

**University of Illinois Student Life and Culture Archives**

**Allen Recordings of Agricultural History (Part 6)**

**UI Centennial Project**

**Length: 01:03:21**

Unknown 1: This address of the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The date is Friday, July the 1<sup>st</sup>, 19[72?]. On Tuesday last, Ralph Allen, Delavan, Marvin Young, [St. Joseph?], and J.H. [Checkley?], Lincoln, joined me at lunch in the fairground cafeteria, after which we listened to a number of historical taped recordings which had been made by Ralph. Among these recordings was one made on September the 10th, 1955, in the Armory of Delavan. The occasion was the [dedication?] program memorializing the late James L. Reid, a Tazewell County farmer who developed the famous open pollinator, Reid's Yellow Dent corn. Following the program recorded by Ralph, those attending the program adjourned and reconvened at the marker which had been made ready on the old Peoria Springfield Road, now a modern black top, the right-of-way of which occupies a small part of the rich land. This marker is a large black boulder which the employee of the Delavan Farmers Elevator Company had moved from Boyden Township. Two bronze pipes had been bolted to the boulder. One will be described later by Dr. Kenyan Paing of the Michigan State College Corn Foundation. The other contains the names of the sponsoring organizations, the Tazewell County Farm Bureau, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors, the Delavan Community Council, the Illinois Department of Agriculture, the Illinois Seed Dealers Association, the College of Agriculture at the University of Illinois, and the Michigan State College Corn Foundation. This plaque was presented by Mr. William G. Kelly of the Kelly Seed Company, St. Joseph, Illinois. Mr. William J. Cooper, President of the Tazewell County Farm Bureau, presided at the meeting. The first teacher was Dr. R.W. Jugenheimer of the Department of Agronomy, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois. His subject was "James L. Reid and His Corn." The first two pages of Dr. Jugenheimer's speech were not recorded, so I add them here.

"We want to pay tribute to a famous man, James L. Reid, and to a great plant, corn. The American Indian gave us the corn plant. The recording history of this great crop began with the discovery of this country in 1492. Archaeological excavations and measures of radioactive decay

of old ears found in caves indicate that corn must have originated at least 6,000 years ago. Corn and man must depend upon one another. The plant is highly specialized and could not reproduce itself without the aid of man. The ear is specially constructed for producing high yields under man's protection. The crop, however, could not survive very long in nature. Food and part of the religious life of the Indians were furnished by corn. Corn aided in the settlement and development of a new world. It is by far the most important crop of American agriculture. Corn produces about twice the yield of wheat from one-eighth the amount of seed and one-half the time. In addition to providing feed for millions of livestock, corn provides the raw materials for more than 500 industrial products.

The story of Reid's Yellow Dent corn started in 1846 when Robert Reid, father of James, moved from Ohio to Delavan, Illinois. Like most pioneers, the Reid family brought their seed corn with them in their covered wagon. This variety was known in Brown County, Ohio as Gordon Hopkins corn. The Reid family arrived in Delavan quite late in the spring, but the seed was soon planted on land prepared by Uncle Daniel Reid. The late planting, however, had resulted in an immature crop. The better ears were selected for the next year's seed, and the stand of young plants was very poor. Consequently, the missing hills were replanted with seed of a small local variety known as ribbon yellow. The cross-pollination of these two diverse strains resulted in a hybrid stock of germplasm. During the next 20 years, Robert Reid strove to develop a strain of corn that was suited to the soil and climate of central Illinois.

Some persons have failed to appreciate the importance of Robert Reid's work. James L. Reid left the home field and started farming for himself in 1867. Ten years later, he grew the field of corn which yielded 125 bushels an acre when the average yield in Illinois was only 27 bushels an acre. This remarkable crop was produced without modern fertilizers or special cultural methods. Mr. Reid's ideal corn is described in his own work. 'The ear is medium in size, medium early in mature, because of a bright yellow color, but a solid deep grain and a small red cob. It has some 18 to 22 rows of kernels on the cob, being well filled over the ends, especially the butt, leaving a small shank, which makes it a great favorite with huskers.' He selected his seeds from healthy, vigorous plants. The ears were carefully dried, and poorly germinated ears were discarded. The development of Reid's Yellow Dent is an example of the effective use of selection. James took

the base materials he found in his father's field and passioned a world-famous corn. He was convinced that his father had blended the elements needed for a better [inaudible]. The next words you are about to hear will come from Dr. Nugent.”

Unknown 2: Thank you, Mr. [Unman?]. At this time, we'll have a word of welcome from the mayor of Delavan, Mr. Lester Byer.

