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THE PRESS AND FARM LIFE

RURAL GRADED SCHOOLS

We are presenting this week a table showing the percentage of rural elementary school pupils in each county who are enrolled in schools with seven or more teachers. Since there are seven grades, a school with seven or more teachers may be considered a fully graded school. Our figures are supplied by State School Facts, which in turn is indebted to L. L. Williams, a University of North Carolina student, who made the compilations.

Last year there were 376,473 pupils enrolled in the 3,549 rural white elementary schools of the state. Of this number 154,502, or 41.1 percent, were in schools with as many as seven teachers. The number of and enrollment in each type of school is indicated below:

Type of school	Number	Enrollment
One-teacher	1,172	37,300
Two-teacher	1,031	62,423
Three-teacher	447	41,760
Four-teacher	219	29,398
Five-teacher	155	27,276
Six-teacher	111	23,815
Seven-teacher	121	31,137
8-10 teacher	182	60,693
11 or more teacher	111	62,672
Total	3,549	376,473

There are seven counties which have no rural elementary schools with as many as seven teachers. These counties are Alleghany, Ashe, Chowan, Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell, and Washington. Fifteen counties have only one such school. On the other hand, there are 33 counties with at least five rural schools of the larger type.

In Stanly county 83.5 percent of the rural elementary pupils are enrolled in these larger schools. In Pasquotank the percentage is 83.2. In twenty-seven counties at least half of the rural children are enjoying the privileges of the larger type of school.

Many Large Schools

Altogether there are 414 rural elementary schools with seven or more teachers. It is true that in 298 of these schools high school departments are maintained, so there is not always a full-time teacher for each grade. Nevertheless a seven-teacher school approximates a graded school. Indeed a fair degree of graded instruction may be given in schools with four, five, or six teachers. Many rural children are attending schools of this size, although the tendency now is to effect larger consolidations. Less than ten percent of our rural white pupils of elementary grade are now attending one-teacher schools and each year the ratio is becoming less. It must be remembered, too, that this study is concerned only with rural elementary schools. Many children living in the country are attending school in special charter districts, so the ratio of underprivileged children is even less than our figures show.

The consolidation program in North Carolina has proceeded very rapidly. In few states has it gone further. In a few years more, if the movement continues, there will be no one-room schools left except in a few remote and isolated sections. Most educators favor the larger school units. The greatest objection to consolidation has been the cost and dangers of transportation, and these are objections which have not yet been fully overcome.

A New Community

There is one aspect of consolidation of undoubted benefit. The consolidated rural school is furnishing a center or focus for the larger rural community which is coming into being. With the appearance of the automobile, the R. F. D., the telephone, and the radio, the old "neighborhood" has been disintegrating. In many respects this is saddening, for there was much that was lovely in neighborhood society and neighborhood activities. But with new modes of travel and communication, multiplying the rural dwellers' social contacts, the break-up of neighborhood society was inevitable. The larger school district offers a new unit of organization and the consolidated school with its larger program a new community center. Those consolidated rural schools which recognize their opportunity will develop a program of education, recreation, and social activ-

ity that will reach parents as well as children. In some instances the rural consolidated school is enriching and rejuvenating rural life in a most encouraging fashion. It is providing the community life which the country has so badly needed. Where this is not the case the rural superintendents and teachers need to catch the vision and direct their efforts toward its realization.—Paul W. Wager.

THE PRESS AND FARM LIFE

No civilization languishes when its agriculture flourishes, and no civilization flourishes when its agriculture languishes. There is scant room for doubt or debate about this truism. It is as old as the race itself.

It is therefore assumed that the Newspaper Institute of the State Press Association will like to come at once to consider definite constructive suggestions.

