

1899

W.B. Otwell, Secretary of the Farmers' Institute in Macoupin County, Illinois, founded the first boys' corn club. He gave small packages of seed corn to 500 boys who were to grow corn and develop exhibits for the next farmers' Institute.

1901

A.B. Graham, a school principal in Ohio, began to promote vocational agriculture in rural schools in out-of-school "clubs."

1911

The four leaf emblem was officially adopted, with the fourth H designated for Health. The four H's were designated as follows: The Head was to be trained to think, plan and reason; The Heart was to be kind, true and sympathetic; The Hands to be useful, helpful and skillful. The Health H was to resist disease, and enjoy life.

LATE 1890'S

As the century turned, young people were moving to cities, drawn by the potential for jobs. They saw no future in laboring behind a plow. The atmosphere of economic prosperity was darkened by the nagging concern for the future generation of rural children.

O. J. Kerns, Winnebago County, Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, founded Farmers' Institutes to introduce farm and home topics and comparative classes for rural youth.

1902

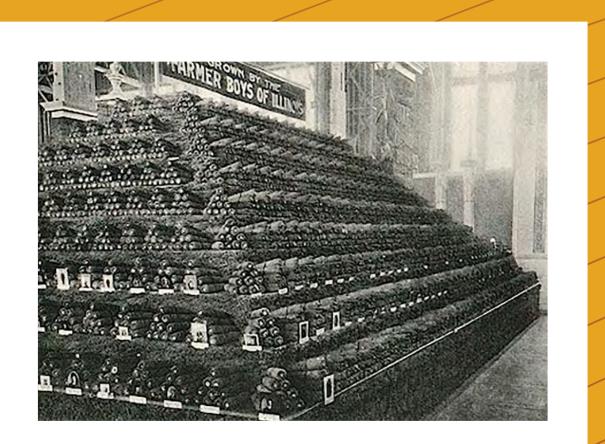
Graham formed a club of boys and girls with officers, projects, meetings, and record requirements. He sought assistance of the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station and Ohio State University. OTWELLS FARMER BOYS. His clubs are considered



the founding of 4-H.

1904

Otwell's Illinois exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition created a great deal of interest in the idea of working with young people.



1907

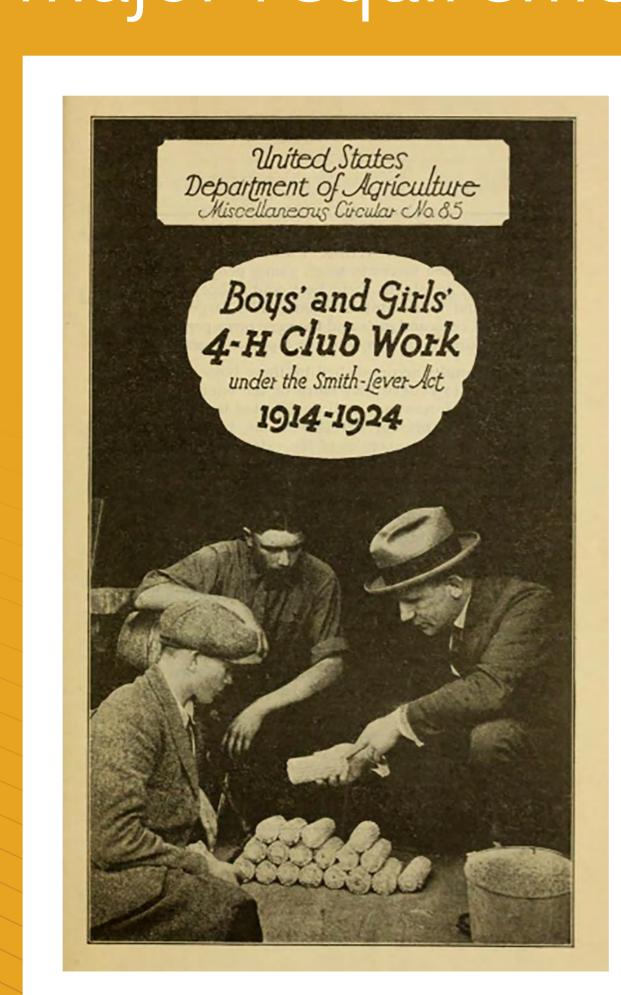
By this time, the principle ingredients of 4-H work had been tested. Graham had shown how well young people would respond Extension System. to organized clubs that introduced them to agricultural science and technology. Otwell's corn contests, with their premiums and equipment prizes, demonstrated the value of incentives to encourage young people to learn.

