

The University of Arizona College of Agriculture and
the Arizona Historical Society Oral History Programs

Narrator: Gladys O. Klingenberg

Interviewer: Gerry Eberline

Transcriber: Beth Thrall

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Today is Tuesday, July 25, 1995. I am Gerry Eberline representing the University of Arizona College of Agriculture. Today I am in the company of Gladys Klingenberg for the purpose of recording Mrs. Klingenberg's recollections of farming in Pima County, Arizona. We are in Mrs. Klingenberg's home at 515 West Quail, Green Valley, Arizona. Gladys, am I correct in stating that it is your intention to give this tape and typed transcript resulting from this interview to the Arizona Historical Society?

Gladys: Yes, it is.

Gerry: Would you please tell us about what you can recall in this area because you've been here so very long and I know you can tell us so much that will be of value to the University.

Gladys: Thank you, Gerry. First of all I want to say that I'm married to Paul J. Klingenberg, Class of 1933, College of Agriculture, University of Arizona. He was associated with my father, James B. Bull, in his farming operation known as Bull's Farms, Inc., from 1950 through 1969. I, Gladys Bull Klingenberg, am giving the account of my father's association in farming two miles North of Continental and lands in the Sahuarita area from 1926 through 1969.

James B. Bull was born in 1887 in Arkansas and died in 1975 in Tucson, Arizona. Mr. Bull, then living in El Paso, Texas, with his wife Lee Ethel and their two daughters, Gladys and Margaret, worked as a bookkeeper for several prominent businesses since his

arrival there in 1916. In September, 1926, he accepted a similar job of bookkeeping with a group of Rio Grande Valley cotton farmers named Messers, Ivy, Dale Owens. They were farming 3,000 acres of cotton that year, San Ignacio de la Canoa Land Grant, and it was the land that is now under cultivation by Farmers' Investment Company. Due to health reasons related to extreme allergic conditions, he had to leave his job in the area. He truly regretted having to leave the Continental area. The family did settle in Tucson where Mr. Bull continued his bookkeeping jobs with various prominent businesses.

Gerry: Gladys, where did the name Continental come from in this farming area?

Gladys: Continental was named by the Inter-Continental Rubber Company that came to the area to grow guayule for substitute rubber to be used in World War I. The crop never was produced due to the fact that World War I ended.

Gerry: Thank you so much. Could you continue on then and talk about the farming operation?

Gladys: I spoke about the fact that my father was working in Tucson but all the time he longed to be able to return to the Continental area and to farm on his own. Farming was his family's background and livelihood in his early years in Arkansas. As a young man after only a seventh grade level of formal schooling, he enrolled and excelled in a business school. This was in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

In 1931 he succeeded in acquiring his first parcel of land of 160 acres located two miles North of Continental, lying West of State Highway 89 to the banks of the Santa Cruz River. It was in 1933 he began to farm the land with the help of labor in the area. Mr. Bull continued with his bookkeeping jobs in Tucson. In the fall of 1940, he and his wife moved

to their farm and continued to live there until 1969. The entire holdings were sold to the Anaconda Mining Company. Mrs. Bull died in 1968. A retirement community (Quail Creek) has been developing since it was established in 1989.

Through the years the Bulls continued to acquire additional adjacent land until their holdings were approximately 2,000 patent acres and located on both sides of the old Highway #89. In addition, several Sections of State and Federal Land leases were held. In 1940 Mr. Bull became full-time farm manager and bookkeeper for his own growing operation. During World War II years, the production of cotton and the demand for the product were tremendous. Beginning in the mid 1940's and continuing for the remainder of the farming years diversified crops were rotated. In addition to the cotton, the crops included cauliflower, various grains, peanuts and grasses for seed production.

In the early years during the Great Depression, financial help was almost nonexistent. Later in the 1930's, after Walter Bimson, a Chicago banker, of the Gila Valley Bank acquired the old Consolidated Bank in Tucson, he saw a definite need to finance farmers in Pima County. An agricultural department was established and Mr. George Pond (deceased) in that department handled Mr. Bull's financial and agricultural needs for many years. In Phoenix, Mr. Bimson and the Valley Bank recognized Mr. Bull and other Arizona farmers in a ceremony as the Outstanding Agriculturists in Arizona.

Through recommendations of the Valley Bank, Mr. Bull became active and a Board Member of Georgia's Cotton Producers Association from 1954 to 1967. The Georgia Cotton Producers came as a Cooperative in 1954 in Pima County with cotton gin

operations.

Gerry: Gladys, do you recall other awards that Mr. Bull received over the years?

Gladys: Well yes. In 1962, Tucson Kiwanis Club named James B. Bull Agriculturist of the year. In addition, for many years Mr. Bull served on the Continental School Board. He was also active in the Pima County Farm Bureau, as well as serving as a supervisor for the Soil Conservation District beginning in the early 1940s and into the 1950s. Technical information came to Mr. Bull early in his farming adventure from the Pima County Extension Office through the then County Agent, Mr. C. B. Brown. Earlier, my father had no contact nor interest in higher education institutions. Then he became a friend of a young UA Agronomy Professor William Thomas, who had recently moved to the local farming community. Mr. Thomas was in the Plant Breeding Department. Mr. Bull became interested in the contact with the Agricultural College and enjoyed the persons from whom he received a great deal of information that benefited his farm activity. When my father died my family gratefully received a letter of condolence from Dr. Harold Myers, Dean Emeritus, College of Agriculture.

Gerry: Gladys, I understand that Mr. Bull had grandchildren that attended the College of Agriculture here at the University of Arizona.

Gladys: Yes. Our three children, John Klingenberg, Dan Klingenberg, and Jeanne Klingenberg Herrman, and a grandson, Jeff Klingenberg, all received their B.S. Degrees from the University of Arizona and all of them are in agriculturally related careers at this date.

Gerry: I see you have some attached material that is to be included in the interview. Could you tell me

about it?

Gladys: Yes, the attachments, I thought, would be of interest. A location map; an obituary from a Tucson newspaper regarding my father, Mr. Bull; and a copy of a letter that we received from Dean Myers.

I should include another grandson of Mr. Bull's. He is Douglas Klingenberg who received a B.A. Degree from the University of Arizona.

Gerry: Gladys, I appreciate the time that you have given us today to review the many years that you have spent in this area and valuable information that will be put into the Arizona Historical Society for future readers. Thank you very much for your time. We appreciate it.

Gladys: You're welcome, Gerry.