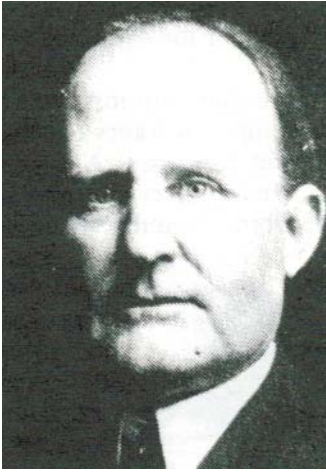


Earl W. Olegbay



Earl W. Olegbay was a noted businessman, a philanthropist, and a lifelong enthusiast of scientific agriculture. He made Waddington Farm, Wheeling, a wonderful example and source of unfailing inspiration to the farming interest of West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

Under his direction – as energetic and faultlessly planned as his business enterprises—Waddington Farm came to be the foremost example of progressive farming in his locality. He was a pioneer in the development of alfalfa as a staple farm product, this requiring 10 years of extensive experimentation. Mr. Olegbay maintained on Waddington Farm Guernsey herds which were among the nation's best. Fruit and grain farming also received his attention and what Mr. Olegbay learned in each of these aspects of agriculture benefited farmers everywhere.

Mr. Olegbay was disturbed by the lack of advantages afforded children raised on West Virginia farms. To help remedy this condition, he assisted in financing and encouraging another man – W.H. Kendrick of West Virginia University – who was a pioneer in merging and consolidating boys' and girls' corn, tomato, and canning clubs into the 4-H movement. Because he felt a vital interest in agriculture education, Mr. Olegbay lent his influence to the work of the 4-H Clubs, to the Agricultural Extension Service and County Agricultural Agents, and the College of Agriculture at West Virginia University.

In recognition of his work in the interest of agriculture in the State, the College of Agriculture building at WVU was named Olegbay Hall. Although the building no longer is the center of agricultural teaching and research on the campus it still retains its name of Olegbay Hall. Bethany College, in 1912, also named one of its buildings "Olegbay Hall of Agriculture."

For 15 years, (1911-1926), Mr. Olegbay served as a member of the West Virginia State Board of Education which has jurisdiction over the State University, the normal schools, and the vocational schools. He was selected for Board membership primarily because of his interest in agricultural education, but his interest soon became general and his well-developed business instincts and seasoned wisdom enabled him to render an invaluable service to the State.

Mr. Olegbay had a practical turn of mind, yet he wasn't a man of vision and keen human interest. He gave liberally to Bethany College, Western Reserve University, the Lakeside Hospital of Cleveland, the Ohio Valley Hospital at Wheeling, and to numerous other institutions and causes during his lifetime. He bequeathed to the city of Wheeling his fine Waddington Farm which is now known as Olegbay Park.

The National Exposition in San Francisco, in 1918, voted Mr. Olegby "West Virginia's most useful citizen" and said of him that "no man in the State of West Virginia gave more freely of his time and money in the interest of education and toward the material development of the State through agriculture."