Live-At-Home Farming

First. Organize a state-wide campaign for the production of cash-crops on a live-at-home basis. The Dallas, Texas, News has for five years conducted contests for prizes in farming of this sort. The annual booklets of the Dallas News are familiar to every editor in the state. The results in Texas are spectacular and very little that is not spectacular arrests the attention of anybody nowadays. The prize winner in 1927 produced fourteen bales of long-staple cotton on five acres within boll-weevil lines, at a cost of six cents per pound, and at the same time he produced around \$20,000 worth of food-and-feed stuffs. It is safe to say that Mr. McFarlane is not only making money at farming, but is having a fair chance to retain and accumulate wealth on his farm. The prevalent farm system in North Carolina is notably strong in wealth-production, but it is weak as water in wealth-retention and wealth-accumulation. Which after all is the most important matter for our farmers, and in the long run for the Commonwealth and the Nation. As an effective detail of this newspaper campaign, it is worth while featuring our twenty-four Master Farmers, one by one, in our newspaper columns. They are all live-at-home farmers and two of them have risen out of tenancy into ownership on this basis.

Front-Page the Farmers

Second. Carry brief, graphic stories throughout the year of other successful farmers within the curtilage of each paper. It is good business policy to feature farming and to blue-ribbon individual farm achievement. Already it is being done by the press of the state from time to time. The suggestion here is that it be definitely a newspaper program for 1928. And the suggestion is made because of the nature of human nature. It is better to teach by example than by precept. Indeed the farmers will not submit to lecturing from editorial offices. A year of the campaigning suggested will make plainer than a pikestaff the fact that ownership-farming on a bread-and-meat basis is safe farming, that tenancy-farming is extremely hazardous, and moreover that cropper-farming menaces our civilization, for civilization is rooted everywhere and always in the home-owning, home-loving, home-defending instincts.

The Crisp-McKellar Bill

Third. Illustrate the fundamental necessity for community life among home-owning farmers. For lack of such farm-life centers, in the State and the Nation, our farmers are innocent of the impulse, the virtues, and the arts of group action in both life and livelihood. As a result our farmers dwelling in solitary farmsteads are without defense in the distribution of farm commodities and farm incomes. The choice is between farm blocs in farm business or farm blocs in politics. The boy up the apple tree, as you may remember, wisely preferred turf to stones as missiles of dislodgment. And here your attention is directed to the Crisp-McKellar bill in Congress (House document 765, sixty-ninth congress, 2nd session) on Rural Development in the South. It is not a soil reclamation but a social reclamation project of farm

THE LOOK AHEAD

Phil. 3: 13

I am done with the years that were:
I am quits:
I am done with the dead and old:
They are mines worked out, I delved in their pits:
I have saved their grain of gold.
Now I turn to the future for wine and bread;
I have bidden the past adieu.
I laugh and lift hand to the years ahead;
"Come on! I am ready for you!"—
Edwin Markham (The Expositor).

owners under expert direction, one colony in each state, financed by a federal revolving fund of ten million dollars as an aid to ownership and operation. It is modeled on the Durham Colony in California. The general public and in particular our own Congressmen must thoroughly understand this bill or it stands little chance of passing. The West has 160 millions of federal money invested in reclamation areas and to the extent that farm colonies in irrigated areas have failed, they have failed for lack of expert guidance. It is the South's first chance at a federal reclamation fund and it is distinctively planned to have the seven colonies of the South succeed at the point where the Western irrigation colonies have failed. The press of the state can alone give to our people the publicity that is requisite to success in this matter. The North Carolina Press Association would do well, in my opinion, to appoint its own committee of four, say, to investigate the measure and to act with the present state committee of twenty-five in securing adequate publicity.

Better County Government

Fourth. Hammer hard the necessity for improved county government in North Carolina. The five state-wide county government laws passed by the 1927 Assembly are in print, but they are far from being in full or even in partial effect in 60-odd counties. These laws could not have been enacted without the unbroken and outspoken unanimity of the state press. But the hardest part of the work remains to be done, the work of showing our county officials and shoving them forward into competent public service under these laws. The County Advisory Commission of the State is performing a function that is almost unique in the United States, but its office and field agents cannot hope to cover the state effectively in many years. If our local papers can get wholeheartedly into this job of adoption, they can wonderfully quicken the pace of the state in a matter in which North Carolina is already distinctly in the lead. Our county bond debt approaches \$200,000,000, and the cost of county government approaches \$40,000,000 a year. Only scrupulous, competent service in our court-house offices will avail to save twenty-one counties of this state from approaching bankruptcy. The matter is extremely important in all our counties.—E. C. Branson before the Newspaper Institute of the State Press Association.

