

The news in this publication is released for the press on receipt.

OCTOBER 26, 1927

CHAPEL HILL, N. C.
 THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS

VOL. XIII, No. 50

Editorial Board: E. C. Brenson, S. H. Hobbs, Jr., P. W. Wager, L. R. Wilson, E. W. Knight, D. D. Carroll, H. W. Odum.

Entered as second-class matter November 14, 1914, at the Postoffice at Chapel Hill, N. C., under the act of August 24, 1912.

PROGRESS AMONG NEGROES

NEGRO EXTENSION WORK

According to a recent bulletin of the United States Department of Agriculture entitled A Decade of Negro Extension Work, home ownership is the largest factor in the solution of the so-called Negro Problem. Cooperative extension work, especially since the comprehensive organization of negro extension agents, has been one of the greatest influences in encouraging and helping negroes to become landowners and to succeed with land investments. Energetic negroes soon learn thrift and have the ability to become good demonstrators.

Farmers' cooperative demonstration work was begun in 1903. At first, all demonstration agents were white men and women, but in 1906 farm and home demonstration work for negroes was begun. The first negro farm demonstrators were appointed that year and the first negro home demonstration agent in 1912. The work among the negroes owes much of its success to the high quality of negro leadership developed at the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes. In fact, the influence of these two major institutions has affected all the schools and colleges where negro agents have been educated. Every southern state now has a group of efficient negro agents, whose numbers are increasing. To be specific, the number of negro agents in the fourteen states mentioned in this week's table has increased from 66 in 1915 to 293 in 1924. The cost of the negro extension work in these states has increased from \$31,589 in 1915 to \$415,248 in 1924.

Negroes Responsive

Negroes are especially responsive to the demonstration method, because of their faith, confidence, and optimism. Demonstrations have reached the most ignorant and the most needy better than any form of academic instruction, because demonstrators must be doers before they become teachers. The demonstration method has proved to be not only the best for the ignorant, but also for the intelligent. The negro farmers want usable knowledge about specific things. Many negro agents seem to have the ability to encourage their demonstrators and magnify the influence of their work. Negroes are very susceptible to commendation and praise. It means a lot to a man, woman, boy, or girl, who has started out on a demonstration program, to receive recognition from his pastor, his neighbors, and especially from the leading white citizens. Whenever a county paper calls attention to the outstanding results obtained by a negro farmer, he immediately measures up to the added responsibility and goes forward on the path of improvement. Whenever there is a considerable number of demonstrators of that kind, it is easy to do organization work along agricultural and home-economics lines. In fact, negroes who have demonstrated that kind of enterprise and dependability are ready for cooperative marketing, or other welfare organization. The great task that is before the negro extension force is to multiply the numbers of good demonstrators.

Results Encouraging

According to the bulletin on which these paragraphs are based, there were in 1924, 3,659 negro farmers who undertook demonstrations with cotton and 3,072 carried the work to completion and submitted reports. These demonstrations represented a total of 23,043 acres. In addition, 2,630 junior club members planted an acre or more of cotton and 1,734 of them completed the work and submitted reports. Many of these boys cleared more than \$100 each on their acres and some more than \$200. This is not bad for boys who attend school regularly.

Corn has always been a favorite crop for demonstrations by both adults and juniors in the South, because it is used so much for food and feed and because it responds so well to special attention. Demonstrations in corn in 1924 covered 25,442 acres and involved 12,335 demonstrators. Each demonstration was probably observed by several neighboring families, hence the number of people influenced was large.

Thousands of demonstrations were likewise made with leguminous and

forage crops, with tobacco, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, melons, berries, and truck crops. Unusual significance may be attached to the livestock demonstrations of negro farmers. The large number of cows, hogs, and chickens owned by them indicates increased land ownership by negroes. Likewise, it means progress when negro boys and girls cared for 102,070 high-class farm animals in their club enterprises in 1924.