**Lester Byer: As mayor of Delavan, it gives me great pleasure today to welcome you folks on this historical occasion. Some of you folks have come to Delavan for the first time, and we hope that you'll come back again. And I hope to all of you that you enjoy this day here with us as much as we enjoy having you here. Thank you. [Applause] I'll find attendance here today. Many of the personnel that are here. Okay. I wish to introduce a few of them at this time. They'll stand and take a bow.**

**Based on my list, the Mr. Otto Steffy, President of the IAA. Mr. Steffy, take a bow. Mr. Donald F. Jones, Department of Genetics in the Connecticut Agriculture. Mr. Dave Thompson, the first farm advisor of McLean County, former executive secretary of the IAA, and former editor of the [*Prairie Farmer*?]. Mr. Thompson. Professor Emeritus E.W. Lehman, Agricultural Engineering Department, University of Illinois, now at the International Harbors Company. Mr. Lehman. Tom S. Hamilton, Associate Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Illinois. Mr. Hamilton. Benjamin Kohler, Department of Agronomy, University of Illinois. Professor A.T. Anderson, University of Illinois, who helped to organize the Delavan Community Council. Mr. Anderson. G.P. Morrison, Vice President of the Illinois Seed Builders Association with the Pioneer [Harvard?] Seed Company. There are probably many others that we have missed, and our apologies if there are. At this time, Dean L.B. Howard, Dean of the College of Agriculture at the University of Illinois will tell you a little about the university's contribution to this program. Dean Howard.**

Louis Howard: Mr. Chairman, members of the Reid family, and ladies and gentlemen. Quite a number of months ago, there were two members of our staff that came into my office one day to

speak to me. Their subject was unannounced before they came in. But shortly after they came in, they told me of their interest in this program which is coming about today. I speak of Professor W.L. Burleson and Professor M.L. Moser. Professor Burleson, who for many years was the distinguished head of our Department of Agronomy, served as an informal chairman of the university group who helped in a minor way in the development of this program. And Professor M.L. Moser, who is emeritus professor of farm management, for many years a recognized leader in this area of agricultural economics, was familiar with the impact of Reid's corn on Midwest farming at the turn of the century.

Then there was Professor J.C. Spitler, who was an emeritus professor of agricultural extension. Up to the time of his retirement was associate director of the Illinois Agricultural Extension Service. And he added a great deal with his knowledge about the early work of the extension service in the corn development field. And then Professor Bob Jugenheimer, whom some of you heard this morning, saw his pictures. He was a professor of plant genetics and one of the best-known corn breeders in the world, contributed of his knowledge regarding the use of the lines from Reid's Yellow Dent in hybrid corn development. Professor C.M. Woodworth, professor of plant genetics, who had much to do with the development of our methods of experimental design and plant breeding at the University of Illinois. Also was quite familiar, of course, with the use of Reid's Yellow Dent in the development of these new corn hybrids. And then I should like to speak of Mr. D.A. Brown, who is the librarian of our College of Agriculture and the author of some books dealing with agricultural history. Mr. Brown did an excellent job, I think, of compiling biographical information on Mr. Reid and composed the biographical sketch which appears on the program that you have in your hands.

Mr. Harley Kemmerer, who is a specialist in landscape design in the horticulture department, helped in the development of the landscaping plan for the marker site. Mr. Adrian James who is editor of our Agricultural Experiment Station, had charge of the final printing of the program. Mr. Hadley Reid, who is our extension editor, attributed in a number of ways development of the program. His office [contacted? the Clearinghouse as far as the College of Agriculture. Finally, Mr. C.F. Bales, Farm Advisor of Tazewell County, and I'm sure served as a contact man for many

of the local people, who I may say have done such a wonderful job on this program. Our people at the university in comparison feel that we have contributed very little.

May I say that we at the University of Illinois are very delighted to have the opportunity to participate in the Michigan State Corn Foundation, for the citizens of Delavan surrounding Tazewell County people, paying this well merit of tribute to James L. Reid. Some of the people to whom I have referred are here today, and I should like to just take this brief occasion to ask them. They will stand all at once. You will hold your applause for them until they have all stood. I will read it: Professor Dudley L. Burleson, Professor J.C. Spitler, Professor Jugenheimer, Professor Reid, [inaudible] and I thank you for your help. [Applause]

