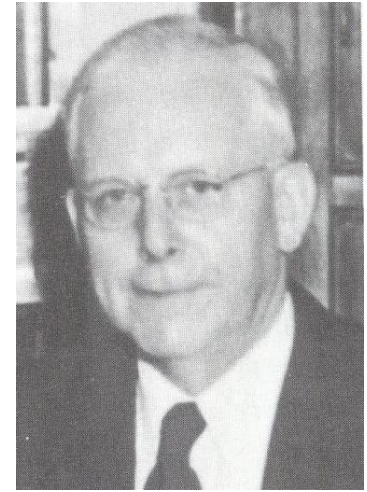


BEATTY H. DIMIT

12th MASTER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE GRANGE (1950-1956)



The Person:

- Born in Freeport, Armstrong County to John B. and Josephine Keener Dimit.
- Spent his early years on the family farm.
- Attended Ginger Cake Grade School and Slippery Rock Normal School; Graduated from Pennsylvania State University majoring in agriculture; Received a Master's Degree from University of MI and a Doctor's Degree from Columbia University.
- One of the first Agricultural Extension Agents and served in Beaver County.
- Married Irene Morgan of Freedom while living in Beaver. They had four sons – Dr. Robert, Reverend Harold, John and Beatty H. Dimit, Jr.
- Moved from Beaver to a farm near Slippery Rock where he organized the Department of Foods & Nutrition at Slippery Rock State College. Later he became head of the Chemistry Department at the University of Indiana, PA
- Ruling Elder of the Presbyterian Church, Clerk of Session and taught a Sunday School Class.
- Directed a college youth group in his home on Sunday evenings. Member of the Christian Concerns Committee of PA. DE & Associates of William Danforth Foundation for many years.
- Director of Farmer & Traders Life Insurance Company and National Grange Mutual Insurance Company
- Chairman of Interim Health Committee of National Grange
- Representative on Advisory Committee to Rural Health Council of American Medical Association
- Priest Analyst of Assembly of Demeter for eight years
- 1954 chosen as State Chairman of Cancer Crusade in PA. Under his leadership the total raised was \$1,272,056, the largest sum ever contributed in the State for cancer.

Of Note:

- Scholarship – Leonard and Margaret Sankey Rhone Scholarship Program accepted by the PA State Grange Executive Committee January 26, 1950 while Dr. Dimit was serving as Lecturer and in the same year he was elected Master. Memorial from Rhone children for parents Leonard and Margaret. The amount bequeathed was \$14,817.13. The interest to be divided annually between a boy and girl pursuing a four year agriculture and home economics course respectively at Pennsylvania State University. Mary Wilson, Centre County, the first recipient of the Home Ec Scholarship, and the ag field scholarship for a boy remained vacant until 1953 when it was awarded to Charles Ross, McKean County.
- Furman H. Gyger Awards established in 1951 by Judge James Milholland of Pittsburgh in memory of Mr. Gyger, Kimberton Grange, Chester County, and member of the Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees for many years. Continued by his son, Furman H. Gyger, Jr., agriculture member of

the Board of Trustees. Nominations submitted by County Agents and Extension Home Economists from 40,000 4-H Club members in PA. The University 4-H Staff selected the winners.

- 1951 – 447 Granges participated in the Blue Cross Hospitalization plan with 12,087 contracts in force
- Thirteen Regional Leaders' Conferences held across the state with 1,350 officers and members in attendance

Membership:

- 1951 – 702 Granges, 82,898 members; second largest membership increase in the nation for the year; 148 Granges qualified in Memorial Membership Campaign by gaining ten or more members in memory of Past National Master Albert S. Goss.
- 1951 – three new halls dedicated
- 1952 – three new hall dedicated
- 1953 – six new halls dedicated
- 1954 – five new halls dedicated
- 1955 – seven new halls dedicated
- Dues – 1954 additional revenue was needed to maintain programs on both State and National levels. Recommended increase of \$3.00 for the initiation fee but was rejected by the Delegates.
- 1955 – Delegates voted to increase the minimum Subordinate dues to \$2.50 annually. First increase in dues since 1948 State Session held in Reading. The National Grange increased annual dues to \$.50 per member

Legislation:

- 1951 – Master Dimit warned against government spending
- Opposed increasing trend towards centralization of agriculture programs in USDA. Danger of such control to existence of Cooperative Extension and land grant colleges.
- Asked for abolishment of Soil Conservation Service with their functions transferred to Cooperative Extension.
- Urged Granges and individuals to work to defeat legislation on universal military training.
- Sale of colored oleo legalized. Defeat for the dairy farmers in PA.
- Grange was among those opposing permitting large trucks with heavier loads. The bill was vetoed by Governor Fine.
- Education Committee presented resolution from Indiana County opposing federal aid and control of elementary and secondary education. The resolution was adopted by the Delegates.
- Legislative Committee reaffirmed support for a broad-based tax originally approved at the 1933 session – a graduated income tax.
- 1953 Master Dimit's Master's address, acknowledged that the PA State Grange initiated the first farm policy conference ever held at Pennsylvania State University. The findings were distributed through County Agricultural Extension Agents. Discussed the economic condition affecting agriculture.
- 1953 Legislative Session continued agitation with Truckers' Association to secure passage of big truck bill. Grange Leaders object of severe criticism from Truckers' Association.
- Constitutional Convention called for writing new Constitution. Recommended changes to present Constitution be made by amendment.

- State Master opposed huge government dams built at great expense. Felt could be controlled by small dams at headwaters supplemented with farm ponds and good soil conservation practices. Conformed to 1952 State Grange policy adopted by Delegates.
- 1954 State Master in favor of State Legislature to support aims and objectives of Hope-Aiken Small Dam Watershed Bill. This was in accordance to Grange opposition to large dams proposed by Federal Government Corps of Engineers.
- Grange policy continued to favor broad-based tax to support education.
- Opposed universal military training in favor of a small well-trained and equipped corps from a volunteer group.
- Called for enactment of a highway use tax as equitable means of developing funds with current need for more and better highways.
- Called for repeal of \$.02/gallon federal tax on gas with this amount available to various states.
- 1955 – State Master Dimit called for return to constitutional government noting the increase in federal spending and federal control. Criticized Federal Government as “a government which uses not only the earnings of individuals but confiscates the profits of industry and business to launch huge programs which compete with business and invade and subvert the right and functions of the 48 states.”
- Requested repeal of 16th Amendment – Income Tax. Amendment stating it was adopted as a war emergency but was now supplying funds for all kinds of socialistic schemes.
- Called for economy in government and spoke favorably of a sales tax with specific exemptions.
- Advocated a weight distance tax for trucks similar to NY state.
- Requested Grange reaffirm opposition to federal aid to elementary education and stated that control of education should be in the hands of parents and local people.
- Requested greater financial support for the College of Agriculture.
- 1956 – State Master spoke against activities of labor unions in their effort to organize farmers and farm labor. Urged members to resist such efforts and support established agricultural organizational in their efforts to protect the interest of farmers.
- Urged the Grange to insist on economy regarding cost of government. Suggested members assist by refraining from demands for increased or special services to be supplied by government; in addition, there should be greater restriction on installment buying, higher interest rates, and return to the gold standard in our currency.
- Bills which passed Legislature with Grange backing:
 - Full refund of tax on gasoline used off-highway
 - Use of lay technicians in Pullorum disease testing of poultry
 - Amended mixed fertilizer bill
 - Ice Milk law
 - Increase penalties for overloads on highways
 - Enactment of a sales tax
 - More adequate support of Pennsylvania State University, College of Agriculture and Agricultural Extension.

Lecturer:

- 1950-56 Elizabeth “Betty” Millard, Berks County, and former Juvenile Superintendent, elected at York. Married Vernon Norris in 1951 and moved to Valencia, Butler County.
- Increased emphasis on educational programs.

- More attention to ritual, concern with legislation and increase in community service area would increase attendance, membership and interest.
- Continued contest of previous years and added an officers' seating drill. Twelve counties participated with Ontelaunee Grange, Berks County winning.
- Encouraged participation in National Contests.
 - 1951 – Dawson Grange, Fayette County, won second in Quartet
 - 1953 – North Sewickley Grange, Beaver County, won second in Quartet
- Traveling programs encouraged Granges to hold play contests to raise money for the benefit of the new State Grange Headquarters.
- PA State Grange News featured the “Gossip Column”
- Leadership Schools conducted
 - 1951 Millersville State Teachers College
 - 1952 Bloomsburg State Teachers College with 100 in attendance
 - 1953 Edinboro State College
 - 1955 Mansfield State College – Mid-Atlantic Lecturers' Conference held in conjunction with Leadership School. Lecturers from five states participated.
- Served on a number of statewide committees during term and part of the planning committee for First Rural Health Conference held at Pennsylvania State University.