The progress and the benefits of home demonstration work among negroes have been no less significant than those of farm demonstration work. Large numbers of negro women and girls have been demonstrators in gardening, food preparation and preservation, home beautification, house furnishing and other home projects.

Altogether, the extension work among negroes has in ten years witnessed a phenomenal development. Its influence is bound to be tremendous. There is no field of education where greater good can be accomplished by earnest, devoted agents working along right lines.

ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

The most beautiful picture in America is that which the Julius Rosenwald fund is painting across the map of the Southern states, says The Christian Century (Nondenominational) enthusiastically. It is only fifteen years since "this modest, retiring Jewish merchant" established the fund for the encouragement of adequate education for negro children, especially in the South, but its results are already writ large. The Rosenwald fund provides part of the money, wherever a southern state, together with a local negro community, provides the remainder necessary for the building of schools of modern type, in which an adequate education may be given. The negro community involved must give a sum equal to or greater than that given by the fund. One or more rooms, we read further, must be dedicated to industrial education in every Rosenwald school, and there must be at least two acres of ground for agricultural instruction. When completed, the schools become public-school property. Statistics are usually tiresome things, says The Christian Century:

"But to those who look with foreboding on the race question in the United States some statistics as to the present status of education for negroes in the South will prove worth noting. There were 86,610 schoolhouses of all kinds in the fourteen Southern states in 1924, when the federal Bureau of Education compiled its latest figures. On July 1 a year ago there were 24,079 schools for negroes. The simple, one-teacher type of school made up 63.8 percent of these negro schools; the two-teacher school, 18.8 percent; the three-teacher school, 7.1 percent, and the four-teacher and larger, 10.3 percent of all rural negro schools in the South. The influence of the Rosenwald fund is even more clear when it is said that only 5.0 percent of the one-teacher schools are Rosenwald schools, while 29.3 percent of the two-teacher, 31.2 percent of the three-teacher, and 31.7 percent of the four-teacher and larger schools for negroes have been helped by this fund. These Rosenwald schools provide 27.4 percent of the pupil capacity for the total rural enrolment of negro children."

Negro High Schools

There are now 209 four-year accredited negro high schools, North Carolina leading with 49 and Texas coming second with 25. There are, in addition, 592 non-accredited schools doing from two to four years of high-school work. The total enrolment in these schools, when these figures were gathered a year ago, was 68,606, and 6,435 young negroes had graduated that year at the completion of a full four-year course. It will be seen that this means that almost 40 percent of the total enrolment is staying in high school long enough to graduate—a fine showing.

"But we go back to the picture. Some amazing and enheartening things are happening in America these days. Some things big with portent for the future are being undertaken. But among all the contributions to our

AT HIS BEST

The negro is, in my opinion, naturally a farmer, and he is at his very best when he is in close contact with the soil. There is something in the atmosphere of the farm that develops and strengthens the negro's natural common sense. As a rule, the negro farmer has a rare gift of getting at the sense of things and of stating in picturesque language what he has learned. The explanation of it is, it seems to me, that the negro farmer studies nature. In his own way he studies the soil, the development of plants and animals, the streams, the birds and the changes of the seasons. He has a chance of getting at first-hand the kind of knowledge that is valuable to him. —Booker T. Washington.

national beauty or our national strength, we know of none comparable with the painting of this picture. We lift our hand in salute to the vision and the courage of the man who first conceived the map of these great States as his canvas, and then dared to sweep upon it such a glorious composition as this. —Literary Digest.

A NEGRO FARMER

J. F. Thompson came to Augusta some 35 years ago from Union Point and started work as a drayman on Cotton Row. Long years of service have incapacitated him for further work, but his son Charles carries on, and Harold, another son, is the farmer of the family, augmented by his mother, Ann Thompson, who started the family out in agriculture.

