

# Paul Raymond Hoff

*August 29, 1903 — September 4, 1974*

Professor Paul Raymond Hoff, born in Dover, Ohio, grew up on a poultry farm and attended elementary and secondary schools in Lisbon, Ohio. He earned the Bachelor of Agriculture degree at Ohio State University in 1928.

During the period 1927-29 he served as extension specialist in agricultural engineering at Ohio State University, and after this experience, he went west to the University of Nebraska, again as extension specialist in agricultural engineering, where he served from May 1929 until February 1934. While at Nebraska, Professor Hoff developed a comprehensive rural sanitation program and obtained cooperation from industry in carrying out the program. He also developed the first intensive 4-H programs at Nebraska in engineering projects on surveying and farm machinery. He joined the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1934 and carried out field projects in Nebraska and Kansas on soil-saving programs during the “dust bowl” years. In February 1939 he was appointed extension instructor in agricultural engineering at Cornell University and simultaneously enrolled in the Graduate School to pursue a Master of Science in Agriculture, which he earned in 1940. Upon receiving the M.S.A. degree, he was appointed as assistant extension professor in agricultural engineering at Cornell. He was advanced to associate professor in 1945 and to full professor on July 1, 1949.

His programs at Cornell in extension education were quite diverse, encompassing soil conservation, farm drainage, farm machinery, and poultry housing and equipment. During the late war years he devoted much effort to field supervision of fifteen district agricultural engineers who were operating the emergency farm machinery repair program for the New York State War Council. In 1946 an agriculture demonstration train, the “Farm and Home Special,” traveled through New York State on the New York Central system to show farm people what was new in agriculture. Professor Hoff managed the three-week tour for the College of Agriculture; his efficient management won praises from both the college administration and New York Central officials.

From 1945 to 1954 Professor Hoff was project leader of the extension program of Cornell’s Department of Agricultural Engineering. Hoff collaborated actively with the College of Home Economics in the rural housing and community buildings program that was initiated after World War II. His principal efforts were directed to water supply, sewage disposal systems, and heating systems.

Hoffs interests were in agricultural engineering educational programs, not only in the United States, but also in developing countries. From August 1954 to August 1956 he served as visiting professor with the Cornell-Los

Banos project in the Philippines. In addition to aiding in the rebuilding of the College of Agriculture at Los Banos, he helped establish a drainage system at the college experiment station and conducted research on proper use of irrigation for rice production.

During a sabbatic leave from February 1958 to March 1959, Professor Hoff was engaged by International Cooperative Administration to organize and conduct training programs for instructors of farm machinery operation and service for Mexican extension personnel, agricultural college faculty, employees of agricultural credit banks, and farm machinery distributors.

One of the outstanding accomplishments while he was in Mexico was the establishment, by the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture early in 1959, of a training center to continue, on a permanent basis, the type of machine operation training developed by Professor Hoff.

Because of his interest and concern for technical assistance to developing countries, Hoff retired from Cornell on September 18, 1960, to accept a two-year assignment with the International Cooperation Administration in Brazil. Due to a serious back injury, Professor Hoff chose to accept disability retirement from federal service prior to completion of this assignment in Brazil.

During his twenty-one years at Cornell, Hoff authored or revised over fifty extension publications and prepared many news stories for farmers' benefit. He was a regular contributor to *Extension County News* and wrote frequently for farm magazines. He had great interest in helping people to help themselves. His success in conducting educational programs can be attributed to his ability to instill in people the desire to learn and to encourage them to continue their learning experiences.

Professor Hoff was active in the American Society of Agricultural Engineers, the Cornell Extension Club, Epsilon Sigma Phi, the First Baptist Church of Ithaca, and the Ithaca Rotary Club. In addition to photography, he had a hobby of building radios, stereos, and other electronic equipment.

He was married to Lucy G. Swift in Danville, Kentucky, on March 31, 1929. Their son, Hugh W. Hoff, a graduate of the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell, lives with his wife and four children in Seattle, Washington. For the past several years Professor and Mrs. Hoff have resided at Panoramic City Retirement Community, Lacey, Washington, where Mrs. Hoff will continue to live.

*William F. Millier, Orval C. French, Hollis R. Davis*