**[Lester Byer?]: Thank you, Dean Howard. At this time, we're very happy to have several members of the Reid family at this memorial service. The man that had been with this project channel, Mr. Ralph Allen, will introduce Marie's family. When he has completed that, he will tell us a little bit about James R. Reid the man. Ralph has worked very hard on this project and been the inspiration behind the, probably the whole movement. He had a display at the rear of the room that deserves a lot of credit. I'm very happy to have Mr. Ralph Allen introduce [inaudible] [applause].**

Ralph Allen: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for that generous applause. I'm glad to get it now. Probably won't treat the generous later on. In regard to the Reid family, [would you like?] the Reid corn. Reid corn was noted for quality and not so much for quantity. That's the situation with regard for three sons, the direct descent of sent James Bell and Marietta Janksby. They consist of three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. So I'll immediately introduce the ones that are present. They are, unfortunately, some leaving the [inaudible]. Now the first one I'll introduce will be the granddaughter. Her name was Elmarie. Now it is Mr. Clifford Wharton. I'll introduce to you now Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Wharton of Erie White Tide County. [Applause] They have a young daughter.

You know, in the Robert Reid family, there were two children, Olive and Jane. Olive was the sister who always hung around and was quite a comfort to all the rest of the family. Well, the

same thing sort of prevails today. Mr. and Mrs. Wharton have a young daughter, 10 years old. How's that for a specimen of humanity?

[Inaudible] granddaughter-in-law is with and she has with her three daughters, beginning with the youngest, Sandra, then Marlon, and then Alan. Their names were all Reid. I don't know how long they stayed that way. Right at the present, it's Reid. [Applause] There's only one great-grandfather who's a family of Reid. You will hear from him, Taylor, the one in the trophies. But he has something with not unusual human events but it's very gratifying as usual here today the great man's son is [Sippard?] Morton Jr. and his recent bride Betty Tudor. [Applause] Now you know what I meant when I specified quality. [Laughter]

Well, Robert Reid had an older brother, Daniel, who had preceded him to the vicinity of Delavan and who was the man that wrote back to Robert that when he comes to the Delavan area that he brings some seed corn with him. And that act of this older brother really is what was the beginning of Reid's Yellow Dent seed corn. Well, of course, brothers and their families, they sort of spread out and identification sort of gets lost. But we have right here in Delavan a great granddaughter of Daniel Reid. Hazel Hannah. [Applause]

I've been talking about the Reid side of the family. Now, Mrs. Reid's name was Jenks. She grew up around Fremont. And there's some distant relatives still around there. And if I don't get this right, I hope I will be corrected. But one of the distant relatives we have here is a, well, Alice James Ferry. She'll have to tell it herself. She says she's a grandniece. Now that's all we have in this exhibit of the Reid family. So thank you. [Applause]

**[Lester Byer?]: I need to do this again. I intended Ralph to go right ahead and tell us a little of the story of James R. Reid, the man. I might say that I think you can appreciate the calmness and the poise that Mr. Allen has up here this morning, especially when realize that Mr. and Mrs. Allen are the grandparents of the this morning they have a new grandson. So at this time Mr. Ralph Allen will proceed with James L. Reid the man. [Applause] [Laughter]**

RA: Well, that had been the next thing to happen in getting this program ready was for me to get drunk. [Laughter] A lot of other things happened. It was pretty embarrassing, but we corrected them in time. So I guess everybody, including me, are sober and happy. I had no specific instructions about what kind of performance to put on here this afternoon. But the very reason that I was selected indicates that something of a corny nature was expected. That for me would be easy. I'm just a natural in that respect. To what extent it would be appropriate, it remains to be seen. I kind of have some doubts about it myself. Just to demonstrate, a corny character should be properly dressed. So I'll just put on some [inaudible] jewelry and I think maybe it really would be corny. I'm quite amazed at how few young people know what that instrument is. You older people really know what it was because you put in so many grueling hours in the cornfield in association with it.

Now since it has been so insistent that I be on this program, I've been kind of suspicious. Maybe it's an experiment to discover some kind of a hybrid in the entertainment field. [Laughter] If that's the case I must give a word of warning. It should be remembered no jackass ever cared anything about hybrids. But I just have a feeling that the other members of the committee maneuvered me into this spot mostly out of curiosity just to see what would happen. I see a lot of them have got guilty looks on their faces.