TAXES ON INDUSTRY

At the last meeting of the North Carolina Club at the University of North Carolina a paper was presented by H. L. Macon, a graduate student at the University, dealing with the Tax Burden on Industry. Mr. Macon took a hypothetical cotton mill and computed the tax to which it would be subject in several different states and at different points in the same state. Even after making every possible effort to check his sources of information, Mr. Macon said that he could not verify his conclusions. It is fairly easy to compute state taxes, but it is extremely difficult to ascertain the real rate of local property tax because of the variations in assessments.

Mr. Macon quoted the New York Journal of Commerce to the effect that the New England cotton mills were in dire straits due, in part at least, to burdensome taxes. It is claimed that taxes are twice as high in Massachusetts as in the South, that assessments

are often higher than the mills will sell for, and as a result the mills are forced to move out or cease operation. The Governor of Massachusetts in his inaugural address said, "It is an open question whether we have not imposed such taxes on our industry that there is nothing to do for many of them but quit."

On the other hand Southern towns and cities are doing all in their power to attract new industries. Chambers of Commerce are advertising the advantages of their respective localities in glowing terms. South Carolina and Alabama have state laws allowing the local authorities to exempt new industry from taxes for a period of five years, and it is being done. Pennsylvania, too, is bidding for industry by almost completely exempting manufacturing establishments from state taxation.

As a means of determining the relative tax burden on a textile industry in North Carolina and in other states, Mr. Macon took a hypothetical case. He assumed that the actual value of the capital stock in the corporation was \$807,000, and the net income \$64,660. The real estate and machinery were estimated at \$516,000. The local and state taxes paid in various locations would be as follows:

Fall River, Massachusetts	Local taxes	\$14,626.00
	State taxes	2,751.20
	Total	17,377.20
Greenville, S. C.	Local taxes	\$12,493.76
	State taxes	4,852.24
	Total	17,346.00
Charlotte, N. C.	Local taxes	\$12,952.35
	State taxes	3,712.20
	Total	16,664.55
Chattanooga, Tenn.	Local taxes	\$13,607.88
	State taxes	1,208.96
	Total	14,816.84

Montgomery, Ala.	Local taxes	\$5,709.60
	State taxes	1,911.60
	Total	7,621.20

Reading, Penn.	Local taxes	\$7,387.88
	State taxes	None
	Total	7,387.88

If the information on which these computations are based is reliable, we find that the South as a whole is not a low-taxed region and that the lowest taxing state of the group is Pennsylvania.

State and local taxes in Massachusetts and South Carolina take 27% of the net income; North Carolina 25.5%; Tennessee 23%; Alabama 11.5%, and Pennsylvania 11%. These percentages do not include the federal taxes.

Exemption Questionable

These percentages are sufficiently large to bear directly upon the location of industry. Not all of the South will be industrial. Does North Carolina desire industry to the extent of being willing to make special concessions? Industry enlarges the opportunity for employment, raises the wage level, provides better markets and better business for the farmers, merchants, and all classes. On the other hand any concession is a definite step into unequal taxation. Pennsylvania has exempted manufacturing corporations from taxation and the result is that the farmers are complaining of the discrimination and the heavier tax which they pay as a result. Non-manufacturing concerns have registered a complaint and as a result the State Tax Commission has recommended that all corporations be exempt from the franchise tax rather than that the tax be restored on manufacturing concerns. North Carolina should hesitate before granting exemptions to any single form of taxables.

RURAL WHITE GRADED SCHOOLS

Percent of Rural Pupils Attending Such Schools, 1926-27

In the following table, adapted from information contained in a recent issue of State School Facts, the counties are ranked according to the percentage of rural white elementary school pupils attending schools with seven or more teachers. The table also indicates the number of rural elementary schools with seven or more teachers in each county.