Home Economics Committee 1950-56:

- Mrs. Neff (Ethel) Richards, Bedford County, Chairman.
- Program goals – “Six H's” – Health, Hospitality, Home Emphasis, Hall Improvement, Helpful Community Service and High percentage of women and girls engaged in Grange work.
- 75% of Granges contributed to Tuberculosis or Cancer Foundation
- 95% of Granges appointed Hospitality Committees
- 1950 - Theme SERVE emphasis for “All Grange women to exercise their rights of franchise.”
- 60% of Granges undertook project to get 100% of women to the polls.
- PA Grange Cookbook – second publication by State Home Economics Committee. The first cookbook paid for the Grange Dormitory at Pennsylvania State University.
- 1950 – Mrs. C. Wesley Starr, Chester County, assumed Chairmanship at the end of 1950.
- Mrs. Starr's first report was 60 years after the Committee on Women's Work gave its first report at State Session in Harrisburg.
- In excess of 11,000 cookbooks sold and many Grange histories placed in college and school libraries.
- Women's Day held at 37th Annual Farm Show in Education Building. Miles Horst, Past State Secretary, and current Secretary of Agriculture served as the principal speaker.
- Highlight was the presentation of a quilt made by Manchester Grange, York County to Governor John S. fine. The quilt was the first place National Winner in 1952.
- 1953 Mrs. Gerald Barnes, Crawford County, placed first in youth sewing class.
- Women's Volunteer Work included operating a kindergarten, sponsoring a blood donor program, TB x-ray mobile unit, secured a doctor for a community, sponsoring baby clinics, and assisting at Juvenile Camp.
- 1953 State Grange first in nation for contributions to Muscular Dystrophy Fund.
- \$560.00 donated to Kelley Homestead Restoration Fund.

- Increased interest in National Grange sewing contest.
- 1953 State Home Economic Committee report noted that “Over \$50,000 gained from projects was reported by PA Granges and many did not report.”

National Limelight:

- Mrs. Starr, Home Economics Chairman, asked to prepare and direct the pageant “Good Fruits In Season” to depict work of all State Grange Home Economics Committees in the nation. A representative from each Grange state portrayed scenes appropriate to work in each state. Dr. & Mrs. Beatty H. Dimit assisted with the program, wearing the dress and regalia as worn when Oliver Hudson Kelley founded the Order; Mrs. Dimit was a member of the National Home Economics Committee. Also assisting were J. Collins and Mrs. McSparran, Mrs. Kathryn Stritzinger, and C. Wesley Starr.
- Mrs. Starr’s Home Economics Committee report received first place in the nation for states with over 300 Granges.
- Phyllis Goodyear, Red Lion Grange, York County, received first in Grange Doll contest.
- Virginville Grange, Berks County, won first place and \$500.00 for Quilt. The quilt was later presented to Mrs. Mamie Eisenhower at the White House.
- Increase in use of correspondence courses from Pennsylvania State University.
- Open House and a tea were held at the new State Grange Headquarters January 11, 1954.

Reflections from 1955-56:

- Home Economics Committee presented programs using themes of “Strengthening Family Living” and “Litterbug Menace”.
- 1955 – Myrna Long, Harrold Grange, Westmoreland County, received national second place in youth sewing contest.
- 1956 – Mrs. Anson Dersham, White Deer Grange, Union County, received national second place in adult sewing division.
- Women asked Legislature to enact laws banning the sale of obscene and immoral literature.
- Mrs. Starr’s last report in 1956 in Erie, reported an increase of participation in all projects. Muscular Dystrophy most aided health agency, Grange hall improvement and aid to youth programs high on list of accomplishments, and all contests were well supported.

Youth Department:

- Newly created in 1951 at Butler
- First report given by Perry Knorr, Columbia County, Chairman of Youth Sessions Committee, recommending a State Youth Committee be named by the State Master and space be given in PA Grange News for a Youth Department news column.
- Concentrated effort be made by all Subordinate Masters to have youth take a more active part.
- 1952 Allentown State Session report from Youth Committee using National Grange Youth theme “Keepers of a Great Inheritance” recommended:
- The State Master appointed an ACTIVE State Youth Committee with responsibilities to include:
 - Preparation of a newsletter to be sent to each Subordinate and Pomona Chairman quarterly.
 - Promotion of all state and national projects, and contests for youth.
 - Plan youth activities and a recognition program for the State Grange Session each year.

