

Home Sept 15, 1955

Dear Arthur

So you wish me to write down some of my experiences covering thirty years of attention service. That's quite an order, but if a record of those incidents and a note of those years and some comments on them can be of any help to you, I'll see what I can do.

I have been sitting here with pen poised, while the ink dried, thinking back through the years and trying to decide how to be gone. These thirty years in Iowa, Mexico, Illinois, have led me to adopt for myself a five pointed program for progress. Like a five pointed star, each point of which is equal to the others, ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> program does point toward the goal of higher attainment.

The five points to this program are  
 ① research, ② education, ③ application, ④ measure of performance, ⑤ distribution.

Research, search for the truth, the discovery of the laws that determine how nature works - how people behave as they do. - Research is back of progress.

Education, the teaching of the laws that govern plant life, animal life, human life. Education of many people so that the chance of finding <sup>and developing the hidden, latent talents of</sup> the exceptional individual is great. This too is essential to progress.

Application, the organized applica



of the laws of life, learned through patient research and taught to as many as possible. This is, to my mind, a vital part of extension work. Surely it is one of the five points of the Star of Progress. The attitude, taken by ~~many~~ <sup>many</sup>, that progress can best be made by the state employing a few men, who, after they have discovered certain laws, make application of those laws and later distribute the product or plan of work to the people is not the most rapid nor <sup>will it lead to</sup> the most effective limit of progress. It leaves out of account the fact that among a hundred, or a thousand or ten thousand individuals who might be induced to apply the laws learned by the research worker there are almost sure to be those who will do a more effective job than the few men who might be employed for the purpose are capable of doing.

Measure of Performance. This follows, as an essential part of the program, the organized application of the laws of life learned through research, taught to many people and applied by many through organized effort. This too is the extension worker's job. ~~because~~ The application must be made by folks in real life on the farms and in the villages. ~~and~~ The measure of their success must be



made, in most cases, on their farms by the extension worker.

Distribution. Distribution of the product or plan of work that proves most valuable is the final point to this five pointed star of progress.

It seems to me that the high spot in an extension workers life comes when he sees the general distribution of an idea or of a product that has been developed by one of many who have been taught the principles that govern the development of the idea or product.

Some such satisfaction has come to me the past week as I have helped to direct farm management tours to farms of a few men who have done particularly good work in some one or more phases of farm management. We visited fifteen of the farms that have been in the farm management services for ten years. What fine work some of those men are doing! Rowland Tucker, Louis Wadsworth and Charley Smith are among those who are doing some particularly good work.

If you do enter the extension field in Indiaa, I can look ahead, in imagination, over a third of a century of your work and see a better fed, more healthy, more debt free people because of the operation of such a five pointed program among the village people.



Well, I think that I had better let that be the introduction. I am not sure how I can best record some of the things that you ask for. I think that I will do the easy thing and begin at the beginning and tell of my experiences through the years. With the experiences, I shall try to work in some of the ideas and ideals that the experiences have brought forth.

The beginning of my <sup>life of</sup> extension work probably goes back to the time when, as a boy of 10 to 15 years of age, I sat on the wood box in a neighboring farmer's kitchen and listened to my father and uncle and the other men of the neighborhood <sup>at their farmers club meetings</sup> discuss <sup>various</sup> problems of farming or of farm life. It may have started those years as I attended some farmers' institute or livestock association meeting or pure bred livestock sale and listened to such men as Uncle Henry Wallace, grandfather of the present Secretary of Agriculture; "Tama Jim" Wilson, for sixteen years Secretary of Agriculture; Col. Judy or Col. Wood, old time livestock auctioneers, as they discussed the problems of the day. I can look back and see myself a rapt listener at the meetings and as I discussed the questions with my father. I know now that it was a fine experience for a boy to have. I thank my father for the opportunities. (To be continued) Bye Love 20



Home, Sept 22, 1935

Dear Arthur:

We enjoyed your last letter in which you told several things about your routine work and plans for the holiday periods ahead. It is good to be busy.

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Extension Memories, continued.