Well, according to Scripture, blessed are they who expect the unexpected, for they shall receive what they expect. For instance, the situation here pertaining as it pertains to James L. Reid is a bit like the case where a preacher went out in the country to talk to an old farmer to convert him to direct him in the path of righteousness. He talked and he talked and he talked. The old farmer was very apathetic, indifferent, non-attentive. He just kept gazing around, admiring his wonderful cornfields with a private possession gleamed in his eye. Finally, the preacher in exasperation says, "Don't you know that Jesus Christ died for you?" The old farmer in shocked surprise said, "Why, is he dead?" Take your time. [Laughter] Well, maybe you got way ahead of me and you foresaw the significance of that story, so I won't try to explain it to you.

I'm supposed to make an evaluation here of James L. Reid, I assume. Now, how do you go about evaluating a human being? Is there any rule or formula that you have to go by? Would you like,

say, evaluating the tract of land where you measure it? Where you make calculations and computations, and you can arrive at an accurate estimation or evaluation that will be satisfactory for everybody. I don't know of any such rule. In evaluating the man, you have to depend on opinions. Well, one man's opinion doesn't necessarily make anything a fact. The opinion of a great many people doesn't necessarily make anything a fact. Might come a little closer to it. So it seems to me that in order to accurately evaluate a man, there should be some rule or formula that we could use to evaluate any human being in existence now, in the future, or in the past.

Now you may be surprised to learn that there is such a rule. And you may be surprised to learn when I subdue my modesty and announce that I just recently discovered that rule. I'll explain how I happened to discover it. I was thumbing through the Bible one day, surreptitiously looking for a \$20 bill someone might have hidden there, when I accidentally run across this rule. Now, this rule is you evaluate a man by the extent that he has learned to become an extension agent of the Creator. Now, that's the rule. If anybody's got a better rule, I'd like to hear about it. I've got to break myself from using that word now. So I haven't done it yet.

Now, in order to use this rule or to understand it, that word learning is very important. How an infant when it first comes into the world or is a product of the Creator from then on until he kicks the bucket, he has the opportunity to learn. Well, the extent to which he learns is the basis upon which you arrive at an evaluation to computation and calculation. Now it's very appropriate that this rule be applied for the first time to James L. Reid. Now I could talk here a long time, probably a huge [inaudible], James L. Reid. But you can do that yourself if you will apply this rule. Just figure back over his record and estimate or calculate the extent to which he became or learned to become an extension agent of the Creator. Said that word now again. I just need somebody to wash my mouth out, I think.

You take others like Burbank, Edison, and Dr. Salt, Dr. Burleson. There's a good example. He's still learning how to become an extension agent of the Creator. I don't know what it's safe for me to have my back turned to him, but I took a chance on it. How much time, Bill? I don't know how I should end this, but I think I can do it. Very roughly, I've got to get down here and look

after my tape recorder. And I'll end it like the small boy ended the prayer. He says, "That's the story, God. Glad we could get together." [Applause]

**[Lester Byer?]: Thank you, Ralph. Now we'll have "James L. Reid and his Corn" by Professor Robert W. Jugenheimer of Plant Genetics, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois. Professor Jugenheimer. [Applause]**

Robert Jugenheimer: Mr. Chairman, members of the Reid family, ladies and gentlemen. I feel a little bit like Ralph Allen getting up here today to speak on this subject. I have worked with hybrid corn for about 27 years, but there are so many people here in the audience that have done so much with Reid's Yellow Dent and with hybrids that I hope I don't get out on a limb too far. Today, we want to pay tribute to a famous man, James L. Reid, and to a great plant, corn. American Indian gave us the corn plant. The recorded history of this great plant begins with the discovery of the country in 1492. Archaeological excavations and measures of radioactive decay of old years that have been found in caves indicate that the plant is at least 6,000 years old.

Now, corn and man must depend upon one another. The plant is highly specialized and could not reproduce itself without the aid of man. The ear is especially constructed for producing high yields under man's protection. The crop, however, could not survive very long in nature. Food and part of the religious life of the Indians were furnished by corn. Corn aided in the settlement and development of the New World, it is still by far the most important crop of American agriculture. Corn produces about twice the yield of wheat from 1/8 the amount of seed to 1/2 the [time?]. In addition to providing feed for literally millions of livestock, corn provides the raw materials for more than 500 industrial products. And we see some of those, just a few of those products, in that exhibit in the back of the room here today.

And the story of Reid's Yellow Dent corn started in 1846 when Robert Reid, the father of James, moved from Ohio here to Delavan. Like most pioneers, the Reid family brought their seed corn with them, probably in the covered wagon when they came here to Illinois. And this variety was known in [Bowen?] County, Ohio, as Gordon Hopkins corn. The Reid family arrived in Delavan quite late in the spring, but the seed was soon planted on land that had been prepared by their

uncle Dan. The late planting, however, resulted in an immature crop. And the better ears, however, were selected for the next year's seed, but the stand of young plants was very poor the next year. Consequently, the missing hills were replanted with seed of a small local variety known locally as Little [Yelp?]. It may have been a [clincorn?] or it may have been perhaps an Indian strain.

