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## STATE BALANCE SHEET

### TAXABLE WEALTH

The increase in wealth in North Carolina during the last two decades is almost without parallel in the United States. As late as 1901 the total value of all property as shown by our tax books amounted to only \$299,666,756. Ten years later we had on the tax books a total of only \$747,501,000. In 1920 the total value of all property on the tax books amounted to more than three billion dollars. Since 1920 many counties have allowed horizontal reductions in the listing of property so that the total value of all property listed for taxation at present amounts to about two billion six hundred million dollars. Probably not more than 60 percent of our taxable wealth is on the tax books so that the present real wealth of North Carolina is close to five billion dollars, both taxable and non-taxable.

It is interesting to note that two counties in North Carolina had almost exactly as much wealth on the tax books in 1923 as the entire state had in 1901. At the present time Forsyth and Guilford, two adjoining counties, have about 300 million dollars' worth of property on the tax books, against less than 300 million for the entire state in 1901.

Again, Guilford county is illustrative of the marvelous increase in wealth during the same short period of two decades. In 1902 the value of all property on the tax books in Guilford county amounted to about nine million dollars. The assessed value of all property in 1923 was about 143 million dollars, or about sixteen times as much as twenty-two years before. The gain in Forsyth is even more amazing. In 1901 the assessed value of all property in Forsyth amounted to \$3,402,308 while the assessed value in 1923 was about 153 million dollars, or more than eighteen times as much as twenty-two years before. These two counties are typical of many others that could be presented, since for the entire state there was more than ten times as much wealth on the tax books in 1923 as in 1901.

### Per Inhabitant

Taxable wealth per inhabitant in the state has almost kept pace with the increase in total taxable wealth. In 1901 the value of all property on the tax books in the state averaged \$158 per inhabitant. In 1920, the year of revaluation, the wealth on the tax books in North Carolina averaged about \$1233 per inhabitant. The taxable wealth in 1923 amounted to almost \$1000 per inhabitant, white and black.

The decrease is due to the horizontal reductions in assessment values which have taken place in a large number of our counties. Actually there is much more wealth in the state today than in 1920, but it is not on the tax books. We still prefer low assessment values, and high rates of fair assessment with low rates. It is only by using the latter method that the burden of taxation can be equitably distributed.

But considering wealth on the tax books only, we have increased our total wealth nine times over during the short period of two decades. The average person in North Carolina is worth more than six times as much as the average person two decades ago. Our rise in wealth during the last two decades is almost without parallel in the United States. We are developing now as never before in our history. Who dares to predict what the wealth of North Carolina will be two decades hence?

### PROPERTY TAXES

Incredible as it may seem at first glance, the average total tax rate on property has not increased to any large extent since 1902. At that time the value of all property listed for taxation in the state amounted to \$346,879,000, and the total property tax levied to support the state, counties, cities, towns, and all other subdivisions amounted to \$3,975,000. The tax levy for all purposes averaged \$1.15 per \$100 of assessed value. In 1912 the tax levy for all purposes, state, county, and local, averaged \$1.34 per \$100 of assessed value. In 1922 the entire tax collected on all property listed for taxation in North Carolina averaged \$1.47

per \$100 of assessed value, and the rate was the lowest in any state in the Union.

The reason is simply that we have grown in wealth almost as rapidly as we have increased our taxes against property for public expenditures. The total tax levied on property to support the state and all subdivisions of the state in 1902 amounted to nearly four million dollars. The entire tax borne by property in 1922 amounted to about 37 million dollars, or about nine times as much. The tax rate failed to increase very much because we had listed for taxation more than seven times as much property as in 1902.

The property tax paid per inhabitant is much heavier than two decades ago. However, our increase in taxable wealth per inhabitant has practically kept pace with the increase in the tax levy, so that the actual tax burden borne by property is only slightly in excess of what it was more than two decades ago.

The tax levy for all purposes against property averaged \$1.15 in 1920 and \$1.47 in 1922. The increase has been much larger in almost all of the states. The 1922 levy against property averaged \$1.47 per \$100 of assessed value and the rate was the lowest in the United States. There is no state in the Union where property fares as well at the hands of the tax gatherer as in North Carolina nor is there another state where the tax payer, property or other, receives as much for his taxes.