I wrote last weeks of some boyhood experiences that probably influenced me somewhat towards extension work. One incident of those days always comes to mind as I look back. One night session of a well attended farmers meeting, one of the big men from Ames had been advertised as the main attraction of the program. He came and what did he do but read in a slow monotone a long story about John and Mary! If the story had any point, it has long gone from memory. I happened to be sitting that night - as boys happen to do such things - beside a colored man from Ames by the name of Carver who was on the program for a talk on flowers. Dr Carver has been for many years one of the head men at Tuspegee. He it is who has been credited with being a wizard in chemistry of the sweet potato. I can remember yet how he rolled in his chair in glee, over behind the stove from the speaker, as he watched the "big" man from Ames make a perfect chump of himself by his dry, pointless story.



I learned a lesson that night that has always stayed with me. When an extension worker goes into a community, people expect some definite information or inspiration. They are not satisfied to have any one, - regardless of how well he may be known - use them for an opportunity to work off some pet story, or hobby, or idea of his own. I remember yet how a neighboring farmer laughed the next morning about that "Chump from Ames with his John and Mary story" as I walked passed the lot where he was feeding sheep as I was on my way to school. That incident, when I was about fourteen years of age, has always stayed with me.

Another incident of those boyhood days that had ~~its lesson~~ <sup>a suggestion</sup> that has lived through the years was connected with one of the pure bred livestock sales. Col. Wood, one of the old livestock auctioneers was delivering one of his usual orations at the opening of the two day sale. As a young lad, I was an interested listener perched up on the top plank of the sales barn seats. "Always remember, my good friends," he said, "that the road to successful farming is the road taken by the cow, the sow and the hen. Stay with them and they will stay with them." Thirty-five years later I was to hear the same as a new idea by an organizer



of 20 operative creameries as he urged his listeners to "bank on the cow, the sow and the little red hen"

The careful study of the farm management records of the past ten years ~~has~~ led me to know that the old auctioneer was giving sound advice when he urged those doubtful farmers of the ~~mid~~ <sup>mid</sup> 90's to stick to the cow, the sow, and the hen. It is still good advice. I know of none better.

Another incident of those sales made a lasting impression. It was a cattle sale. A fine big Shorthorn bull was led into the ring by the owner. Among other good points about the bull, the owner was telling how gentle he was. "Why," he said, "many a time when I lead him out to water, I put my little girl up on his back and he doesn't pay any attention to her". The old auctioneer had hardly let the man finish his statement until he began such a verbal lambasting of him as it has rarely been my privilege to hear. He told him that it was criminal to allow a child to have anything to do with such an animal, regardless of how gentle he might seem.

It was a good lesson. An extension worker, occasionally misses an opportunity to drive home a lesson if he fails to rebuke one for an obvious error or call attention to a vital mistake. It is most difficult and should rarely



done. — Well it is bed time, I am going  
out with Mr Cunningham in the morning  
for a week of tours.

Bye Love Dad.



Honolulu, Oct. 6, 1935

Dear Arthur:

Two weeks ago I finished a section of Extension memories by stating that I was going out the next day for a week of Extension Tours with Mr. Cunningham. With that week, I finished what I expect may have been one of the most fruitful <sup>months</sup> of my extension career. It included the ten year Good Farming Meeting at Normal ~~and~~ with an attendance of 400 interested people and nine tours with a total attendance of about 500. I'll be sending to you some of the reports based on 3 years work on 150 farms and on 10 years on 57 farms in the near future.

My first extension meeting came during what I think must have been my sophomore year in college. It may have been during my junior year. I was asked to tell those in attendance at the annual meeting of the American Poland China Record Association about "How they Raise Hogs at the Iowa State College." The meeting was at Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The secretary, Wm. McFadden was an old neighbor at Edgewood and my father had helped him report the annual meetings for many years. Up to that time, about 1903, not many farm boys had gone to the Agricultural College and they thought it would be a nice thing to have "Lem Mosher's boy who was in school at Ames" tell about hogs at Ames.