The cross-pollination of these two diverse strains resulted in a hybrid stock of germplasm. During the next 20 years, Robert Reid strove to develop a strain of corn that was suited to the soil and climate in the new prairie area here in central Illinois. And today, although we're honoring James Reid, I think we ought to also pay tribute to Robert Reid. Because during that at least 20-year period, those of you who know corn know that something could have easily happened with that germplasm if Robert Reid hadn't made the right collections.

James Reid left the home field and started farming for himself in 1867. And 10 years later, he grew a field of corn which yielded 125 bushels an acre when the average yield in Illinois was only 27 bushels an acre that year. This remarkable crop apparently was produced without modern- well, it was produced without modern fertilization and other special cultural practices. Now, Mr. Reid's ideal corn is described in his own words. Quote, "The ear is medium in size, medium early in maturity, is of a bright yellow color with a solid deep green and a small red cob. It has from 18 to 22 rows of kernels on the cob being well filled over the ends, especially the butt, leaving a small shank which makes it a great favorite with huskers." End of quote.

And incidentally, this last word here, one of the former corn husking champions of the world recently wrote and said that he could do his best in Reid's Yellow Dent corn in those early days. Mr. Reid selected his seed from healthy, vigorous plants, and these ears were carefully dried, and the poorly germinating ears were discarded. Now, a lot of those things we might take for granted today, but they were pioneering events then. The development of Reid's Yellow Dent corn is an example of the effective use of selection. And selection is still one of the very potent tools of the modern corn breeder. James took the basic materials he found in his father's field, and he fashioned the world-famous corn. He was convinced that his father had blended the elements needed for a better variety. He believed that the perfection of this grain was primarily a work of

selection. He never planted his field in a, he never planted his corn apparently in a field which was exposed to. [Tape cuts out]

Father had blended the elements needed for a better variety. He believed that the perfection of this strain was primarily a work of selection. He never planted his field in a, he never planted his corn apparently in a field which was exposed to corn from his neighbor's field. And apparently, there was no intentional mixing of the variety from the very beginning. He carefully protected the purity of this new strain, even though it might mean giving some seed to his neighbors who might plant next to his corn.

Now, just a few words about the contributions of Reid's Yellow Dent to American agriculture. Reid's Yellow Dent corn was a winner of many blue ribbons. Five samples were exhibited in 1879 at the Tazewell County Fair at Delavan, and also at the Illinois State Fair that year in Peoria. Highest honors, again, were won at the Illinois State Fair in 1891. The 10-year sample, which was entered for the first time under the name of Reid's Yellow Dent, won highest honors at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Then again, in 1897, Mr. Reid exhibited over 100 bushels, the products of one acre at the state fair at Springfield and on this sample, he received two first prizes and a sweepstakes. The variety, Reid's Yellow Dent, was officially recognized by the Illinois Seed Corn Growers Association in 1900. These and other prizes and awards spread the fame of Reid's Yellow Dent corn. And soon, Mr. Reid was shipping corn from Delavan to all parts of the country and even to some foreign countries. In 1902, the family moved to a 200-acre farm in Vermilion County, where a large seed house was built to house a larger supply of seed corn. But according to the literature, much of this space was not needed since Mr. Reid seldom had over 300 or 400 bushels of seed for sale. Calm only because of his high standards of selection. For ordinary people or many people might have made a fortune, Mr. Reid's rigid standards, he had competitive ability to sell.

Now Reid's Yellow Dent corn was a corn of beauty. The plentitude however was more than skin deep. The final test conducted throughout the corn drought during the first third of the 20th century showed that Reid's Yellow Dent yielded most of the older corn varieties. And Mr. Moser mentioned some of those tests this noon over at the church. Mr. Reid also became interested in

the [coronal hire protein contact?] through contact with some of the staff members of the University of Illinois. This work resulted in the [coronal hire feeding variety?].

