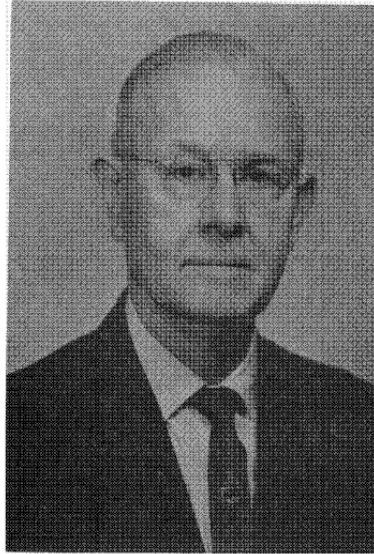


From the Oat Newsletter, volume 24, 1973:

O. T. Bonnett  
Award for Distinguished Service to Oat Improvement



Dr. Orville Thomas Bonnett, Professor Emeritus of Agronomy, University of Illinois, has made many contributions to his profession. He is particularly well known for his research in small grains improvement and in plant morphology and development. Dr. Bonnett was also regarded as a most outstanding teacher of plant breeding and plant morphology by students and colleagues alike.

His professional career began as a teacher in a rural school at Silverdale, Kansas, 1913-1914. He was county agent, Marshall County, Kansas, 1919-1921; Vocational Agriculture teacher at Alton, Kansas, 1921-1926; and Instructor, University of Wyoming, 1927-1928. Dr. Bonnett came to the University of Illinois in 1928 where he advanced through the various instructional and professorial ranks before becoming Professor Emeritus in 1962.

Dr. Bonnett was leader of the Illinois small grains breeding program for a number of years and, during that time, developed five improved soft winter wheat varieties and four spring oat varieties. One of his major contributions to small grains improvement was the development of the "hill plot" method of testing that continues to be widely used by plant scientists.

Even though Dr. Bonnett was quite occupied with small grains breeding, he still found time to conduct a monumental amount of research in plant morphology and development. Largely as a result of his contributions in this field, he was awarded a special Guggenheim Fellowship in 1948 to permit him to pursue his investigations on the morphology of the ear and tassel of corn. His research on plant morphology and development included work with oats, wheat, corn, barley and many other grasses. The

publications that resulted from this classical research are held in high regard and are widely used by scientists throughout the world. It is significant that Dr. Bonnett continued this fine research for more than ten years after retirement and his most recent publication was completed within the past year.

Dr. Bonnett is a member of Sigma Xi, Alpha Zeta, Gamma Sigma Delta, Phi Kappa Phi, Scabbard and Blade, American Society of Agronomy, American Botanical Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and is a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy.

Dr. Bonnett was born June 21, 1894 at Winfield, Kansas. He received his undergraduate training at Kansas State University, being awarded the B.S. degree in 1918 and the M.S. degree from the same institution in 1927. He received his PhD degree from the University of Illinois in 1933.