It was a nice thing for them to do, but I fear that they were not much the wiser about raising hogs at the Iowa State College. I talked from notes and my "address" was taken down by a stenographer. She must have had a job! When the copy came to me for correction for use in the printed proceedings of the meeting, I had as much of a job getting it into shape as it would have been to write it in the first place. That is what I should have done. In addition, I should have taken it to my instructor in Animal Husbandry for his suggestions.

My real entrance into the extension work came in my senior year during February, March and April when I spent ten weeks on a "seed corn train". The train carried two lecture coaches. It traversed every main line of railroad in Iowa. Lectures were given ~~at~~ in about 600 towns. From ten to fifteen stops were made each day. We aimed to have four lecturers on the train. Two would talk at each stop and sometimes an overflow meeting would be held in the depot.

M. L. Wilson, <sup>now assistant Secretary of Agriculture</sup> and I were on the train all ten weeks. Prof. P. G. Holden was along most of the time. Several others were on for from one to four weeks each. I kept a rather complete record of attendance at all stops and made note of interesting incidents.

Out of paper - Continued next week.

By Love Dad



Home, Jan 5, 1936

Dear Arthur

Extension Memories - continued.

It is exactly three months to-morrow that I wrote the last instalment of Extension Memories. How fast time passes! I have been looking through my old files to-day. I found ~~the~~ a copy of the "Proceedings of the American Poland-China Record Company" which includes the stenographic copy of my talk and answers to questions to which I referred in my last letter. The meeting was at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the afternoon of February 10, 1904.

My father had been active in the work of the association and it was really a nice thing for the Secretary, who had grown up on <sup>a farm</sup> ~~an~~ adjoining ~~farm~~ Edgewood, to ask me to tell them "How Hogs are Raised and Studied at the Agricultural College". I did a fairly good job; better as I read it now than I thought then. I got "balled up" some by several questions. As I read again the proceedings of that meeting, my most keen feeling is that of appreciation for their having asked me to speak.

I found, too, the "notes taken on the Seed Corn Special" during the spring of 1905. The special started out on the Q. M. & N. P. R. R. on Monday, Feb. 13, 1905. The speakers were Prof. P. B. Holden, Mr. J. W. Jones, an assistant of Holden's, M. L. Wilson and I. Wilson was a junior and I a senior. He made his first talk at Kenwood, Iowa, on Feb. 14



and I made my first talk at Luton the next day. We lived on the train. It was at Algona, Thursday night, February 16<sup>th</sup> that I fell out of the upper berth. One of the men said at breakfast the next morning that it sounded like a side of fat pork hitting the floor. They joked me about it for weeks.

I see in my notes that at Indianapolis while we were running on the I. B. & O. R. R. "as the King Corn drops over ~~the~~ a picket fence". The railroad official in charge of the train had decorated it rather elaborately including a big paper mache' bust of King Corn. King corn was not well received by Prof. Holden who never did care for show and so the "king" was dropped over a picket fence into somebody's back yard. The railroad official was much provoked about the disappearance. King corn was recognized by someone and forwarded to a station ahead and reinstated later. Don't ask embarrassing questions about who kidnapped the king. The Asst Secy of Agriculture at present is not the only one who might shed light on the subject.

I find in the notes for Kirkman on March 9<sup>th</sup> where Jones and Mosher talked - "Old man with chin whiskers asks for Prof. Holden. Disgusted with the kid. Had to talk for forty five minutes."

There are many more notes that are of special interest to me as I look back over 31 years that has passed. I find that I talked 169 times during the spring. That was surely some train



It was a worthwhile project and I doubt not that it did much good.

I had an interesting time when I returned to Ames that spring of my senior year and tried to substitute about 30 hours of electives that I had above requirements for a 5 hour course in "Feeds and Feeding". Two others were in about the same fix. The head of An. Hus. was adamant. No, sir, he wouldn't graduate any student who had not passed up "Feeds and Feeding" (He was right.) So, we crammed for three weeks and he met us daily for a few days and then turned us over to an assistant. When the time came for the special examination for us and we went in fear, the assistant had "forgotten" all about it and had gone to a base ball game. We were given passing grades. It is of interest to me that the one who is scheduled to preside at the session of the Indiana Farm and Home Week at which I am to speak next week is the same man who, as the assistant, "forgot" and went to the ball game. I wonder if he remembers.

