

NOTES FOR RESPONSE TO THERESA MILLER NOV. 20, 2006

1. I took two grad courses (C.L. Stewart and H.C.M. Case) at U of I as a senior in 1943.

.After WWII I got an MS at Minnesota in 1948 and PhD at Iowa State in 1952. Arrived back at Illinois in Sept. 1950. I was then gone for about 2 yrs with the Korean War, returning in the fall of 1952. Among the new assistant professors, I was the only one with a degree from a school other than U of I (There were Thompson, Mutti, Hieronymus, West, Broadbent, Kelly, Muller and maybe others, all U of I PhDs) Even though I had a B.S. from Illinois, I was an "outsider". Most of my colleagues were not trained to use economic analysis (based on economic theory) but rather used a descriptive, literary (non-quantitative) approach.

Teaching- I taught beginning farm mgt. Ag Ec 220 from the time I arrived until the 1960s. The text was written by senior professors in the dept that did not have the more modern approach of production economics, but I followed the text rather closely. Then in 1953-54, semester II, I was asked to teach a graduate course in production economics (Ag Econ 404). There was a recognition by Courses and Curricula committee that there was a need to modernize our graduate program with more emphasis on economic theory. I taught this course until 1980., when enrollment dropped to six, when it had been steady, at about 15, for many years. Then I started a new course, Macroeconomics of Agr. Prod. (Ag Ec. 426) which I taught until retirement in 1984.

Research- My research work was pretty independent of others in the department. I didn't pay too much attention to what others were doing in the department

-The availability of the Illiac, together with a new mathematical technique, linear programming, was an important development in the period 1953-mid 1960s. A journal article in Journal of Farm Economics (Swanson and Fox) in 1954 served to establish linear programming as a farm management tool (see Exp Sta. Bulletins 602 and 629) "Highest Return Farming Systems for....Soils" (Swanson, Peterson). The 1955 article "Flexing feed formulas...." (Swanson) in American Miller and Processor introduced linear programming to the animal feed industry. This method is now universally used to minimize costs of feed mixes in the industry (see Bob Easter's comment following an article by Jim Corbin).

Many of the PhD theses in the department in the late 1950s and early 1960s used linear programming as an analytical tool.

People with influence on my career:: The arrival in 1957 of Chet Baker (PhD Berkeley) and Harold Halcrow (PhD Chicago), the latter as Department Head, marked the beginning of a new era in the Department. In retrospect, I count these two as the most influential in my career, although for quite different reasons. Chet was a colleague who understood economic theory and research methods. He was an excellent sounding board. He was truly a professional agricultural economist and served as a role model for the younger staff. His principal contribution to the subject matter of the department was the formation of an Agr. Finance group that had a solid basis in economic theory.

Harold Halcrow's contribution to my career was his encouragement to create visibility for the department in the profession of Agr. Econ. He encouraged me to publish in the national journal-

then called the Journal of Farm Economics- and to secure a Fulbright award. He was instrumental in my appointment as Editor of The Journal of Farm Economics. I served as his Associate Head during the period 1967-70 and he taught me many useful things that I needed during my period as acting head, April 1974-August 1975.(between Feltner who left to become asst. Secy of agriculture in Washington and Padberg who arrived to be dept. Head in August 1975) Harold also gave me recognition by promoting me to Full Professor in 1958, just six years after my first appointment as Asst. Professor and three years after my appointment as Associate Professor.

2. Two significant accomplishments of the Department:

Until Halcrow arrived in 1957, the department was very inbred and not ranked very high nationally;; there was concentration on "taking care of the home folks". Harold really brought the department into the 20th century. Harold began recruiting carefully, partly because of the crisis created in the Department of Economics through attempts at rapid reform. The problem for Harold was that he could not hire good young faculty without paying good salaries, sometimes exceeding the pay of the present faculty. Harold got a considerable sum from the dean to raise salaries for a few of the best faculty presently in the department. Then he was able to compete for the high quality faculty from outside. He made agreements with heads of other ag.ec. Depts. not to "steal" their senior faculty if they would let him know their best graduate students. He then proceeded to hire persons from a variety of places,e.g.-two distinguished persons-George Judge(Iowa State PhD) and George Brinegar(Chicago PhD) came as professors from Connecticut where Harold had been. Judge was a brilliant econometrician who ended up at Berkeley in the 1970s and Brinegar who had a national reputation in finance. He also hired young people, for example, Lyle Fettig(Chicago PhD), Ray Leuthold(Wisconsin PhD) Wes Seitz(Cal Berkeley PhD) and with this diversity he gradually increased the vitality and productivity of the department. The practice of hiring our own PhDs was almost abandoned, thanks to the leadership of Halcrow. Thus, Halcrow had changed the orientation of the department into what was recognized nationally as the profession of agricultural economics.

