

Everett Franklin Phillips

November 14, 1878 — August 21, 1951

Everett Franklin Phillips, Emeritus Professor of Apiculture, died at his home on August 21, 1951, after a lingering illness. In spite of his disabilities, he worked on problems of beekeeping until the day before his death.

The son of a Methodist clergyman, Dr. Phillips was born and received his early education in Ohio. He was graduated from Allegheny College and took advanced work in Zoology at the University of Pennsylvania. At Pennsylvania he held scholarships and fellowships, and was granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1904. In 1905 he went to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, and after two years became head of the work in Apiculture, which post he retained until coming to Cornell University. In 1929 his alma mater granted him the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

Professor Phillips' doctorate thesis was a study of the compound eye of the honeybee, and that work interested him in beekeeping. On being made Head of the Division of Bee Culture in Washington he began to develop the much needed scientific work, and enlisted the help of scientifically trained men whose names are now familiar in the world of beekeeping. In 1911 he undertook work on one of the most important problems in beekeeping, the behavior of bees in winter and the wintering of bees. He worked out methods for the eradication of European foulbrood, which have been highly successful. Work begun in Washington on physical properties of honey and expanded at Cornell contributed greatly to our knowledge of methods of handling honey.

He also worked on the bee louse, and in 1922 was influential in obtaining legislation to protect the industry in North America from the introduction of bee diseases from other continents. He did much work on pollination and presented the available evidence on the effect of the insecticides on other pollinating insects. He also studied the relation of bees to fireblight.

During the first world war Doctor Phillips conducted an intensive campaign to stimulate beekeeping, primarily by encouraging a change from comb honey to extracted honey production. Commercial honey production increased in that period about 400 percent. It was then that extension work in beekeeping was begun in a few states, and the work was so successful that it has been continued. A notable group of men performed their first public service to beekeeping in this undertaking. For some years these men held most of the state positions, and when more men were needed, several of Professor Phillips' students from Cornell became engaged in this work. Doctor Phillips was editor of the apiculture section of Biological Abstracts and twice served on the editorial board of the Journal

of Economic Entomology. He was the author of "Beekeeping", published by the Macmillan Company, which has been translated into Russian. He wrote more than 600 bulletins and articles for technical and scientific journals, several of which have been translated into other languages.

He visited Europe four times and studied the work of leading investigators in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, England, Scotland, Jugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and every state of this country. He maintained correspondence with leading apiculturists all over the world and he was honored by election as Fellow of the international Apis Club, of which he was president in 1926. This Club awarded him its medal in 1924. He also received medals from three French beekeeping societies and one in Czechoslovakia. In 1932 at the invitation of the government he visited the Soviet Union to assist in beekeeping aspects of the Second Five Year Plan. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi and other honorary scholastic societies, and of the social fraternity Phi Delta Theta.

Professor Phillips was responsible for the establishment of the Miller Memorial Beekeeping Library at the University of Wisconsin and built up a similar library in the Bureau of Entomology of the United States Department of Agriculture. On coming to Cornell he again started a beekeeping library and arranged for its endowment. He presented his personal collection on beekeeping to the Library and obtained additional books and journals through exchanges with individuals and institutions in other lands.

Some notable private collections have been included, such as the entire library of Moses Quinby, all books known to remain in the libraries of L. L. Langstroth and Dr. C. C. Miller, the Evard French library, the John Anderson Scottish library, and a large collection of European first editions. Langstroth's hand written journal, his letter press book, and a diary of Quinby are among the most precious items.

The library now consists of more than 3000 books and volumes of bee journals and with adequate funds assured, this library will remain supreme. In recognition of the contribution which Doctor Phillips made in this field, the Board of Trustees designated this collection as the "Everett Franklin Phillips Beekeeping Library".

As a teacher Dr. Phillips attracted many graduate students to Cornell. Most of them are now in charge of important phases of beekeeping in this country as well as in Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, India and the Union of South Africa. He gave unsparingly of himself to his students and all of them were stimulated by his interest and enthusiasm in their work. For example, the help and encouragement given one graduate student resulted in a method for processing honey which is now used throughout the world. The patent for this process was given to

the University and largely because of his interest and supervision it has brought to Cornell a considerable sum of money for research in apiculture.

Doctor Phillips worked also with entomologists. He served on various committees of the Association of Economic Entomologists and the Entomological Society of America and as president of the former in 1935. At the outbreak of the last war he became chairman of the joint committee for coordination of entomology with the war effort. He was a member of the Crop Protection Committee of the National Research Council and a committee of the Economic Entomologists to promote the establishment of a national science foundation. He was a member of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, the Society of Naturalists, and the Biological Union.

People in Ithaca probably knew Doctor Phillips best for his civic activities. He was president of the Ithaca Community Chest, on the executive committee of the Council of Social Agencies, member of the boards of directors of the Ithaca Reconstruction Home for Infantile Paralysis, the Salvation Army, and the Family Society. He was a commissioner of the Department of Public Welfare of the City and chairman of a committee on a war memorial. He was also a trustee of the Hazel Hurst Foundation for the Blind, Monrovia, California, and Tompkins County chairman for United Service Organizations. In 1945, he was elected a director of the New York State Association for Crippled Children, was made Vice President in 1940, and became President in 1950. A resolution passed by that Association at the time of his death said in part: "Infirm in body. . .but unquenchable in spirit, he served us well until the very day of passing."

Rotarians everywhere knew him as well as did beekeepers. He was president of the Ithaca Rotary Club and the next year became governor of former District 28 of Rotary International. In 1936-37, he was chairman of the International Service Committee, and in 1939 was elected director and third vice-president of Rotary International.

Doctor Phillips was well known in the beekeeping industry throughout the world and was directly or indirectly responsible for much of the basic research work in Apiculture. His keen analytical mind and forthrightness of character engendered respect and confidence among all who knew him. It is common knowledge among men engaged in the beekeeping industry that he will go down in the records of beekeeping history as the greatest scientific apiculturist in our time.

Dr. Phillips is survived by his wife, Mary Geisler Phillips, three sons, and five grandchildren.

E. J. Dyce, P. J. Kruse, C. E. Palm