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We will look forward with old time interest to your letters. What a day that was for us in Indianapolis! I expect that I will look back upon it as one of the high spots of my life. It meant much to me to sit in that great conference of young people there to find their place in life and to realize that all of my children were there



and with three of you a part of it for the week. That dinner that you planned so nicely was a delight to Mamma and me. It was fine to see you with your Allahabad associates. I was particularly happy to meet and visit with Dr. Farman. I don't wonder that you like him. The young folks were all a fine lot.

I spent Friday at Geneva. Lawrence Smith and Louis Wadsworth were particularly interested in hearing of you.

We started off about 80 new cooperators in Livingston, McLean, Taywell and Woodford last week. They are the youngest group that we have ever started off. I am happy that that is true. The Hickem boy who played some football with you is one. He asked about you.

I have a busy week ahead preparing for three Farm and Home week talks.

I had a fine letter from Mr. Doane telling of his interest in your Chicago talk. He was apparently very favorably impressed. He wants to know more about some things that you apparently said regarding things I had told you.

I must close now and write to Luther.

Bye  
Love  
Dad



Home, Jan 12, 1936

Dear Arthur:

We were happy to have your letter telling of your safe arrival in New York and of your getting settled down to work. I am inclosing the statement of your finances. I think that you must have made both deposits of Nov. 14 and Nov. 23. I have no record of them. Mamma and I shall add another \$9.<sup>00</sup> to finish out the year of 1935. We are continuing this payment of \$1.<sup>50</sup> per week from our tythe. We are more glad than ever to have you use some of our missionary money since talking with you and learning of your attitudes towards the use of money.

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Extension Memories - Continued.

During that last year in college, I did considerable work in the Agronomy Department. When I graduated in June, I was offered a full time assistantship in Farm Crops laboratory at the princely salary of \$40 per month. I had a college debt of about \$800 and was able to pay off \$5.<sup>00</sup> per month. I passed up my teaching career with one semester in the Farm Crops laboratory. I had about 160 students mostly freshmen. Looking back on that year, I am sure that I enjoyed it. There is considerable satisfaction after these many



as I occasionally meet one of the fellows who was in that class. I think that I would have enjoyed college teaching. There must be a lot of satisfaction to the teacher who sees his students making good in later life.

However, it was that fall that Uncle Arthur's ailment was diagnosed as T B and he went west to Pooma, Colorado. Just at the beginning of the second semester his doctor advised me to come to him, which I did. The events and scenes of those days, thirty years ago now, are still vivid in my mind. I expect that the most vivid of all is of that night in a dimly lighted tent house that I had built in an orchard in a little valley on the western slope, with the brightest moonlight that I have ever seen lighting up the snow covered mountains, surrounded by a few neighbors who had befriended us. I said goodbye to the brother who had been my only boyhood chum and ~~my~~ the closest companion of my young manhood. I miss him yet after thirty years.

When I returned to Iowa, the doctors urged me to give up indoor work and to live in the open. Those events probably changed the whole plan of my life.

It was that year that the old house at Edgewood burned and that spring I stayed at home and helped as the new house was



with. I mixed the mortar and carried it to the old stone mason who built the cellar wall. My muscles almost ache now as I think of it.

When corn planting time came, Prof Halden wrote to learn if I could come and help them with the County Farm demonstrations with corn. It was outdoor work and my folks thought that I had better go. So I went back to Ames and began my career in extension. The Department of Agricultural

Extension was organized that summer and I was asked to help with the crops work. From that time until I went to Clinton County as county agricultural agent on Sept. 1, 1912, except for the 18 months spent in Mexico, I was largely responsible for the County Farm Demonstration work during nine months of the year and for helping with the travelling short courses during the winter.

