

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE BULL ASSOCIATION

The Bull Association of the Oregon County Agents Association was organized at the time of the annual Extension Conference held in 1917. It's first objective was that of a fun group. It was hurriedly organized one afternoon by about 15 men, and a decision was made to initiate, that evening, two farmer members of the old Board of Regements. Namely: Walter Pierce, later governor of Oregon and Curt Hawley, a dairyman from Polk county. These were the first initiates. The ceremony was carried on with great gusto. According to the old-timers it was one of the highlights in the early happenings of the Bull Association. The place of the first meeting was in the Julian Hotel, then Corvallis' leading hotel.

Among the first members of the Bull Association were such funsters as Claude Cate, S. B. Hall, Roy Ward, Paul Spillman, Stanley Smith, Jay Smith, Pete Hardy, Roland Glaisyer. Marketing specialist, Frank Ballard was also initiated.

Claude Cate, Roy A. Ward and S. B. Hall made up the first initiation committee and are responsible for many of the ideas involved in the initiation ceremonies such as: drinking from the deep pool, presentation of the pass word, the sparrow story, branding, vaccination and last but far from least the taking of the picture.

Doc Allen was first official photographer and camera operator. How well we remember the expression on the mugs as they were taken by that famous camera. The first three years the organization was entirely built around a good time. Up until then only county agents were included as members with, as indicated, the one exception*Frank Ballard. In 1920 extension specialists, faculty members and special guests were admitted as steers.

As the organization grew in membership it became apparent that through it there was an opportunity for the field force to express their views in the development of the extension program. Therefore, the officers met with administrative staff and expressed their views relative to such matters as personnel selection and general policies. As an example, about this time County Agent Leader, Paul V. Maris, was under consideration.

The agents also learned that the late W. A. Lloyd of the Washington D. C. office was also a candidate. A committee from the Bull Association met with the late President Kerr and indicated their feeling that Maris, being an Oregonian, was better qualified for this assignment. It was reported that the Bull Association Committee, which visited with President Kerr, met with a cool reception. He indicated to them that he realized their great interest in this matter, but that the president was doing the appointing. However, subsequent developments proved that he listened. Later was formed the County Agents Association and the Bull Association remained as the fun group. From that time on, the coordination of thinking between the field and administrative staff has strengthened.

In 1917 Ira Gabrielson, specialist in predatory animal control for Oregon, and Claude Gate, County Agent of Jackson county, presented the impressive legend of the Sparrow for the first time. This story has impressed us all, old and young, throughout the years.

Many famous stories were told at banquet meetings of the Bull Association during those early days. Paul V. Maris, before he became director, would not approve of some of these and felt "county agent conferences should not be a clearing house for questionable stories."

At the initiation meeting in 1920 held in the Men's Gymnasium at Corvallis, there were but ten association members present to initiate a class of twenty new members. It looked for a while as though the initiates would take over. However, through the careful use of lock and key the members got the job done. At that session, initiate P. M. Brandt demonstrated the technique of noislessly placing the lid on the pot. Incidentally, the paraphernalia used in this demonstration later became the crown now worn occasionally by the Most Potent Bull.

At the 1923 annual meeting it was proposed that the organization adopt some sort of insignia which could be worn at annual conference time to distinguish the members of the extension staff from the professors and students on the campus.

Several proposals were made as to what this insignia should be. Such things as hats, sweaters, rings, coat lapel buttons, etc. were proposed. As this was a bull association, all such trivial suggestions were overthrown in favor of the now famous stockman's cane with its various markings with which all are familiar. The original cane committee appointed to procure and mark the first canes and set up the rules for their use were: S. B. Hall, O. T. McWhorter and H. A. Lindgren. Canes were carried at State Fair, Pacific International as well as Conference time. Later it was decided that they be carried only at Annual Conference.

In 1926, W. B. Cooney the county agent in Douglas county promoted a so-called state dinner for the association members. This took the place of the annual banquet. Each agent was requested to furnish a food product for which his county was famous. Everything from turkey, fish, fruits, nuts and ox tails were included. Sufficient food was brought in to provide for the sixty people at the banquet. When the banquet was over we paid \$3.50 per plate and were informed later that the Hotel Benton dining service had sufficient food from these contributions left over to serve their hotel guests for a week.

At the 1926 meeting it was decided to maintain a bull registration book for the association members. It was the intention that in this book there be kept a record giving essential details regarding activities of each member while he was connected with the extension service.

To the early members named in this report much credit is due for setting up one of the liveliest organizations of its kind in existence. It was built first on humor and sometimes that humor was rugged. It is felt that it has done much to create a closer bond of friendship among the members of the staff. Some of the older members have passed on, others engaged in other work, but wherever they are, those that live, recall the pleasant memories of the Bull Association activities.

These are brief notes of the early history of this organization. We are indebted to Claude Cate, Roy Ward, Paul Spillman, S. B. Hall and Frank Ballard for their help in bringing to memory some of these incidents which we trust will prove of interest to the organization.

Respectfully submitted -- H. A. Lindgren