The second accomplishment is in the international area. Although Professor Case played an important role as an individual in WW II and post WW II in food allocation in Europe , there was not much done in an organized way until the AID projects in India and Sierra Leone. Also the Ford Foundation grant for work in India was quite an undertaking. President Henry was particularly anxious for our Dept. to take the Ford grant and to be successful in it. There were also a number of individual assignments, too numerous to mention. Also Halcrow had hired a land economist, Folke Doving, who was previously at FAO in Rome. Doving, a gifted expert in questions of global food supply, land use and energy. (His biography by Janken Myrdal will soon be published).

Although I did not take a long-term assignment abroad, I did have contact with the many foreign graduate students. In the immediate post WW II there were many from Europe, but gradually shifting to the developing countries. My foreign experience included; Teaching summer school in Hokkaido, Japan 1958; Fulbright Research Scholar Denmark 1958-59; Visiting Lecturer, Moscow State University and Leningrad State University April-June 1963 under US-USSR

Cultural Exchange Program; Ford Foundation Consultant, India Jan. 1968; Research scholar, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Laxenberg, Austria 1975 and 1976: various agricultural assessment teams-Egypt, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Antigua; Visiting Professor, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences Oct. -Dec. 1984

3. Relationship of the Dept. With following audiences:

a. Farmers— Influence by record keeping with FBFM. This dominated in the early years of the dept as a type of extension program, a very important one., albeit a service type rather than an educational endeavor. This remains today an important part of our farm management program. The teaching of our students who become farmers and professional farm managers remains the primary source of influence. (A question for you is why has the emphasis on farm management courses in the department decreased substantially in the last few decades? Some of it may be due to Parkland's offerings in this area) The current farmdoc project has, I believe, received wide acceptance.

b. Industry-(See the linear programming feed mix contribution above) Again our courses in agribusiness management and finance, price analysis, agr. law are preparing students for careers in this area. Our former students keep the relationships active. Lowell Hill had good relations with grain industry.

c. Other depts. In college.

i Agr. Engineering- I worked with Agr Engineering(see Swanson and Jones article on irrigation); (Mitchell and Swanson on soil conservation)

ii. Agronomy- All told there at least 4 or 5 journal articles with joint authorship with Agronomy faculty(e.g. , yield response to nitrogen fertilizer(Swanson, Taylor and Welch) ; yield plateaus(Walker Carmer and Swanson) ;herbicide use(Slife and Swanson) etc.

iii. Dairy Science-article with J.L.Albright on Productivity of Dairy Herds in Los Angeles Milk Shed.

iv. Plant Pathology-article with G.L. Noel on Soybean Cyst Nematode

v. Illinois Water Survey..I was a co-principal investigator on an inter-disciplinary project, "Technology Assessment of the Suppression of Hail" We had meteorologists, economists, sociologists and lawyers participating. We won the Quality of Communication Award from the American Agricultural Economics Association in 1978 for our report.

d.. peer institutions. Regional committees provided opportunities. I also jointly published with a colleague from Purdue(Patrick andSwanson)Components of grain production. Also Iowa State(several bulletins and articles with Earl Heady)

e. school consolidation. Rural sociology was a part of the department until the reorganization into ACES. David Lindstrom in Rural sociology, was very active in promoting school consolidation of scattered rural schools. He appeared at many meetings throughout the state advocating consolidation. For more details check with Harvey Schweitzer, retired professor of rural sociology(359-4001) 1504 Cambridge Drive, Champaign.

4. Response to changes-There was a gradual shift in the subject matter of my career. When I started at Illinois I was primarily interested in farm management. In The early 1960s I became aware of the coming emphasis on environmental concerns. My first topic was soil conservation and I had a number of articles on this as well as a few students writing theses on this topic. Then the question of nitrogen pollution became a matter of public concern. I responded with research on several topics: Impact of restrictions on N fertilizer; yield response functions to N fertilizer. National and state policies for restricting fertilizer use. I gave testimony to the Ill Pollution Control Board on the impact of restricting N fertilizer use. I then received a grant from U.S. EPA to study economic impact of pesticide use and this absorbed much of my time in the late 1970s and early 1980s A chapter on economics of soil conservation was published in a book The Resourceful Earth, by Simon and Kahn in 1984.

AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION FELLOWS

Those who were faculty members of the Dept. Of Agr. Econ. at the time of their election to Fellow;

1959-Harold Clayton M. Case

1977-Earl R. Swanson

1978-Chester B. Baker

1985-Harold G. Halcrow

1991-Lowell Hill

1997-Peter J. Barry

Robert L. Thompson was elected in 1993 before he joined our staff.

My contribution to recruitment and hiring faculty-The following were hired during the period I was Acting head or Associate Head while Dr. Halcrow was on a foreign assignment:

Earl Kellogg

Donald Uchtmann

Steven Sonka