As I look back on it, that County Farm <sup>and Short Course</sup> work was a valuable forerunner of Farm Bureau. The State Legislature had passed a law permitting any County Board of Supervisors to appropriate \$300 to be used for demonstrations conducted by the Extension Department on the County Farm. Considerable local interest was necessary in order to



induce County Boards to appropriate money for such purpose. I had some interesting days appearing before the County Boards in behalf of the work. However, I do not now remember any special incidents connected with that work.

Most of the demonstration work was with corn. Four types of work were developed. The most important was the Farmers' Variety Test. For this we would have interested men in the county drive through the country at <sup>early</sup> corn planting time and get a quart of seed corn from the planter-box whenever a man was found planting. From 60 to 100 of these were collected in each county. The samples were planted in small plots on the County farm.

In the fall, County fairs were held and folks would come to see the corn growing. Later on the plots were harvested and the yields computed.

The second type of work was known as the Introduced Variety Test. For this we would get samples of seed from the prize winners at the State Corn Show and would have farmers order samples from various seed houses. (That poor stuff some of those seed houses were selling in those days!)

A third project was the Individual Ear Test for which we would get 40 ears from each of



50, or three farmers and plant a part of each ear in a row by itself. The most of each ear was saved and shown at the Short Course in the County the following winter with the yield of corn that it produced. As I write this I have again a very vivid recollection of one lot of individual ears planted in Kassuth County near Algona the summer of 1906. A man named Peter Winkle had brought it in. It was a Pride of the North corn earlier than was commonly grown even there in the north edge of Iowa. Some ears produced well over 100 bushels per acre. While it was smaller, ~~it~~ it was the most like good King corn of any that I have ever seen.

The fourth project was one in thickness of planting.

The first of these County Farm demonstrations was conducted in Sioux County Iowa in 1903 under Prof. Holden's direction. It was there the summer of 1906 that I drove a strange horse into town one Saturday night and when I went back, drove off with the wrong horse. I can remember yet the giggling "hired girl" at the county farm who greeted me the next morning with the words, "We've got a good joke on you." They had, and it was many years before I heard the last of it.



I have just gone to my files and gotten out the copies of the unpublished manuscripts for four bulletins that I wrote the last summer before I left the work at Ames. Their title pages read as follows:

1. Comparative Value of Seed Corn Planted by Different Men. Summary of 71 experiments in 32 countries during 8 years in which 4516 samples were planted.

2. Imported and Seed House Seed Corn compared with Home Grown Seed. Results of 56 experiments in 29 countries during 7 years.

3. A Study of Single Ears of Seed Corn. Results of 144 tests in 32 countries during 6 years.

4. Thickness of Planting Corn. Summary of 127 experiments in 32 countries during 7 years.

I am sorry that these were never published. as I glance over them now, I realize that they were well worth publication.

That work was much worthwhile at the time and later developed into the work that led to the finding of the Studeman Corn in Clinton County, <sup>Iowa</sup> and the King Corn in Woodford County, Illinois. That is another long story.

Goodnight.

Love

Dad.



Sept 20, 1936.

So you would like for me to continue with my "Extension Memories" I had thought that perhaps you had had enough, but if you wish more you may remember that you are bringing it upon yourself.

Extension Memories - Continued

Then I glanced through what I wrote last fall and winter and came to the place where I told of the disappearance of "King Corn" from the C. B. & D. seed corn special. I am reminded of the visit to my office last summer of the C. B. & D. official who had been in charge of the train. We had a pleasant visit.

Those County Farm corn tests of which I wrote in my last installment were worth while. They created interest in good seed corn. We had some fine meetings in connection with them. We also learned much that was worth while.

Much of the practical side of testing seed corn for disease that was such an



important part of the Illinois Utility corn campaign we learned during those years under Prof. P. S. Holden's leadership. He didn't know much of the science of corn diseases but he did have a fine grasp of the practical.

Prof. Holden, the first director of the Department of Agricultural Extension in Iowa was an unusual man. He was a little man, but was a bundle of energy and filled with enthusiasm. He had an unusual ability to pick on some worthwhile idea and use it to interest people in worthwhile things. He used corn - seed corn - as a means to interest people <sup>in</sup> good living.