- The State Youth Chairman be entitled to attend the nearest National Regional Conference.
- Preparation of a monthly column in the PA Grange News.
- Maintain active contact with the National Youth Committee.
- Cooperate with other youth serving agencies.
- Plan a special leadership school for Pomona and Subordinate youth chairmen.
- Maintain active interest and cooperate with the Student Grange at the PA State University.
- Following the State Session Dr. Dimit appointed Brooke Althouse, Berks County, as Chairman.
- February issue of PA Grange News contained a heading “Interested in Youth”.
- August 1953 – 52 young people from 13 counties and several leaders attended youth camp at Seven Mountain Boy Scout Camp, Lewistown.
- First State Grange Youth Day held at State Session in Williamsport was in 1953. Youth filled the chairs and opened the session on Wednesday morning.
- Youth Program – two specific projects presented:
 - April observed as Youth Month
 - Youth Committee to erect direction signs from main highways to Grange halls. Program originated in Fayette County and accepted as a National Youth Project in 1955.
- Second Youth Camp held at Camp Kanesatake, Spruce Creek with 114 campers from 32 Pomona Granges in attendance.
- First Camp King and Queen selected – Queen Jean Markley, Snyder County and King Raymond George, Lawrence County.
- Mrs. O. Walker (Mary) Shannon assumed Chairmanship of State Youth Committee in 1955.
- 1,000 young people actively participated in Grange projects during April.
- State Grange Youth Leadership Training Camp held at Methodist Training Camp, Newton Hamilton, Huntingdon County had 207 campers from 33 counties.
- Camp King and Queen changed to Knight of Harvest and Princess of Springtime and Master’s Medal Award instituted. Participants must be between 14 and 21 and be single. Required to take a written test on Grange subjects. The contestant receiving the highest score would receive the Master’s Medal. The top five males and top five females presented to entire camp and elected by popular vote for Knight of Harvest and Princess of Springtime.
- Master’s Medal – Richard Porter, Crawford County, and Elwin Ream, Tioga County tied. Additional oral test given by Master Dimit and Richard Porter won.
- Frank Mitchell, Perry County and Ulrike Rhalenbeck, German Exchange Student, Allegheny County, voted Knight of Harvest and Princess of Springtime. Miss Rhalenbeck was the National Grange International Youth Exchange Student.
- Crowning ceremony written by Mrs. Harlan (Ruth) Underwood, Chester County.
- Charles Ross, McKean County, appointed to National Grange Youth Committee in 1956. He traveled as a Youth Program Specialist for National Grange during the summer.
- Mercer County completed the direction sign project with 100%.
- Drill Team Contest won by Big Knob Grange, Beaver County and Bernville Grange, Berks County.

Community Service Program:

- Combined effort of National Grange and Sears and Roebuck Foundation developed at National Grange Session in Columbus, OH in 1947. The National winner awarded \$10,000 plus nine other cash awards of lesser amounts given.
- PA Granges supported project designed to improve rural communities.
- 1965 – 580 Subordinate Granges participated
- Harmony Grange, Clearfield County, won first place on the national level in 1956. They built a new hall, secured a doctor of Veterinary Medicine, developed a three day Farmers' Institute and developed numerous other projects in cooperation with church, school, Agriculture Extension and other organizations.
- North Sewickley Grange, Beaver County, was the third place National winner in 1958. They were commended for their efforts in securing replacement of a 74 year old bridge. They developed and carried out a community polio inoculation project.
- Valley Grange, Elk County, in 1959 developed a new public water supply as the current one had been ruined by strip mining. In excess of \$10,000 interest free bonds were sold and hundreds of labor hours were donated.
- Curfew Grange, Fayette County, built a 22 acre recreational area with a swimming pool and received the second place nation award in 1961. \$60,000 was raised for the project.
- Royal Grange, Butler County, recognized in 1963 for completion of 32 projects, one of which was the establishment of a scholarship program to assist qualified students to obtain a college education.
- Many Granges developed community fairs – Hookstown Grange, Beaver County and Middletown Grange Bucks County which won first place in the Nation in 1967.