### OUR STATE WEALTH

The Department of Commerce announces, for the State of North Carolina, its preliminary estimate of the value, December 31, 1922, of the principal forms of wealth, the total amounting to \$4,543,110,000, as compared with \$1,647,781,000 in 1912, an increase of 175.7 percent. Per capita values increased from \$724 to \$1,703, or 135.2 percent.

All classes of property increased in value from 1912 to 1922. The estimated value of taxed real property and improvements increased from \$637,960,000 to \$2,209,432,000, or 246.3 percent; exempt real property from \$62,540,000 to \$161,933,000, or 159.8 percent; live stock from \$85,068,000 to \$103,397,000, or 21.5 percent; farm implements and machinery from \$20,315,000 to \$33,863,000, or 66.6 percent; manufacturing machinery, tools, and implements, from \$85,120,000 to \$283,327,000, or 180.0 percent; and railroads and their equipment from \$204,606,000 to \$251,694,000, or 23.0 percent. Privately owned transportation and transmission enterprises, other than railroads, increased in value from \$44,411,000 to \$31,257,000, or 83.0 percent; and stocks of goods, vehicles other than motor, furniture, and clothing from \$507,961,000 to \$1,395,438,000, or 174.7 percent. No comparison is possible for the value of motor vehicles, which was estimated in 1922 at \$67,779,000, because no separate estimate was made in 1912.

In making these estimates the Department followed in general the methods employed in making the estimates for 1912, though it is believed that in some respects the work in 1922 has been more thorough. It should be borne in mind that the increases in money value are to a large extent due to the rise in prices which has taken place in recent years, and so far as that is the case they do not represent corresponding increases in the quantity of wealth.

Reports similar to the above have been issued for about half of the states. The increase in wealth during the decade has been larger in North Carolina than in any other state for which reports have been issued.

### STATE BALANCE SHEET

Feb. 4.—A surplus of \$422,963.79 in state revenues for the year 1923 is reported in a financial statement prepared by the auditor and treasurer and made public by Governor Morrison today.

The state lists the total general fund disbursement for the year at \$9,396,331.33, while revenues collected or estimated applicable to 1923, aggregate \$9,819,795.12.

### UNEQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

On one side of a dividing line which separates two counties or perhaps determines the boundaries of some great city, lives a young North Carolinian. On these bright October mornings he wends his way to a magnificent school building in which are provided all the conveniences necessary to comfort. Before him stands a teacher gifted, trained, and competent, with only a single grade to teach. This privilege is given him for 180 days every year.

Just on the other side of this same dividing line lives another young North Carolinian. His school does not open till the middle of November and will continue for only 120 days. Perhaps no conveniences are offered and no teaching apparatus is provided. He is instructed by a young girl who is not even a high school graduate, and who has to teach seven grades.

Shall the accident of birth place or dwelling place forever affect unequally the opportunities of these two young Americans? Each of them is and will be a citizen of the same state. Each of them is being trained for his duties as a citizen in a system of public schools which our Constitution says shall be uniform. One is as capable, as ambitious, as promising as the other. One, in all probability, will have completed high school and entered college while the other is still in the grades. Must this go on forever, or is there a remedy within the reach of the people, if they will only reach out and take it?—A. T. Allen.

A second statement takes the legislative examining committee's report for the year ending December 31, 1922, substitutes actual collections of the past twelve months for the estimates of a year ago, and increases, by reason of the excess of collections over estimates, the surplus of one year ago to \$1,019,433.12. The surplus reported at that time by the legislative examining committee was \$232,805.25, but that was based on estimates of the 1923 yield applicable to 1922. Actual collections exceeded the estimates by \$786,627.87.