There are 414 such schools in the state with 41.1 percent of the rural elementary white pupils enrolled therein. In twenty-seven counties more than half of the rural pupils are enjoying the opportunities of a fully graded school. In Stanly county 83.5 percent of the rural children enjoy this privilege, and in Pasquotank 83.2 percent. On the other hand, there are seven counties which do not have a rural elementary school with as many as seven teachers. These counties are Alleghany, Ashe, Chowan, Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell, and Washington.

Paul W. Wager

Department of Rural Social-Economics, University of North Carolina

Rank	County	Rural schools with 7 or more teachers	Percent of rural pupils in such schools	Rank	County	Rural schools with 7 or more teachers	Percent of rural pupils in such schools
1	Stanly	11	83.5	51	Martin	3	34.7
2	Pasquotank	2	83.2	52	Orange	2	34.1
3	Edgecombe	4	79.9	53	Hertford	2	32.9
4	Lenoir	6	79.3	54	Warren	2	32.2
5	Wilson	8	77.0	55	Randolph	5	31.6
6	Gaston	13	76.0	56	Swain	3	31.2
7	New Hanover	3	74.7	57	Graham	1	29.7
8	Forsyth	10	73.6	58	Haywood	5	29.5
9	Avery	4	72.7	59	Onslow	2	28.6
10	Buncombe	17	70.3	60	Alamance	3	28.5
11	Mecklenburg	14	69.1	61	Mitchell	2	27.7
12	Pender	4	66.6	62	Burke	3	26.2
13	Rockingham	9	64.0	63	Chatham	3	26.1
14	Granville	5	63.8	64	Caldwell	4	26.0
15	Greene	4	61.2	65	Currituck	1	25.1
16	Johnston	13	61.1	66	Pamlico	2	24.8
17	Durham	4	61.0	67	Clay	1	24.1
18	Catawba	13	60.9	68	Stokes	4	23.9
19	Guilford	12	59.6	69	Halifax	2	22.7
20	Montgomery	5	57.8	70	Alexander	4	22.6
21	Jones	2	56.4	71	Iredell	4	22.5
22	Wayne	7	55.4	72	Perquimans	1	22.1
23	Duplin	7	55.2	73	Lincolin	3	21.8
24	Camden	2	52.2	74	Anson	2	21.6
25	Vance	2	52.2	75	Northampton	2	21.1
26	Caswell	4	51.7	76	Yadkin	3	20.7
27	Cumberland	7	50.4	77	Jackson	2	20.2
28	Wake	9	49.8	77	Madison	3	20.2
29	Nash	9	49.4	79	Union	4	18.3
30	Cabarrus	5	49.3	80	Surry	3	18.1
31	Bladen	4	49.1	81	Carteret	1	17.6
32	Craven	5	48.9	82	Gates	1	17.3
33	Davidson	9	48.8	83	Polk	1	16.7
34	Henderson	7	48.0	84	Watauga	2	14.4
35	Bertie	5	47.9	85	Brunswick	1	13.1
36	Richmond	4	47.0	86	Beaufort	2	12.5
37	Hoke	2	46.3	87	McDowell	4	11.4
38	Rutherford	8	45.8	88	Cherokee	1	9.2
39	Harnett	6	45.6	89	Macon	1	9.1
40	Columbus	8	45.0	90	Moore	1	8.8
41	Sampson	9	43.8	91	Yancey	1	8.4
42	Person	4	43.1	92	Franklin	1	7.9
43	Davie	2	43.0	93	Wilkes	1	2.7
44	Pitt	6	42.8	94	Alleghany	0	0.0
45	Scotland	1	41.8	94	Ashe	0	0.0
46	Lee	2	41.1	94	Chowan	0	0.0
47	Robeson	7	40.4	94	Dare	0	0.0
48	Rowan	6	37.1	94	Hyde	0	0.0
49	Cleveland	6	35.6	94	Tyrrell	0	0.0
50	Transylvania	2	35.4	94	Washington	0	0.0