

William H. Kendrick



William H. Kendrick was largely responsible for the unique emphasis on the four-fold development of the 4-H Club members which has characterized the work with boys and girls in West Virginia. In 1912, he joined the Extension staff to assist in the supervision of the “200-hill” seed corn growing contests and a year later became State Agent in charge of boys’ clubs.

At the time when agricultural clubs for rural boys and girls in West Virginia was a new idea, “Teepi” Kendrick began organizing such clubs in many parts of the state. His dynamic personality won him friends and instilled confidence and he was able to recruit dedicated local club leaders. He made the clubs a state organization by establishing 4-H club conferences at Morgantown.

Mr. Kendrick had many “firsts,” He was the organizer of the first 4-H club in West Virginia; he was the first to adapt the 4-H name corn clubs and canning clubs in West Virginia; he was the first State 4-H Club Agent in the West Virginia Agricultural Extension Service; he helped set up and conduct the first county 4-H camps in West Virginia; he was the first Director of the State 4-H Camp at Jackson’s Mill and was one of the leaders in securing legislative approval of the Jackson’s Mill Camp.

Mr. Kendrick has what has come to be called “charisma.” He reached out for, and secured, the personal loyalty of hundreds of young people with whom he came in contact. He inspired them, turned their attention to public service, made them more conscious of their communities and churches, and turned a great number toward further education at West Virginia University and other institutions. By organizing cooperative trips to the Eastern States Exposition, and other similar gatherings, he gave many West Virginia rural youth a broader horizon. Always, he encouraged leadership development.

The development of Jackson’s Mill, the State 4-H Camp, during the period immediately following World War I, into an institutional center for country life activities was unique and significant. “Teepi” Kendrick, for 25 years State Club Agent and Assistant Director of the Agricultural Extension Service, gave the later years of his life to the vigorous direction and development of the Camp as a cultural and leadership development Center.