Because of its consistent winnings at corn shows, wide adaptation throughout the country, excellent field performance, and fine seed [varieties?], the Reid's Yellow Dent continued to spread. The wide farmer's acceptance of these corns led many other corn breed to develop their own strain of Reid's Yellow Dent. Some simply put their own name in the front of there of the strain that they had, but many other corn breeders really developed a remarkable strain, a molten pollinator variety, their own strains, starting with a basic material. The surveys indicate that Reids and selected strains of this variety were grown in about three-fourths of the corn acreage in the Corn Belt over a period of at least 50 years. In 1937, 27 years after Mr. Reid's death, Reid's Yellow Dent variety still was recommended in 21 different states by the respective agricultural experimentation. I just checked in a yearbook of the US Department of Agriculture, and I found that Reid's Yellow Dent was still recommended under the name Reid's Yellow Dent by 21 experimentations, 27 years after Mr. Reid's death.

Now another milestone and long history of corn as the development of harvest. In Illinois, during the 10-year period, 1925 to 1934, less than 10% of the corn acreage was planted at harvest. Practically all of it was open pollinated dry. And corn yields in the state during this period averaged only 33 buses an acre. The response to these open pollinated varieties to fertilizers was disappointing. Even the better farmers were satisfied with the yields of 50 bushels an acres. The lack of standability made it practically impossible to harvest much of the acreage with the mechanical pickers. A lot of you all know we used these husking pegs. Not only did we use these husking pegs, we had to lean over to the ground in order to plant the farm easily. Picker wasted planting resulted in producing [ebbing and bum?] crop.

Susceptibility to cold, diseases, drought, insects, resulted in terrific fluctuations in yields in those days. In general, the annual yields during this period ranged from about 20 to 40 bushels an acre. Sometimes there were 100% variation from year to year due to the year and the hazard. A corn acre in the second 10-year period, 1935 to 1944, changed to hybrid. Some of these hybrids responded around this fertilizer application and [configures?] the climate. Mechanization became

more practical with the greater vigor, uniformity, and standability of the better harvest. As a result, corn yields in the state averaged 45 bushels an acre. This is 11 bushels more, or one-third more corn, than then the last period of unpollinated corn.

Now, what about the third 10-year period or the last 10 years? In our corn yields in the last 10 years here in Illinois, then the period '45 to '54, averaged many 53 bushels an acre. Those are state averages. This is 19 bushels per acre more than comparable open pollinator figures. On a percentage basis, the first harvest in Illinois out yielded the open pollinator variety by 133%. But our modern-day hybrid have yielded the open pollinated varieties by 156%. Now, the excellent performance of our hybrids has made several million acres of good Illinois land available for such crops as soybeans, grasses, and legumes. An increase of 19 bushels an acre and the 9 million acres of corn grown in the state total is 171 million bushels, worth about \$200 million. This 19-bushel increase for hybrid is about the average total yield of corn in most of the countries outside the United States. I've traveled in many, many countries outside the United States from foreign projects, and the average yield in many of those countries, most of those countries, is just about what the increase has been here for hybrid.

Our hybrids revolutionize corn production. Hybrids are produced, however, by crossing inbred lines, and many of these inbred lines were developed from strains of Reid's Yellow Dent corn by modern corn breeders working in at least a dozen of our states. Just one of these lines alone, or one of these important lines, WF9, was developed from Wilson Farms strain of Reid's Yellow Dent, and this inbred is one parent. In my estimation, I've estimated that this inbred line alone has been one parent in at least half of all the hybrid seeds ever produced here in this country, or anywhere else in the world. Two popular single crosses, WF9, the 3811, and I think you'll see this particular single cross planted out of the location of the plaque, and another single cross, WF9 High, resemble Reid's Yellow Dent considerably in the front. And probably half of all the hybrid seed used in the Corn Belt has in the past been grown on these two single crops. Therefore, since Reid's Yellow Dent corn has contributed so much to American agriculture during the past century, both directly as open pollinated corn and indirectly in hybrids, we believe that we can quote the last sentence of the wording on the plaque: "Humanity certainly is

indebted to James L. Reid and other members of the Reid family for improving America's greatest crop, corn." [Applause].

**[Lester Byer?]: Thank you, Professor Jugenheimer. This afternoon, we have in our presence Dr. Kenyan C. Paing. He's the head field crops department for Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan. He is an official representative of the Michigan State College Corn Foundation. They've taken a very sincere interest in this project in the beginning, and we do appreciate their fine support. At this time, we'll have the presentation of citation by Dr. Kenyan C. Paing. [Applause]**