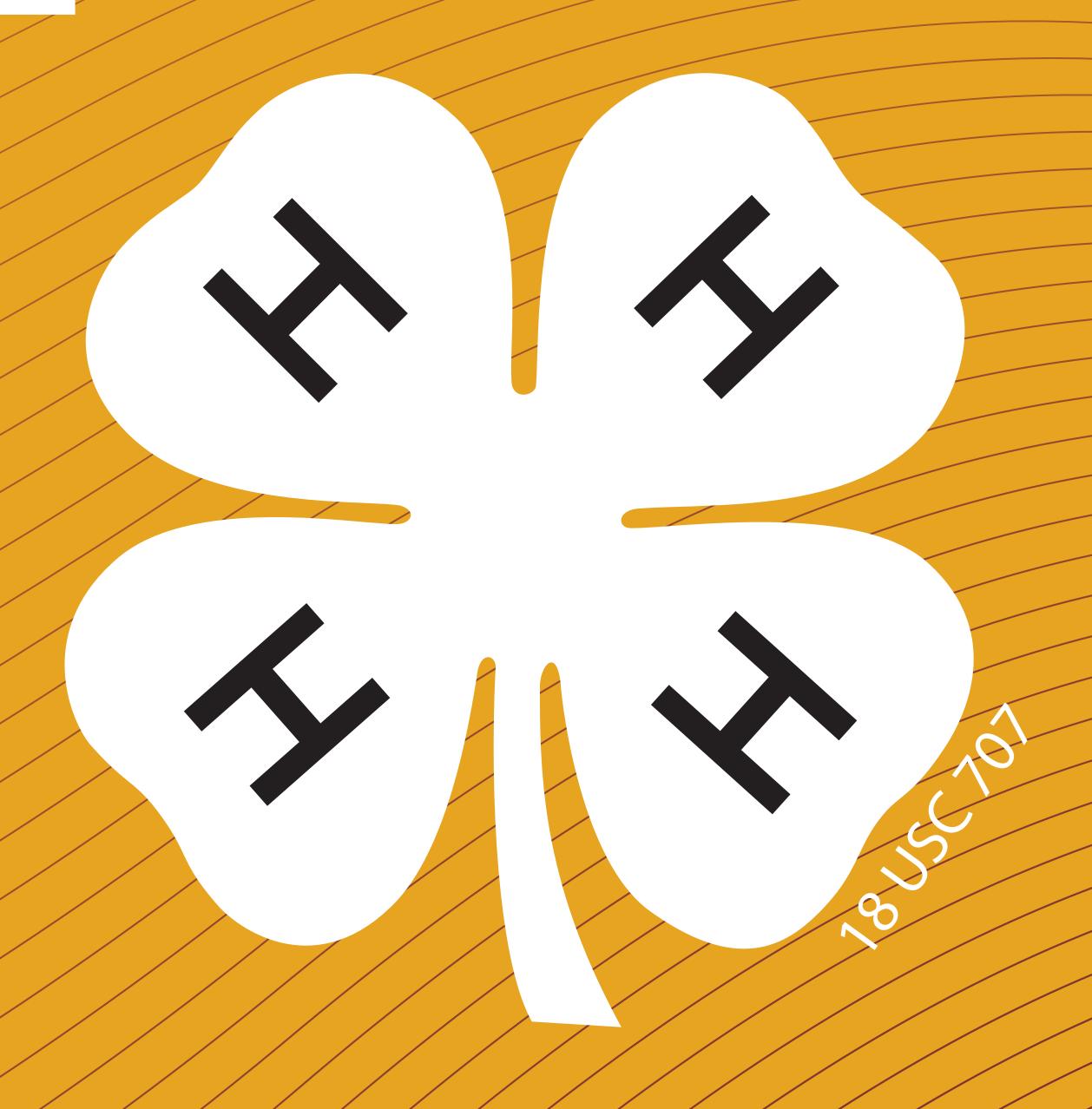
In 1907, education officials in Wright

County, Iowa presented the three-leaf clover to the members of their boys' and girls' clubs as an emblem for their organization. The three H's represented Head, Heart, and Hands.