The balance sheet follows:

Debits	
Expense disbursements, January 1, to December 31, 1923.....	\$9,559,955.08
Of which \$163,133.75 was charged to 1922.....	163,133.75
	\$9,396,821.33
Surplus Dec. 31, 1923....	422,963.79
	\$9,819,785.12
Credits	
Surplus, Dec. 21, 1922, as reported by the Legislative Examining Committee.....	\$ 232,805.25
Revenue:	
Total revenue receipts Jan. 1, to Dec. 31, 1923.....	\$8,506,998.68
Less: Revenue collected Jan. 1 to December 31, 1923. Applicable to 1923 and 1924.....	2,989,455.27
Revenue applicable to 1922.....	\$5,517,543.41
Legislative Examining Committee estimate..	4,730,915.54
Excess of revenue collected over estimate of uncollected revenue	786,627.87
Collected and uncollected revenue estimated to be collected for 1923.....	8,800,362.00
	\$9,819,795.12
Assets	
Uncollected revenue (estimated).....	\$5,810,906.73
Advance to counties recoverable: Emergency Loan Fund. Notes receivable.....	181,205.00
	\$5,992,111.73

Deduct: Net surplus adjustments (Below).....	236,996.92
	\$5,756,104.81
State Auditor	
Surplus Adjustments:	
Revenue collected 1922 applicable to 1923....	\$ 373,916.94
Outstanding warrants Dec 31, 1922, paid in 1923.....	131,692.51
	\$ 505,609.45
Lapsed Appropriations, recoverable from other funds.....	211,532.50
Expenses of 1923 paid in 1922.....	58,070.03
	\$ 269,602.53
	\$ 236,006.92
Liabilities	
Cash overdraft on other funds.....	\$5,434,433.02
General fund notes payable.....	500,000.00
	\$5,934,433.02
Deduct: School note excluded by Legislative Examining Committee.....	\$ 710,000.00
	\$5,224,433.02
Matured bonds unpaid.....	28,600.00
Matured bond interest unpaid.....	80,108.00
Surplus (per analysis attached).....	422,963.79
	\$5,756,104.81
State Treasurer	

### PLANNING SCHOOL GROUNDS

According to the report just issued by Dr. W. C. Coker, Kenan Professor of Botany at the University of North Carolina, the public schools of the state have received with increasing enthusiasm the services of the Extension Bureau of Design and Improvement of School Grounds. Mrs. W. J. Matherly is field agent of this Bureau of which Dr. Coker is in charge. As a result of personal requests from the schools the bureau, during the year, made blue prints giving planting suggestions for the beautification of 35 public school grounds.

The following are some of the North Carolina communities visited by Mrs. Matherly: Holly Springs, Haw River, Morehead City, Louisburg, East Durham High School, Smithfield, Johnston County Training School, Troy, Carrboro, Greenville, Winterville, Bethel, Ayden, Grifton, Norlina, Semora, University, Rich Square, Cullowee State Normal, Cullowee Graded School, Bryson City, Magnolia, Charity Crossroads, Calypso, Apex, Leaksville, Siler City, Liberty, Long Creek, Woodlawn, Newell, Paw Creek, Hoskins, Matthews, and Hickory Grove.

A letter recently received from L. W. Umstead, Principal of the Magnolia School, shows that the work of this Bureau is being appreciated. Mr. Umstead says in part, "In November of 1922 the Holly Springs School applied to the Extension Division of the University of North Carolina for aid in the beautification of its grounds. Mrs. Matherly, field agent, visited the school a few days later and obtained the necessary information for making the blue-print. Shortly afterwards the plans were forwarded to us, and the total cost was four dollars thirty-five cents. Mrs. Matherly's traveling expense to Holly Springs.

"The school bought seventeen dollars' worth of nursery stock to begin work on the plans. The plans are not yet completed, but the improvements already effected have added at least a thousand dollars to the value of the school site. The Extension Division is rendering a great service to the state."

### STATE AIDS COUNTIES

Loans to 77 counties from the state aid construction fund aggregating \$3,700,000 were approved and bonds in that amount ordered sold at a meeting of the State Board of Education yesterday. Applications for loans amounting to nearly two million dollars were held in abeyance until the regulations governing the distribution of the fund are more completely complied with.