Harold began his work as a mere youth and rented land a short time until he bargained to buy a farm, the Taylor Hill place down the river, consisting of some 900 acres of land, and when this was settled for he bought, with the assistance of other members of the family, the Lombard and Holmes tracts, comprising another 400 acres, and has under lease at present 150 acres more of land, or a total of about 1500 acres.

Last year upward of 10,000 bushels of corn was grown, more than 15,000 bales of hay, more than 30 bales of cotton, and oats galore. He has sold thousands of bushels of oats, Fulghum seed oats, one Augustan buying 2000 bushels and M. M. Daniels of Millen buying 2000 bushels. On the farm today are more than 300 acres of the finest oats imaginable, oats that make 50 or 75 bushels per acre.

The farm is equipped with tractors, power presses and other modern supplies that make farming in the Savannah River Valley a success. The story is one remarkable in that it shows what can be done in farming around Augusta, and there is no question but that some day every acre of fertile valley land of this section will be utilized for agricultural purposes, and it is certain that two blades of grass, or even five or six, will be made to grow where only one has grown heretofore.

The lesson of these colored farmers is one that ought to be inspirational throughout this entire section, and a visit to the place, six or seven miles down the Savannah River road, will show the public what is being done there and what can be done elsewhere around Augusta.

With the construction of immense dams above Augusta for water-power purposes, the flood control of the Savannah River would be well-nigh perfect. With this done, a vast acreage could be opened up with a reasonable degree of safety from any overflow and farming on an extensive scale could be carried on from every viewpoint around Augusta. It is worth considering and means great things for those who go into the proposition and pursue the work on an intelligent basis.

Anybody who has some 8000 bushels of fine corn and 10,000 bales of choice native hay to sell at this season has little to worry about in making a success of agricultural operations. The Thompson family, colored, is doing much to demonstrate the possibilities in farming, and it is a great pity that thousands of both white and black farm-

ers of this section do not emulate their example and grow the things needed at home.

In addition to these staple crops, the Thompsons grow quite a quantity of hogs, some chickens, some truck and other products that contribute to swelling the coffers of the family.—Manufacturers Record.

NEGRO FARM TENANCY

The table which appears in this issue gives the number of negro tenant farmers in each of fourteen Southern states in 1910 and in 1925. It also indicates in each case the ratio of tenants to the total number of negro farmers. The table was limited to those states in which there is a relatively large number of negro farmers. The states are ranked on the basis of negro tenancy ratios. In Virginia only 33.8 percent of the negro farmers are tenants; in Mississippi 87.1 percent are tenants. The other Southern states lie between these two extremes.

More significant, perhaps, than the present tenancy ratio is the trend. Is it upwards or downwards? Our computations reveal that in ten states the ratios were higher in 1925 than in 1910, and in four states the opposite was true. Incidentally, North Carolina's negro tenancy ratio increased from 67.7 to 72.7, not a very encouraging commentary. Only in Texas was the increase greater. Florida witnessed the greatest reduction, its tenancy ratio falling from 49.7 to 42.8. Taking the entire fourteen states the negro tenancy ratio increased from 76.0 in 1910 to 76.6 in 1925. While any increase in tenancy is to be deplored it is worthy of notice that the increase among negroes was less than among whites in the same area.

A Numerical Decrease

Numerically seven states showed an increase in negro tenancy in the fifteen-year period and seven a decrease. Taking the entire group of states the number of negro farm tenants decreased from 667,913 in 1910 to 635,612 in 1925. In the same period the number of negro farm owners decreased in these states from 210,116 to 193,638. In other words, there was an exodus of negro farmers from the South rather than any appreciable passing from tenancy into ownership.

A study of the table reveals that the number of negro tenant farmers increased slightly in Virginia, Maryland, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana, and increased phenomenally in Texas and North Carolina. On the other hand, there were slight decreases in Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina and Mississippi, and phenomenal decreases in Alabama and Georgia. It is evident that there has been a steady migration of negroes from the South Atlantic states northward, with a considerable number of them stopping in

North Carolina. There appears also to have been a migration from the Gulf states westward into the newer cotton areas in Oklahoma and Texas.