1914-1917

Passage of the Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative County agents and local leaders began to organize 4-H clubs. Club meetings and projects were made major requirements.







1922

The first National 4-H Club Congress was the designation given to the national 4-H event in Chicago. In 1920, an educational tour held in the Union Stock Yards during the International Livestock exhibition to Chicago was the forerunner that eventually became known as National 4-H Congress.

1927

The 4-H Motto – "To Make the Best Better" – was coined by a USDA botanist.

1939

When the original patent on the four-leaf clover emblem expired in 1939, Congress passed a law protecting the 4-H name and emblem against misuse.

1944

In September of 1944, with the war coming to a close, the Joint 4-H Advisory Committee proposed a memorial for 4-H members and alumni who lost their lives in battle. It was ultimately voted that this memorial would be a State 4-H Camp.

1915

The first 4-H club in Illinois was the Union Pig Club, organized by C.C. Coots in Macoupin County in the spring of 1915. The wartime effort brought about rapid expansion of the work and by 1917 over fifteen thousand members were enrolled in Illinois. Not only were there corn and pig clubs, but the work now included canning, sewing, garden, calves - and even strawberry clubs.

1918

The term "4-H Club" first appeared in a federal document in 1918.

1919

One of the most important meetings in the history of the 4-H movement was held in Kansas City. The general structure of local clubs was firmly established, an expansion of projects was encouraged, relations between club work and vocational education in the schools were defined, and the general principle of local initiative was ratified.

1924

Club charters were first offered by U.S.

Department of Agriculture to local 4-H clubs as they organized and the four-leaf clover emblem was patented in 1924.

1941

With the United States' entry into World War II, 4-H responded to the needs for increased agricultural production and community service.



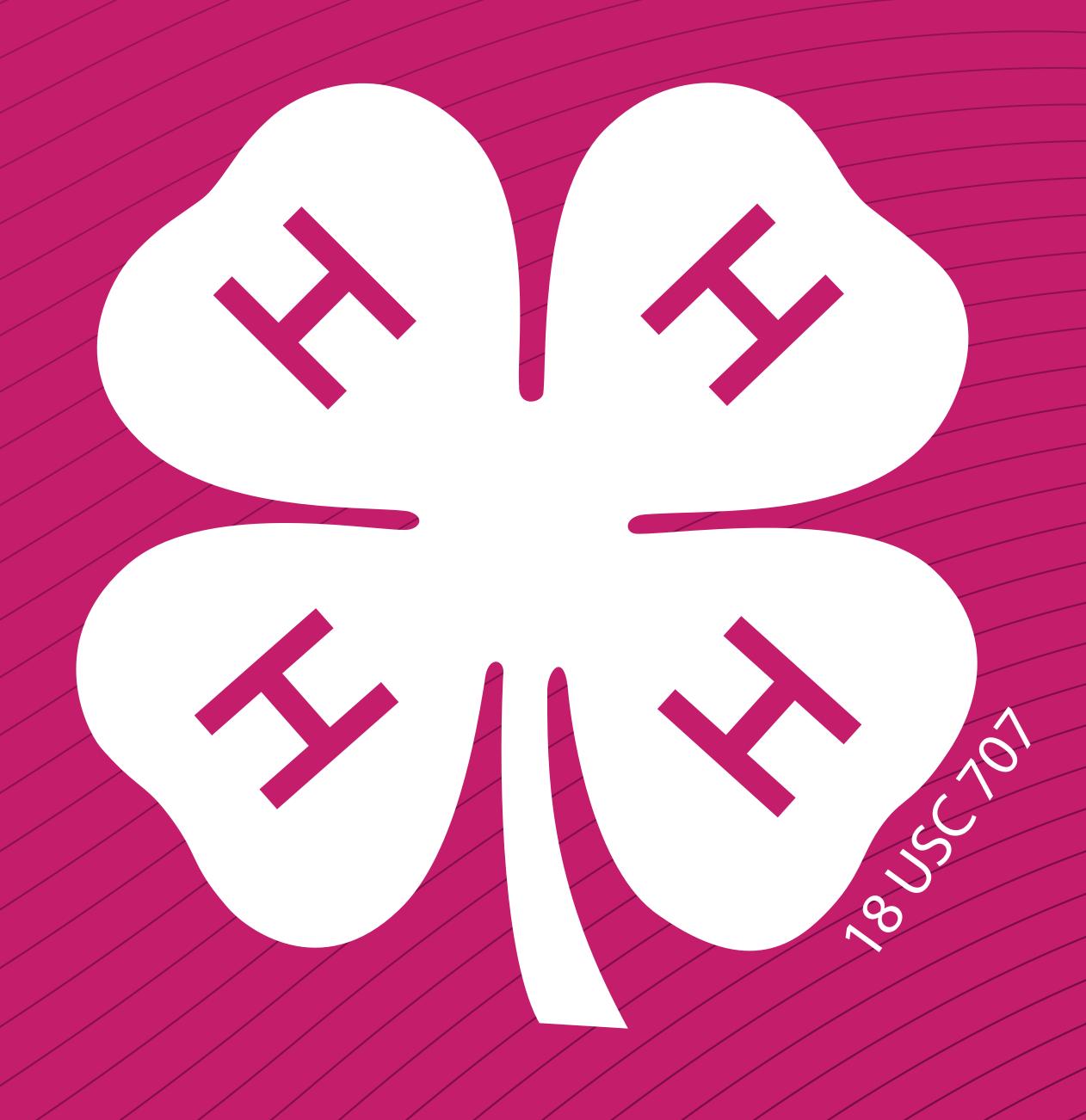
They grew Victory Gardens and sponsored fund-raisers in support of the war effort.