Individual amounts to the counties range from \$2,000 borrowed by Dare county to \$170,000 borrowed for the construction of a series of school buildings in Johnston county. Guilford

asked for \$110,000 and Craven \$105,000 of the funds available from the second five million authorized by the General Assembly to be borrowed and loaned to the counties at low interest rates.

No assistance is given to any county in the construction of its school houses unless the proposed buildings are in line with plans to reorganize the county school system on the county-wide basis. The restriction does not go to the limit of requiring that reorganization must be in process, but that the building will fit into such a system when it shall have been instituted.

The first five million loan fund was authorized by the General Assembly of 1921. So popular did it become with the counties that a second five million was authorized in 1923. Applications are on file for more than the total of the second loan, but have not yet been approved. Applications which have been held in abeyance will be acted upon later and the loans made if approved.

The amounts loaned to each county yesterday follow:

Alamance, \$50,000; Alexander, \$20,000; Alleghany, \$1,200; Anson, \$46,000; Avery, \$35,000.  
Buncombe, \$28,000; Burke, \$22,000.  
Cabarrus, \$90,000; Caldwell, \$60,000; Carteret, \$3,600; Caswell, \$29,000; Catawba, \$64,000; Chatham, \$14,000; Clay, \$18,000; Cleveland, \$40,000; Columbus, \$19,000; Craven, \$105,000; Currituck, \$34,000.  
Dare, \$2,000; Davidson, \$56,800; Davie, \$45,000; Duplin, \$55,000; Durham, \$55,000.  
Edgecombe, \$50,000.  
Franklin, \$100,000.  
Gaston, \$94,000; Gates, \$35,000; Granville, \$100,000; Greene, \$16,000; Guilford, \$110,000.  
Halifax, \$85,000; Harnett, \$120,000; Haywood, \$40,000; Henderson, \$35,000; Hertford, \$3,000; Hyde, \$25,000.  
Iredell, \$28,000.  
Jackson, \$54,000; Johnston, \$70,000; Jones, \$25,000.  
Lee, \$16,400; Lenoir, \$90,000; Lincoln, \$74,000.  
Madison, \$90,000; Martin, \$86,000; McDowell, \$16,000; Mecklenburg, \$46,000; Mitchell, \$12,000; Montgomery, \$55,000; Moore, \$30,000.  
Nash, \$33,000; New Hanover, \$60,000; Northampton, \$12,500.  
Onslow, \$50,000; Orange, \$8,000.  
Pamlico, \$25,000; Pasquotank, \$20,000; Pender, \$68,000; Perquimans, \$40,000; Person, \$9,500; Pitt, \$55,000; Polk, \$40,000.  
Richmond, \$28,000; Robeson, \$67,000; Rockingham, \$45,000; Rutherford, \$57,600.  
Scotland, \$50,000; Stanly, \$55,000; Stokes, \$12,500; Surry, \$40,000; Swain, \$40,000.  
Transylvania, \$40,000.  
Union, \$10,200.  
Vance, \$44,000.  
Wake, \$96,300; Warren, \$50,000; Wayne, \$85,000; Wilkes, \$60,000.  
Total, \$3,700,000.—News and Observer.

### CORRECTIONS

Our attention has been called to two errors which appeared in the recent table showing the percent of school districts in each county which had voted local taxes. The table was based on information received from an authoritative source.

Superintendent R. E. Sentelle informs us that all school districts, white and black, in Edgecombe in 1921-22 were operating under special local tax.

In Durham county white and negro districts are coterminous, and in 1921-22 twenty-five of the twenty-eight districts were local tax districts. These two errors were due to inaccurate information and we are glad to make corrections.

### THE IDEAL FARM

In the final analysis the ideal farm—the truly successful farm—is the one which yields to the farmer and his family a living—full, adequate, complete—liberal in its material rewards, but not lacking in its social, aesthetic, and ethical values which make for character, contentment, and genuine happiness. The soil has the capacity to produce these returns if the hand which turns it but knows how to sow the seed. The key which will unlock the wealth of the fields and bring forth the treasures material and spiritual is the intelligence of the farmer.—New Jersey College of Agriculture.