Kenyan Paing: Thank you, doctor, members of the Reid family, ladies and gentlemen. Dr. Jugenheimer has done a splendid job of tracing the important contribution that has been made by Mr. Reid and others of his family. In providing the back graft which through heredity has given us our, in a large part, our hybrids of today, which are most successful. Our classes opened a couple of days ago at Michigan State and I have a class in plant breeding. On the first afternoon, there wasn't a great deal to be done, the way the class is arranged. And so I asked a few questions around to see just how well equipped the chaps were to come into this particular phase of their study. And I said to one of them, I said, "What is heredity? Define heredity for me." Fellow raised his hand and he said, "Well, as I understand it, Professor, if your father and mother didn't have any children, the chances are pretty good that you aren't going to have any children either." [Laughter]

We're here today to dedicate a memorial to the contribution which has been made by a man and by the foodstuff upon which our great Western civilization has been built upon which it now rests. The maize of our early Pilgrim forefathers, and the corn that we know today. I would like to review in just a moment or two the story of our corn memorial and the cause which brings us here today. Corn, as Professor Jugenheimer has indicated, has been the footing and the sturdy foundation upon which several civilizations have grown and prospered in our Western Hemisphere. Entirely depended upon man for its own perpetuation because corn, unlike practically any other plant, is completely unable to survive without his care, corn has served man well and has supplied him with that abundance of food which is essential to a flourishing

civilization. Many volumes have been written on this food and feed, which is truly the greatest of them all. But in modern days, no fitting memorial has been built to commemorate the service to mankind of this magnificent plant.

With this objective in view, an idea was conceived in the minds of a small group of men at Michigan State College near the close of the last decade. This group included Professor Jackson Town, who was and is our Michigan State University librarian, Mr. Richard Crabb of Chicago, who is a noted author and an authority on corn history, the late Professor Rod Decker, formerly head of the Department of Farm Crops at Michigan State, and our beloved Pry G. Holden, one of the few living today who has been associated with and has contributed to the great hybrid corn industry since its earliest infancy. P.G. Holden lives with a son in East Lansing at the present time. He's a sharp and crackling 90 years of age and full control of all of his faculties. His legs are just a little bit weak. And he wished for me to extend his sincere regrets to all of you that he would be unable to be with you because he knew that there would be in this a distinguished crowd some who no doubt would remember the old years in which he was stumping the state for the university his many years since. He's a very fine gentleman and is contributing daily to our interest and our enthusiasm for many things at Michigan State. And of this group that I've mentioned, P.G. Holden is due the greatest credit for the initiation of an appropriate memorial and for persistent and fruitful effort towards its final realization. Since his retirement back in 1953, Dean Emeritus of Agriculture Ernest Anthony has been playing a very major role in our Michigan State Corn Foundation.

From the diligent efforts of this group and from others has come the Michigan State University Corn Foundation. The object of this foundation is to establish a commemoration of the service of corn to mankind by the development of several substantial projects. These projects at present include an accumulation of all significant corn literature in a library for the use of scholars on this subject so that a scholar can come from any place in the world and count on finding in one given point all significant literature. A second objective is the collection of museum pieces related to corn and its impact on mankind. A third, one in which we're participating today, is the placing of suitable markers at appropriate locations throughout the country and the world dedicating milestones in the development of the great corn industry that we know today. Another

is the Tory G. Holden Memorial Fellowship, which has been established to assist a graduate student through his graduate training.

Since July 1 of this year, 1955, the name of our institution has been changed from Michigan State College to Michigan State University by an act of our state legislature. At the time that the plans were made for this memorial today, however, we were Michigan State College. And the committee from the foundation felt that it would be most appropriate, since most arrangements have been made under that name, that we continue and, on this marker, we'll follow our foundation, the Michigan State College Corn Foundation. Thereafter, or hereafter, any markers which are erected will use our new name, the Michigan State University Corn Foundation.

This is the third such marker to be dedicated in this way. The first was dedicated in 1954 to Dr. William J. Beale. This was dedicated in the Beale-Garfield Garden on the Michigan State University campus. And it was Professor Beale who back in 1879, for the first time of record, crossed varieties of corn for the express purpose of increasing yield. The second was at Research Acres at Bloomington, Illinois, last month, dedicated to a rich, sustained, and productive effort to develop hybrid corn as we know it today by the Falk family and by their associates. Today, we step back into the years, and with this ceremony and this plaque, pay homage to a man whose keen insight and whose meticulous attention to perfection provided the major background or gene pool from which our hybrids of today have come. The most significant source of material for the multi-billion-dollar industry that our corn is today. History indeed records James Reid as a man of destiny. It is with great pride that we this day dedicate a monument to this humble man of the soil and to the destiny which dictated that his accomplishments would be multiplied a million-fold for the enrichment of all mankind.