In one of their most notable drives, Illinois 4-Hers donated three ambulances to the American Red Cross after raising over \$4,500.

9,817 Illinois 4-Hers fought in the war, while countless others actively contributed on the home front.

1942

National 4-H Mobilization
Week was observed annually
in 1942, 1943, and 1944. The
following year, and every
year since, it has been
observed as National 4-H
Week.





1946

In July of 1946, young philanthropist, Robert Allerton, made a donation of 250-acres from his estate in Monticello, IL to house the 4-H Memorial camp.



1952

A 4-H Commemorative
Stamp was issued with
first day covers at
Springfield, Ohio, in 1952.

1973

The National 4-H Pledge was written by Otis Hall, Kansas State 4-H leader. The first and only change from the original wording added "and my world" at the close of the statement in 1973.

1983

In Illinois, the
4-H age was
expanded for
eight-year-old
to join the 4-H
program.

1947

County 4-H club agents established their own national professional association in 1947.

1948

While still in the beginning phases of construction, 4-H Memorial Camp opened for the first time for rudimentary camping in July 1948.

The National 4-H
Foundation was organized
in 1948 and Chevy Chase
Junior College was
purchased as a site for a
national 4-H training
center.

1960

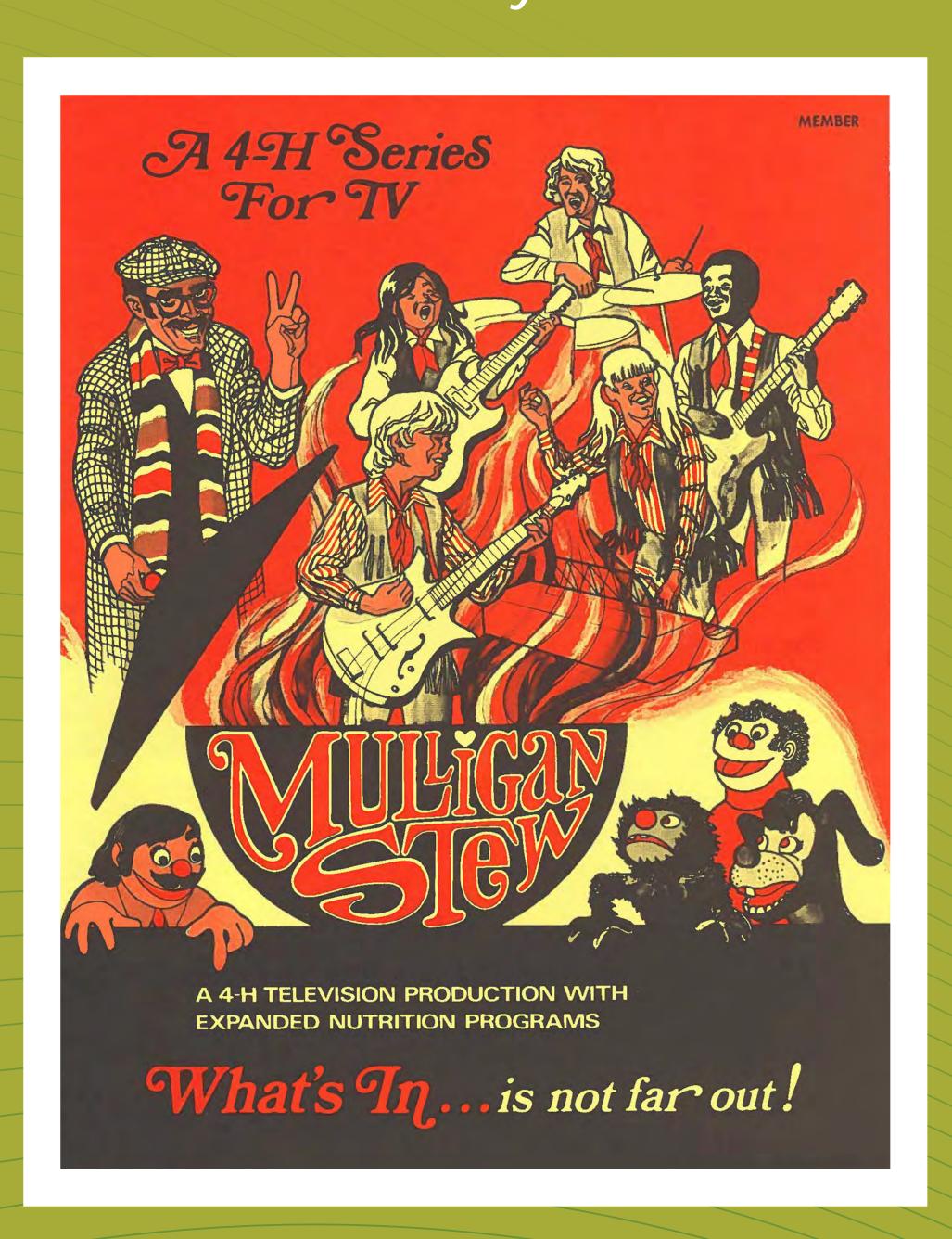
A study of urban 4-H was undertaken with support of the Ford Foundation in 100 metropolitan areas where 4-H was organized. Illinois' urban programs had begun in Chicago in 1955, with the help of a grant from the Coats & Clark Company.

1965

It used to be that 4-H served young people between 10 and 21 years of age. Since 1965, youngsters between 9 and 19 years of age have been eligible to take part in 4-H.

