Negroes engaged in tobacco manufacturing are traced to 1760 when P. Lorillard Company, makers of Old Gold cigarettes, established the first tobacco factory in the U. S. Here at Lorillard's Bronx River Mill, N.Y.C., above, smoking tobacco was manufactured for the first time in the U. S. These are among the many facts revealed in Old Gold cigarette's "Brown Skin and Bright-Leaf"-the story of the Negro's role in the tobacco industry.

BROWN SKIN AND BRIGHT LEAF

The Story Of The Negro's Role In The Tobacco Industry

Mrown Skin and Bright Leaf Chapter IV-Education For Tomorrow

If there is one sure ground for the optimistic tone of this report on the future of the Negro tobacco farmer, it is the magnificent work that is being done in agricultural education by the Negro agricultural colleges and the various branches of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service.

What's a Negro tobacco farmer to do when his beds of precious seedings are attacked by weeds or insects...when his new tractor fails to perform as promised...when sudden storms threaten his lush midsummer crop? Chances are he'll call on his local county agent for the U.S.D.A. Extension Service. In his isolated rural area, how's he going to learn the latest methods of waging chemical warfare against plant and insect pests...draining heavily flooded soil...building new barns for curing and storage? Chances are his local county agent has already arranged a demonstration of these techniques...or will do so on short notice.

To the Negro (or white) tobacco farmer, the county agricultural agent is many things: friend, helper, teacher, and adviser on everything from tobacco cultivation and marketing to home improvements and domestic relations. His influence, perhaps more than any other, is responsible for the independent Negro tobacco farmer's strides of progress in the past thirty years. Trained in every phase of tobacco growing, with an approach at once scientific and friendly, he is able to teach and assist the farmer from the first seeding of the crop to its marketing and the management of his finances.

Of the more than 5,000 county agricultural agents employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in the South, nearly four hundred are Negroes. Federal, state and county appropriations, in that order, share the support of the agricultural extension work.

Planning and supervision of the Extension Service's growing national program rests with experienced men of the USDA's Washington office. A former county agent, a Negro is a national leader of the South's extension program and directs the policies to be carried out by many agents in tobacco-producing regions.

For an accurate measure of the value of the Negro county agent's work, you might ask a typical Negro farmer of Lexington, Ky. The farmer happily credits the soil improvements suggested to him by his Negro county agent with improving the yield of his tobacco acreage 100 percent. "I got started on the right track" he says, "when my county agent encouraged me to send samples of my soil to the State laboratory for testing. When the report came back, I knew for the first time what my land really needed." Today, by seeding winter cover crops, turning them under in the spring, and applying the proper composition of fertilizer, this farmer harvests 1'800 pounds of burley tobacco per acre from the same land that once yielded a scant 1,000 pounds.

Then you might visit another prosperous Negro farmer of Bryantown, Md., who would tell you that his county agent encouraged him to install flourescent lights approximating "daylight" illumination to aid him in the accurate stripping and grading of tobacco. You might make a short tour of Nash County, N. C., where Negro tobacco farmers, under the supervision of their county agent, voluntarily donate their land to soil conservation demonstrations so that they may learn from each other. Or you might visit Charlotte County Va., where some forty veteran bright tobacco farmers are going back to school to learn the newest methods of controlling suckers with mineral oil and destroying insects with DDT.

Everywhere you would see young and old Negro tobacco farmers taking to modern ideas and equipment like ducks to water, becoming more conservation-minded and profit-minded--and hence more prosperous. And everywhere the figure of the Negro county agent looms as the major influence behind this great change.

Consider five typical months in the active life of a busy Negro county agent for Wayne County, Va. Here in the heart of the flu-cured tobacco regions, where some 18,000 acres of tobacco are grown on 75 percent of the county's farms, the agent made nearly 6,000 contacts with farm families in the months from December to May. He made 79 visits to farms, conducted seventeen meetings and demonstrations, and taught at two schools. One of these "schools" was attended jointly by more than four hundred white and Negro farmers, who came together to learn new methods of nematode (destructive worm) control. In this same period this specialist also instructed groups and individual farmers on the following subjects: tobacco variety, tobacco barn construction, soil sampling, fertilization, plant bed preparation, soil fumigation, plant spacing and its effect on crop quality, and various types of pest control. While only 154 of the 1,465 Negro farmers served by this agent own their farms, it is safe to say that his emphasis on profitable farming methods will encourage--and enable--a few more tenant farmers to become independent every year.

When the time comes for the cured crop to be taken to market, the Negro tobacco specialist also provides invaluable help to the farmer. Outstanding in this field is one specialist, who is employed by the Agricultural Marketing Service of the USDA to instruct tobacco farmers in the latest market news and prices and in the preparation of tobacco for market. With headquarters at A. and T. College in Greensboro, N. C., his work of teaching the Negro farmer to be a better businessman covers the extensive flue-cured tobacco regions of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

The agricultural marketing specialist's connection with A. and T. College and the scope of his work, which includes cooperation with agricultural extension agents and college teachers of vocational agriculture for the instruction of 4-H Club members, high school and college students, and veteran farmer trainees, shows the close linkage of the many branches of agricultural education in the South.

The state agricultural colleges, like Greensboro's A. and T. and Orangeburg, S. C.'s A. and M. College, provide the knowledge, the research, the specialized teachers, and the most promising crop of students. The extension agents and marketing specialists of the USDA provide cooperation toward a common end: better farming, better tobacco, and enlightened, prosperous farmers.

And the youth organizations, like the Extension Service's 4-H Clubs and the U. S. Health and Welfare Administration's New Farmers of America, provide the hope of the future-alert, ambitious youngsters who aspire to successful farming careers. Some 50,000 Negro boys are enrolled in the NFA and some 337,000 Negro children are members of 4-H Clubs in the seventeen Southern states. While the NFA is more specifically directed to Negro youth studying vocational agriculture, both organizations teach children and teenagers sound agricultural and business methods and good citizenship--and both have excellent tobacco training programs. The amazing achievements of these youngsters, encouraged, trained and rewarded by these organizations, are the strongest promise of a shining future for the Negro farmer in Tobaccoland...and for the entire tobacco industry.

Editor's Note: Next Week, Chapter V-*Creative Craftsmen* which reveals, Skilled Negro labor and its role, past and present, in the growth of the American tobacco industry; the skills at which Negroes have distinguished themselves thumbnail biographies of valued workers at P. Lorillard plants.

School Heads To Be Greeted By Govt. Officials

NEW YORK

Thirty-one presidents of Negro colleges will meet with Mayor Robert F. Wagner when they open their three-day convocation. Then will follow a luncheon at Columbia University, a visit to UN headquarters to report to the Secretariat on the college's work in training UN personnel, Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles will address the final session at the Metropolitan Opera House.

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ARTHUR B. McCAW, former Director of the Budget for the state of Nebraska, is currently a member of the Tax Appraisal Board for Douglas County, Neb. He is also active in many other organizations.

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