

## Fred BELLES

Tri-County News, Jan 30, 1958

Fred Belles, who lives a mile south of Milligan in Parke Co, was highly honored last week at the annual meeting of the Indiana Livestock producers held at Purdue University when his portrait was presented to the University for inclusion in The Purdue Hall of Fame. The following talk was given by Noah Hadley, former Parke Co. Agricultural Agent. Last November Walt Wimmer and I spent a day hunting quail together. The less I say of the hunt, the better, but it was a fine day and we had a fine visit. The best part of it was that Walt asked me to do a job here tonight. I didn't give him a chance to change his mind - I snapped it right up because it is an assignment I am proud to have and happy to perform. Of the 54 men this association has honored there is none I would prefer present than Fred Belles. First, I want to qualify as somewhat of an authority on Fred Belles. I have known him for 19 years. During 7 of those years, I was his Co. agent and he was very active in many phases of extension work. For 15 years he has been my neighbor - our farms are two miles apart. He is my banker, my insurance rep, my friend and in my ways my benefactor. Secondly, I want to emphasize that in making this presentation I am really presenting two people. Down around Russellville and Milligan when we speak of the Belles, everyone knows we mean Fred & Blanche Belles. Many sometimes speak of Fred or of Blanche but usually they are the Belles, because they are a team. It is true that Fred is the captain of the team, but without her help, inspiration and devotion the team efforts would not be the same. So, while what I say will be about Fred, it will also be about the Belles. Fred was born Jan 28, 1884 near Danville in Hendricks Co. Now, just to help you with the arithmetic, that means he will be 74 years come next Tuesday. 52 years ago he married Blanche LaFollette. In 1905, they started their married life on the Parke Co. Farm where they still live. As a farmer, Fred Belles is successful and highly respected. He is a breeder of Pure Bred Shropshire Sheep, Duroc hogs, and Shorthorn cattle. Although his herds and flocks have been small, they have been of the best. In 1932 he received the Master Farmer Award. An agricultural leader, his list of contributions is far too long to recite here. He has served on practically every committee in Parke Co. Extension Program and been chairman of most of them. He has held practically every office in the township and county Farm Bureau organizations. He was and is a key man in Parke Co. and Russellville fair Associations. He is a leader and successful contestant in the various Gold Medal Clubs. He was for many years a director of the Indiana Livestock Breeders Association and served as president of this organization in 1945 and 46. Fred Belles is a successful business man. As cashier of the Russellville State Bank, he has built that institution into a solid, sound, and constructive enterprise which fills a great need in the community. He is a very efficient and highly respected representative of the

Indiana Farmers Mutual Insurance Company. As a church man, Fred is a senior elder of the Christian Church, Russellville. He has held ever major lay office in the church. He and Blanche regularly teach classes there. But the greatness of Fred Belles lies not in his personal accomplishments. Other may match his accomplishments as a farmer, livestock breeder, businessman, or even as an agricultural leader, but few can surpass him as a mold of men. The home of the Belles has not been blessed with children, but they have become godfather and godmother to a whole community of young people. A lot of 4-H kids have had help, guidance, encouragement and example from Belles. Some of them are here tonight. If they were all here, they would half fill this room...a few days ago I was down at Milligan, I asked one of Fred's young neighbors what he would say if he had my job tonight. After some thought he said, "Well, all I can say is - he is the kind of man I would like to be known as." So, President Hovde, I present to you a true friend, a fine neighbor, a topnotch farmer, a tireless agricultural leader, a respected businessman, a loyal community worker and a true gentleman - Fred Belles - and on behalf of the Indiana Livestock Breeders Association I give to you the portrait of Fred Belles to be hung in the Agricultural Hall of Fame in commemoration of his services to agriculture and his fellow men. And to you, Blanche, I give a copy of this portrait as a memento of this occasion.

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