1972

A highly successful 4-H television series, Mulligan Stew, was premiered by the Extension Service in 1972 and that began the exploration for new 4-H delivery methods. Many of those new initiatives continue today.



1981

Launched the first 4-H Day on the University of Illinois campus. 4500 Illinois 4-H members and their families watched the Fighting Illini take on Syracuse University in the hope opener game. At half time, the Marching Illini presented a spectacular show complete with 4-H flags and a huge 4-leaf clover.









1996-2002

28 log cabins constructed to replace initial cabins in the Adopt-A-Cabin campaign at 4-H Memorial Camp.

2002

Celebrated
100 years
of 4-H in
Illinois



2009

Illinois 4-H adds the National 4-H
Shooting Sports curriculum
offering archery, rifle, and shotgun
SPIN Club opportunities to youth

2013

Illinois 4-H
Livestock
Ambassadors
launched

1996

1997

Illinois launched the
Illinois 4-H Cloverbuds
Program for youth ages
5-7 years old.

Illinois launched the 4-H Can Make A

collecting over 2.3 million pounds of

food and contributed more than 2.1

million hours of volunteer service at

meal programs throughout the state.

food banks, pantries, shelters, and

Difference Food Drive Campaign,

1999

Launch of the Illinois 4-H Youth Leadership Team

2007-2008

The Remember CAMPaign fundraising effort assists with paying for a complete \$1.1 million dollar replacement of the commercial kitchen at 4-H Memorial Camp

2004

Illinois launched the
Operation Military Kids
Program to support
deployed National Guard,
Army Reserve and Active
Duty Soldiers children.

2015

Launch of the Illinois 4-H Hunger Ambassadors

2016

Launch of the Illinois 4-H
Alumni Association

2020

Launch of the Illinois 4-H
Food Advocacy Team