Causes and Effects

The causes of the shifting of negro population are easier to explain than the consequences. The boll weevil has been an expulsive force; the negro farmers have tried to advance ahead of it. Again the negroes generally find it to their economic advantage to migrate from areas with a high negro ratio to areas with lower negro ratios—in other words to spread out. Possibly the migration has been prompted in part by the prospect of better schools, better institutional facilities, better race relations.

An increase of 15,189 negro tenant farmers in North Carolina in fifteen years can hardly be an unmitigated blessing. The addition of these landless hordes from regions further south introduces serious problems—both economic and social. The presence of new competitors hinders the economic advance of our native farm tenants, and makes a reduction in farm tenancy more difficult. The influx of thousands of homeless negroes, unacquainted and unadjusted, makes for social disturbances. There is an increase in crime, race friction, and social maladjustments of every sort.—Paul W. Wager.

A RURAL PROBLEM

Education of negroes in the United States is mainly a rural problem. A recent study by the U. S. Bureau of Education indicates that 93.4 percent of the negro schools in fourteen southern states are in rural communities. In other words, there are 22,494 rural schools and 1,585 urban schools. The average length of the school term in the rural schools was in 1925-26 about six months. The range was from 8.7 months in Maryland to 4.7 months in Alabama. Of the 801 negro high schools in the fourteen states, 290 are four-year accredited high schools. The total enrollment in the high schools in 1925-26 was 68,606 and the number of four-year graduates was 6,435.

IN VARIED OCCUPATIONS

An increasing number of colored business women find employment as insurance agents and real estate agents and nearly 200 have qualified as undertakers. Fully 2,500 are clerks and saleswomen in stores, and others are making a livelihood and gaining business experience as commercial travelers, decorators, drapers, and window dressers, as demonstrators and floor-walkers in stores, and as employment office keepers. We have several opticians and nearly 400 female hucksters and peddlers, a number of junk dealers, and a dozen or more dealers in rags. All of which indicates a decided improvement in the economic status of our race.—Columbian Press Bureau, quoted in The Southern Workman.

NEGRO TENANT FARMERS IN THE SOUTH

Number and Ratio, 1910 and 1925

The following table shows the number of negro tenant farmers in each of the Southern states in 1910 and in 1925. It also indicates in each case what percent of the total number of negro farmers the tenants represent. The table is based on United States Census statistics.

It will be noticed that the absolute number of negro tenant farmers increased in seven states and decreased in seven states. The tenancy ratios increased in ten states and decreased in four. Mississippi has the largest number of negro tenants, as well as the highest tenancy ratio; nevertheless the number has decreased by nearly twenty thousand since 1915. North Carolina witnessed the greatest increase numerically, and Texas the greatest relative increase. There appears to be a gradual movement of negro farmers northward and westward.

Paul W. Wager

Department of Rural Social-Economics, University of North Carolina

Rank	State	1910		1925	
		Negro tenant farmers	Percent of all negro farmers	Negro tenant farmers	Percent of all negro farmers
1	Virginia	15,691	32.6	16,928	33.8
2	Maryland	2,334	36.6	2,510	37.3
3	Florida	7,311	49.7	5,148	42.8
4	Kentucky	5,753	49.1	5,747	53.6
5	Oklahoma	8,370	63.4	11,348	56.6
6	North Carolina	43,676	67.7	58,865	72.7
7	Tennessee	27,551	72.0	25,412	73.3
8	Texas	48,554	69.6	61,840	75.7
9	South Carolina	76,285	79.0	72,179	79.7
10	Alabama	93,288	84.5	70,539	82.7
11	Arkansas	48,872	76.9	52,181	73.8
12	Louisiana	44,062	80.4	49,913	83.9
13	Georgia	106,733	87.1	72,206	85.9
14	Mississippi	139,433	84.8	130,796	87.1