A few moments after this ceremony is completed here, we will adjourn to the plaque and the dedication itself will be held there, as you know. I think in closing, I would like to read through the inscription that will remain for years on a bronze tablet to be viewed and to be unveiled shortly later this afternoon. "James L. Reid, 1844 to 1910, pioneer corn breeder, a patient and thoughtful man with the temperament of an artist and a mystic, developed Reid's Yellow Dent corn on this farm in the last third of the 19th century. This highly productive open pollinated

variety was widely adapted, became extensively grown, and was the source of inbred lines used as parents of many present-day hybrids. Humanity is indebted to James L. Reid and other members of the Reid family for improving America's greatest crops, corn." It is with great pleasure and great humility that I present on behalf of the Michigan State University Corn Foundation this plaque.

**[Lester Byer?]: Thank you, Dr. Paing. Now, for a response, we will hear from Mr. Clifford Walton, Jr., great-grandson of James L. Reid, the former president of his FFA Chapter in which he was awarded the honor of State Farmer. He's resident of Whiteside County, and I understand he's now looking for a farm to continue his farm interest. [Applause]**

Clifford Walton: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. I am highly honored in receiving this as a member of the Reid family, for the Reid family, and all these groups near and around Delavan. And the Reid family wish to express their deep thanks for these groups, along with the Michigan State Corn Foundation for bringing this day about. I am very proud to be related to a man like James Reid, for I believe that he has went a long ways in the production of corn and the growth of our nation. What seems to me is that corn is the background of our nation. For if it was not for food, no man could do his best work in any phase of life. And it seems that corn is the backbone of all food. For without corn, there would even be no meat or eggs or milk because the feed for the animals would produce them. And as the years go by and the farmland decreases because of the size of population increasing, and the roads and so on, well this farm must produce more and better through breeding and fertilization. And this is where we should be thankful for men like James Reid and others. As speaking for the Reids and be proud to be a member of his family. Thank you. [Applause]

**[Lester Byer?]: Thank you, Clifford Walton. It's been suggested to me that the four or five rows at the rear of the room are having difficulty in hearing the program. If that is the case, there are sufficient seats here at the front. And if you tell it to, we'd be very happy to have you move up at this time. Sorry. Anyone try to move up so they can hear better, we'd be happy to have you there. Well, we're very happy this afternoon to have in our presence, Mr. George Ifter. He's a former farm advisor of Tazewell County, now Assistant Director of the**

**Department of Agriculture, State of Illinois, he's a member of our committee to promote this project. He's done an excellent job. He's been in charge of the publicity. He's done an excellent job. At this time, Mr. George Itfer has a presentation for the family.**

George Itfer: Mr. Chairman, [applause] members of the honored family Reid, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of Governor Stratton, I bring you greetings and welcome you to the armory at Delavan which is one of your many state institutions. We in the Department of Agriculture have been pleased to have a part in this program. It is a thing that should have been done years ago, and I am pleased that at last we have come to the realization of the importance of the contribution of Mr. Reid and his family to our nation's agriculture. And this is a day that we have all looked forward to. The director would liked to have been with us today and have made every plans to be here but he had to change them, and I have this telegram this morning from Ontario, Canada, and I wish to read it at this time. It says, "I am very regretful that I am unable to be with you today when you are in meeting to honor Mr. Reid, who contributed so much to the agriculture of Illinois with his Reid's Yellow Dent corn. When I was but a child, I remember that my father would not allow any corn planted on our farm other than Reid's Yellow Dent. This trip that takes me outside of the country prevents my being with you, but you have my best wishes for a successful meeting at the unveiling of the shrine for Mr. James L. Reid," signed Stillman J. Standards, Director of Agriculture.

And so I bring you his regrets and his greetings. We have enjoyed working. We're going to do it as capacity as a member of the Tazewell County Historical Committee, Tazewell County Farm Bureau Historical Committee, and as a representative of the Department of Agriculture. This program will go on for some time after today. I'm sure that many of the 400 and 515, I believe the number is, vocational departments in the state of Illinois, sometime early this fall, will devote at least one class period to the contributions of the Reid's Yellow Dent corn. All of those teachers have been supplied with ample material for that part of their program. All of the lecturers of the [range?], about 75 or 80 of them in the state of Illinois, have been supplied with the same material and I have the assurance of the state lecturer that most of the rangers will give at least one program sometime this fall to this same worthy cause. A number of years ago, I found in the

Tazewell County Farm Bureau two photographs or paintings of two distinguished-looking gentlemen. And I asked Ralph Allen-