Frank Pores Bussell

September 3, 1878 — May 27, 1956

Frank Pores Bussell, professor emeritus, who had served Cornell as professor of plant breeding for 22 years, died on May 27, 1956 at San Gabriel, California. Professor Bussell was born on September 3, 1878 at Abilene, Kansas but soon moved with his parents to a farm in Illinois. He was graduated from Colgate University in 1901. For two years he taught classics in the high school at Geneva, New York and then came to Cornell University for a year of graduate study in philosophy while holding a Sage scholarship. After his year's graduate work he taught history and the classics in Minnesota and California. He did additional graduate work in the meantime at the University of Chicago and at the University of Illinois. From 1908 to February 1915, he managed the home farm in north central Illinois. As the result of his farm experience Professor Bussell acquired a keen awareness of the need for an adequate supply of pure seed of improved varieties of farm crops. To further his training for public service in this field, he returned to Cornell in the spring of 1915. He chose plant breeding, plant physiology, and soils as the subjects for his doctorate which he received in 1919. Having served as an instructor in plant breeding during his graduate study, he was appointed assistant professor in 1919 in charge of the extension work for the department. He was further advanced to the rank of professor in 1924, which position he held until retirement. On September 1, 1946, he was appointed professor of plant breeding, emeritus.

Professor Bussell with his thorough knowledge of farm problems, a sympathetic viewpoint and fundamental training in the sciences was able to undertake his extension teaching with unusual success. He used the demonstration method as an effective means of teaching throughout his period of service. He was among the pioneers in believing farmers should have an important part in their programs of better seeds. To this end he among others helped to organize the seed growers and distributors into a cooperative known as "New York Seed Improvement Cooperative Association, Inc.". This has now become the "New York Certified Seed Growers Cooperative". This organization has been effective in promoting the extensive use of improved crop varieties by insuring adequate supplies of pure seed.

Farmers from the humblest to the most prosperous were considered of equal importance and deserving of Dr. Bussell's best efforts. The confidence that the Iroquois Indians on their seven reservations in the state had in Dr. Bussell was exemplified by the fact that he was the first man ever entrusted with the improvement of their sacred

maize. In addition to his extension teaching, he taught the winter short courses in plant breeding for many years. On occasions he also gave regular courses in plant breeding during the college year.

Professor Bussell was an active member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; American Society of Agronomy; Genetics Society of America; New York Seed Improvement Cooperative Association. He was also a member of Sigma Xi, Gamma Alpha, Alpha Zeta and Delta Kappa Epsilon.

In addition to his work among farmers and students he always found time to serve his community through membership in civic and fraternal organizations. He liked people and made many friends with those in all walks of life. He was a loyal and dependable friend with an ever ready word of cheer and hope and a helping hand for those in need. He was an active member of the Baptist Church where he served as a trustee, teacher, and lay minister. He joined and was a life member of the Hamilton Lodge F and A M, and belonged to the several upper bodies and served as Commander of the St. Augustine Commandry, Knights Templor.

He married Grace Eaton in 1912 who passed away in 1947, and after her death married Ruby Tobias in 1952. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Olivia Bussell Kikendall, Jr. and Mrs. Ruth Bussell McLay.

A. A. Johnson, H. M. Munger, R. G. Wiggans