His influence on young people was incalculable. Every few months, I am in contact with some one who says that it was Prof. Holden's influence who started him on the road to a worthwhile life. I can hear him now, as I heard him almost hundreds of times as he urged young people to, "Do something and be somebody." I realize that I owe much to him.

That's all this time - more later

Bye Love Dad



Home, Oct 4, 1936

Dear Arthur and Alice Wynne.

First, may I congratulate you, Arthur, on your 26<sup>th</sup> birthday. I am well pleased with my oldest son. You may remember of my telling you boys once that every young man had three momentous decisions to make first, what he will do about religion and God; second, his choice of a life mate, and third his choice of a life work. I feel that you have decided wisely in all three.

We continue to enjoy the travelogue and find that it is giving pleasure to many others.

I was up to DeKalb last week to a Rural Young Peoples Conference. It was the first of a series of six district conferences. Charleston comes this week. I was asked to give that same talk on the Personal Qualities of Good Farmers. So I re-worked it, added three new qualities, and am using it again. I'll send you a copy.

### Extension Memories - Con.

Farm and Home Short Courses - During those early years of extension work, the short courses held in county seat towns, patterned after the short courses held at the Iowa State College, were very helpful. The idea of holding them did not originate with anyone at Ames, ~~but~~ Someone, I think an elderly man



living at Red Oak, Iowa, came to Prof. Holden and wanted to know if such a school could be held at Red Oak. Prof. Holden was always quick to accept a good idea from anyone (one of his good points) and said, "yes, if you will organize and get 100 farmers and 100 business and professional men of Red Oak to sign a request and a guarantee of the finances". This was done and, for years, that plan was followed.

I suspect that, sooner or later, nearly every county in Iowa was reached with one of those short course schools. They were rather thoroughly organized. As already stated, the first requirement was a petition and financial guarantee signed by both business men and farmers.

When the petition was granted, a short course organization was formed with officers and committees. Fees were charged and collected from those in attendance.

These short courses were really travelling schools. The crew consisted of two ladies to conduct the Home Ec. classes; two men to look after the Agr. Husb. classes and the carload of livestock that was taken along; two men to conduct the classes in corn and grain judging and soils, one



man to take care of the exhibit car; one man to judge the corn and small grain; one all-around flunky, and one advance man. The advance man would go nearly one week ahead and work with local committees to see that all arrangements were complete. Then he would stay long enough to help get started.

Registration was Monday morning with a general meeting at eleven o'clock. Classes would run from Monday noon until Friday evening. Examinations were given Saturday forenoon and a big auction of the prize winning corn was held Saturday afternoon.

Evening meetings were held with some special speakers and considerable house talent. An old-fashioned spelling school was usually held towards the end of the week.

My part was usually to lead one of the crops classes and help to judge the corn. The classes were divided into two equal size groups. Each group would spend a half of each half day with crops and half with livestock. This kept all instructors busy for six to eight hours per day. With the judging and night meetings it made long days.

Railroads cooperated by furnishing



three cars. One was what we used to call a palace stock car. It was an express car fitted up to haul horses. In this we took several good type animals of different kinds and breeds. A second car was a baggage car in which we moved our supplies, corn trays and all sorts of equipment. A third car was an old passenger car fitted up as an exhibit car. In this, we placed permanent exhibits of home equipment, specimens of weeds, and various educational exhibits. We would have this car spotted as near to the center of town as possible. It would be visited by many people. Special efforts <sup>were made</sup> to have it visited by the school children. It proved an excellent addition to the short course equipment.

Saturday evening, we would pack up, load our equipment, <sup>and</sup> move to the next week's location to be ready to begin the following Monday morning. For several years two such crews were out from the first of December until early March. Ten to twelve weeks with only a little break at Christmas was pretty strenuous. But it was excellent extension work. As I look back to those winters twenty-five to thirty years ago, I realize that much really effective work was done.

To be continued - Bye for Dad