

Paul J. Kruse

September 7, 1883 — February 17, 1974

In thirty-two years of professional service to Cornell University Paul Kruse was, in the view of students and colleagues, a colorful teacher, staunch advocate of the views he professed, and good friend. Spanning the long period since his retirement in 1949, the picture emerges of a man with a keen relish for life; Professor Kruse loved to teach, to persuade, to befriend, to be with people.

Born in Boone, Iowa, Paul Kruse grew up on a farm and attended the public schools of his region. He earned the B.A. degree from the University of Iowa in 1906 and the M.A. from the University of Washington (1913) and completed requirements for the Ph.D. at Columbia in 1918, working under the direction of E. L. Thorndike, who was then a major figure in the fields of psychology and measurement. During this period he also served as a superintendent of schools and as an instructor at the University of Washington.

In 1917 Professor Kruse came to Cornell to join George Works and others in developing the newly formed Department of Rural Education in the College of Agriculture. Serving one year as assistant professor, he was then promoted to a professorship, a position he held until retirement in 1949. While at Cornell he served as a member of the Committee of 21, established in 1922 to survey New York's rural schools, and of a number of other state, local, and University committees dealing with teaching and learning. He was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Psychological Association, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Delta Kappa. Especially interested in the Ithaca community, Paul Kruse served as a trustee of the George Junior Republic and on the boards of a number of organizations dealing with children's welfare. He was an active member of the Rotary Club.

During his latter years at Cornell, Professor Kruse became interested in applying his expertise as an educational psychologist to the problems of teaching confronted by cooperative extension workers. Simultaneously, in the mid-1940s interest began to grow among cooperative extension personnel in learning more about the psychological dimension of their instructional tasks. These emerging interests led to requests from outside New York State for Professor Kruse to take part in workshops, annual conferences, and special summer schools for extension workers.

In 1947 the faculty of the College of Agriculture, on recommendation of a committee, approved the establishment of a professorship in extension education. Professor Kruse served for two years in this role until his retirement in 1949 as professor emeritus of education. After retirement, Dr. Kruse continued periodically to teach educational

psychology especially adapted to extension workers attending regional summer schools. His retirement residence was in San Diego, California.

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