USDA under Davenport. In 1914 the USDA asked all colleges to enter into an agreement regarding joint extension service, and Illinois signed. Next year Davenport recommended that President Edmund J. James ask the Board of Trustees to abolish the agreement and it did. The agreement was never signed again until after Kammlade retired in 1960. There was never "the most cordial relationship between the College of Agriculture and the USDA" because Davenport would not agree to the USDA directing what was done in Illinois. During World War I, for example, Davenport insisted that farmers must organize themselves at the local level and establish a local organization to support extension work. He wanted the organizations to provide office space for farm advisors, secretarial help, travel expenses and part of the farm advisor's salary.
- 603-641 True-Howard agreement and encouragement of cooperatives. In 1920 A. C. True of the USDA and Farm Bureau president James R. Howard reached the True-Howard agreement. It was agreed that extension service personnel would not solicit membership in the farm bureau, but they would help advise and strengthen cooperative organizations. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 encouraged the extension service to help cooperative enterprises. The College of Agriculture, therefore, became associated with the early formation of cooperatives in Illinois. In 1921 the IAA asked Professor Mumford to study the advisability of stock commission companies selling livestock for farmers in markets like Chicago and St. Louis. Eventually this led to the Producers' Livestock Commission Associations which were connected with the farm bureau.
- 642-667 Defeat of the Granger Bill. The real effort to separate the extension service from any relationship with the farm bureaus came at about the time Kammlade became state leader. Granger, a congressman from Utah, introduced a bill in Congress calling for

separation. Kammlade testified in Washington, D. C. against the bill. It was defeated on the basis of a statement in the Smith-Lever Act that support for extension may come from federal, state and county governments, agricultural colleges, individuals and organizations.

- 668-790 Illinois circumvented Memorandum 1368. In 1954 Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson issued Memorandum 1368. It stated that farm bureaus could not contribute to the salaries of farm advisors or any USDA employee. Benson sent it to IAA president Charles B. Shuman. Kammlade felt it should have been sent instead to the extension service. Everyone assumed this was the end of the extension service-farm bureau relationship. Louis B. Howard, dean of the College of Agriculture, thought some action to separate was required, but Kammlade said he would do nothing. If the extension service and farm bureau were separated, Kammlade said the college could look for a new man. Shuman, Howard, Kammlade and others met. Kammlade decided to have local bureaus send their money to the College of Agriculture. Benson could not stop the university from accepting money from any body and then it would spend the money for the same purpose as the bureaus. The University Legal Counsel said the plan was subterfuge; Kammlade answered that it was effective. Kammlade knew things would change after he retired, because he was the last of the "Davenport Era."
- 791-837 Farmers' Union and Grange. Around 1940 the extension service made a study in Grundy County of the people who came to the local farm advisor with questions. Over 30% were not farm bureau members. University legal people told a farm bureau cooperative in Fayette County that it had to do 50% of its business with non-farm bureau people. The president of the Farmers' Union came to Kammlade's office and said his group was going to separate the extension service and the farm bureau. Kammlade doubted it could be done because the relationship was voluntary. The extension service had friendly relations with the Grange. Kammlade spoke at Grange meetings.
- 838-859 Relationship between extension service and College of Agriculture. A unique situation existed at Illinois. Extension workers on the college level were members of the departments they represented, such as animal husbandry. They knew every experiment at the station. Davenport put extension service people in as members of a department.
- 860-910 Qualifications for farm advisors. No one could be a farm advisor until he graduated from an agricultural college and spent 5 years in activities relating to agricultural education, practical farming or cooperative work. One could become an assistant, however, directly upon graduation. The College of Agriculture approval committee always brought men to Urbana for interviews. Many applicants were turned down

because they did not have the qualifications, experience, personality or desire to be of service. People from the USDA and other states said Illinois had excellent advisors.

- 911-936 Assistant farm advisors. Assistants served a type of internship. Some never became advisors, but a good many did. The Woodford County farm bureau council wanted an old assistant to take over when the advisor retired. Kammlade moved the assistant from southern Illinois back to Woodford as the farm advisor.
- 937-979 Impact of the depression. Everyone received salary cuts. "A dedicated person will work regardless of what his salary is." Kammlade often worked 6 or 7 days a week. Many farmers went bankrupt. It was a horrible business. The College of Agriculture was not immune to budget cuts. Isabel Bevier, the head of Home Economics, said you had to do without.
- 980-1013 Introducing agricultural innovations. People are not all alike. Some are more progressive or innovative. Some farmers right on the edge of the Dixon Springs station did not adopt a thing, yet 10,000 people a year would visit the station and adopt changes.
- 1014-1022 Extension service tried to reach all farmers. "We reached anyone that would listen." Extension service personnel visited farms, local meetings and individual farmers.
- 1023-1044 Speaking engagements throughout Illinois. Kammlade spoke in every county in the state. Sometimes at large meetings 3 or 4 men would speak. Kammlade appeared at Rotary Clubs and church meetings, where he would tell of the sheep herders interpretation of the 23rd Psalm.
- 1045-1071 Administrative structure at the College of Agriculture. Kammlade was the subordinate of the director of the extension service. Davenport was dean of the college, director of the experiment station and director of the extension service, and he had associate directors. This arrangement continued through Kammlade's tenure. Louis B. Howard was dean when Kammlade retired.
- 1072-1086 Served under six deans. Kammlade served under six deans of the College of Agriculture from Eugene Davenport to Louis B. Howard.
- 1087-1112 Served under eight University presidents. President David D. Henry said he spent more of his first three months at Illinois studying agricultural extension than any other topic. Kammlade served under eight presidents from Edmund J. James to David D. Henry.

- 1113-1153 Most important men in Illinois agricultural development. Kammlade included Eugene Davenport, Cyril G. Hopkins and Herbert W. Mumford from the college. Frank I. Mann from Gilman was important. People in the old days were more willing to listen to Mann than to people from the university, although Mann received his training at Illinois. Kammlade also cited Ralph Allen, Henry Parke and Alfred N. Abbott.
- 1154-1210 Poor land farm of Hopkins. Many ridicule him now, but Cyril G. Hopkins pioneered significant developments in Illinois agriculture. His system was soil fertility and permanent agriculture. It is the basis for what we see in Illinois today. It might not have worked elsewhere but it worked here. Limestone or phosphate as advocated by Hopkins is still a basic ingredient, although it is now applied in different forms.