Junior Grange:

- The Juvenile Sessions Committee met in Butler (1951) and stated that the Juvenile Installation ceremony was recommended be held at a separate meeting other than the Subordinate Installation.
- In October 1951 the PA Grange News published a picture of the Juvenile King and Queen from Camp Brule` - Lanier Coons and Bonnie Metzger.
- 1951 Juvenile Superintendent appointed was Mrs. Royal (Anna) Frack and in 1953 Mrs. B. S. Newcomer, Fayette County became the Juvenile Superintendent.
- Sister Newcomer's annual report in 1954 included the following:
 - A Juvenile Committee of three members appointed in every Subordinate Grange.
 - A meeting place for each Juvenile Grange where regulations o Grange procedure will be respected.
 - Juvenile Grange leaders given recognition within the Subordinate and Pomona Granges.
 - Assistance in raising funds to send more Juvenile members to camp.
 - Better leadership through increased interest in Juvenile work.
 - Cooperation with the state and county youth committees.
 - More participation in the Juvenile Grange projects – county, state and national.
 - At least one Juvenile Grange in every county in PA
 - Improvement in Juvenile Grange ritualism.
 - Better communication between Deputy State Masters, Matrons, and Superintendents.

- 1954 State Camps were combined into one and held at Camp Kanestatke, Spruce Creek. The State Youth Leadership Camp held at the same location during the same weekend. There were 114 youth in attendance with no disruption to the Juvenile Grange program.
- 1955 Arlene Frack, Harmony Juvenile Grange, Northampton County, placed first in National Grange competition with her "Nature Scrapbook".
- 1956 Myron Cook, Shinglehouse received first for his entry in the Juvenile "Game Board Contest".
- 1956 Mrs. Newcomer, Juvenile Superintendent, reported that a state-wide Lecturers' and Juvenile Matrons' Conference was held at Mansfield State Teacher's College with the work of these Departments stressed and exemplified. As years passed and all Departments became involved in the conference, the name was changed to Leadership School.

PA State Grange Headquarters:

- Preliminary steps taken during Beatty H. Dimit's term as Master to acquire Grange owned headquarters in Harrisburg.
- J. Collins McSparran, State Secretary, consulted with real estate agencies and located an unoccupied building at 1604 N. Second Street, Harrisburg for \$37,000.
- Sale withheld until approved by Delegates at the October 1952 Session in Allentown, the 80th Session.
- Four plans formulated for financing by Master Dimit and the Executive Committee selected "that each Delegate be asked to pledge his Grange to the payment of \$1.00/member."
- Dr. Ira C. Gross, Executive Committee member, presented the proposal at the Allentown Session and was unanimously accepted.
- At the 81st Annual Session at Williamsport it was reported that "Headquarters Fund" contributions totaling \$36,282.62 were already received.
- November 10, 1952 Secretary McSparran and Treasurer Philip Price purchased the building.
- \$7,000 paid from Grange funds and the balance covered by a note to Harrisburg Trust Company at the rate of 4%.
- Cost of remodeling and equipping the building exceeded original estimate. The total was \$45,045.12.
- January 1953 Master Dimit appointed Ira C. Gross, George F. Ruth, and Mrs. Wesley C. (Anna) Starr as the Building Committee.
- May 1953 remodeling work done sufficiently to allow moving of offices from the Telegraph Building
- The building provided ample space for State Grange offices, storage of records, Conference room and extra space available for rental making the venture self-supporting.
- Mid-June 1953 all space rented except one room on the third floor.
- January 1955 remodeling and furnishing completed, grounds landscaped and parking lot paved.
- Landscaping provided by Indiana County Pomona Grange as their contribution to the Headquarters Fund. Planting done by Sam Dibble, Indian Pomona Treasurer.
- Total cost, including original purchase price and two lots approximately \$67,000.
- September 30, 1954, gifts from Juvenile, Subordinate, and Pomona Granges and individuals totaled \$56,657.70.
- The two year Headquarters Fund drive ended January 1, 1955.

Dedication of the PA State Grange Headquarters:

- September 13, 1956, the building was dedicated by E. Carroll Bean, High Priest of Demeter.
- State Master Dr. Beatty H, Dimit and State Officers assisted in the formal dedication.
- Past Masters J. Audley Boak and Kenzie S. Bagshaw in attendance.
- Bronze plaque acknowledging contributions and furnishings of Juvenile, Subordinate and Pomona Granges and individual Patrons placed over the mantle in the Conference Room.
- A bound and inscribed memorial register provided with the plaque which contains the honor roll of all who contributed to the Building Fund.
- Bank of England type chairs in the Conference Room were formerly presented by persons from the Pomona Granges who had sponsored them honoring the past 11 State Masters. The chairs were inscribed with name of Past State Master, years served and name and number of Pomona donors.
- Quartet of Clark and Erwin Fleming and Ray and Roy F. Metz, Big Valley Grange, Huntingdon County, sang during the ceremony.
- High Priest Bean's address was entitled "The Responsibility of Patrons and Citizens".