

# Speculator Lives Off Mistakes Of Farmers

By LLOYD T. WEEKS  
(Special to the Democrat.)

Raleigh, Nov. 21.—A speculator on the tobacco market is a fellow who lives off of the mistakes of farmers. He is a bargain-hunter, a man who buys tobacco that, because of poor sorting or other reasons, sells for less than its current market value. This type of buyer can be driven out of business if farmers will follow good methods of stripping and sorting their burley.

Most tobacco is purchased by buyers for large companies, or by dealers who buy on order for manufacturers, large and small, or in expectation of a larger sale. It is not uncommon for the dealer to re-sort the tobacco in accordance with the grades desired by his clients. The speculator makes his living

off re-sorting tobacco, and frequently he makes more money on a lot of tobacco than its grower received for it after nearly a year's work. By the intelligent application of a few simple rules during the stripping season, the growers can earn much of this money.

Usually the re-sorting by the speculator is done by bundle-picking, but sometimes the tobacco is untied and leaf-picked. In either case, the object is the same—to correct the mistakes made by the farmer and place the tobacco back on sale in the expectation of deriving a profit from the transaction.

Making a crop of burley tobacco is a year-round job. It is hard work. But it is discouraging when a farmer sees half of his possible profits blown away because he did not exercise skill and care.

Stripping and sorting are two of the most important steps in the



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preparation of burley tobacco for market, and if the operations are properly systematized, it will not speed up the work but result in greater uniformity. The first essential in proper sorting is suitable light. The reason this is so important is that color distinctions are among the controlling factors in determining the grade of burley tobacco.

It should be borne in mind that the object is to bring together the leaves of like body, color, size and quality. As the plants are removed from the bulk they should, when necessary, be sorted into lots of: (1) plants that are small and undersized; (2) plants that show a decided green color; and (3) plants of normal size and clear color.

The next manipulation is the removal of the leaves from the stalks. The easiest and quickest method of stripping leaves is as follows: grasp the base of the stalk with the left hand and raise the plant clear of the pile of plants; place the index and middle fingers over the upper side of the mid-rib and at the base of the leaf, with the thumb on the "back" (stem) of the plant and at the under base of the leaf to be removed, make a quick, backward and sweeping motion of the fingers. The leaf will snap clear from the stalk.

The third step is grading. Normally the leaves occur on the stalk in a certain order or sequence—flyings at the bottom, thin leaf or lugs a little higher up, heavy leaf next, and then tips.

Flyings are recognized by their thin, tissuey body and by the considerable degree of injury characteristic of leaves grown near the soil. They are also shorter than leaves produced higher up the stalk, with the exception of tip leaves. As the flyings are removed, they should be divided into lots according to quality, which is largely based on the percentage of injury and on the color. The leaves of each quality are then tied into "hands" or bundles of 20 to 30 leaves each.

The tie leaf wrapped around each hand should be of the same quality and color as the tobacco in the "hand," so that the butts will not contrast with the leaves contained therein. This is a small point but one of considerable importance. The "hands" of different qualities and color should be assembled and placed on different sticks. The sticks of sorted tobacco are then bulked until enough of each quality has been stripped to make a basket when offered for sale. The bulk should be carefully covered to prevent the tobacco from drying out.

Next above the flyings are the lugs. These leaves are very thin to medium in body, are larger than flyings, and do not have the injury characteristic of leaves grown near the soil. The medium-bodied tobacco has certain characteristics closely related to body, such as smoothness, fiber size, finish, oil, shape of tip, and color shade.

As the lugs are stripped they should be sorted according to body, quality and color. Body and color are closely associated. The light-colored leaves are usually thin-bodied and the red, or darker colored, are of medium body. The "hands" of each quality and color should be assembled and placed on separate sticks, the same as with flyings, and as should other grades of burley be handled.

After the lugs are removed the remainder of the leaves to be stripped fall into the leaf group. The leaves of this group are thicker, or heavier bodied, and are generally

### NOTICE OF SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

North Carolina, Watauga County, In the Superior Court. Town of Blowing Rock vs. D. Lampton and wife, Mrs. D. Lampton; J. M. McTeer and wife, Mrs. J. M. McTeer; Seldon Longley and wife, Mrs. Seldon Longley, and Watauga County.

The defendants above named, and each of them, will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the superior court for Watauga county, North Carolina, to foreclose on real estate for past due taxes due the plaintiff for town taxes for the years 1927 through 1937, and the said defendants will further take notice that they are required to appear at the office of the clerk of the superior court of said county in the courthouse in Boone, North Carolina, on or before the 4th day of January, 1940, and answer or demur to the complaint in said action, or the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in said complaint.

This 13th day of November, 1939. A. E. SOUTH, Clerk Superior Court, Watauga County. 11-16-4c.

# PARKWAY COMPANY

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KENNETH LINNEY

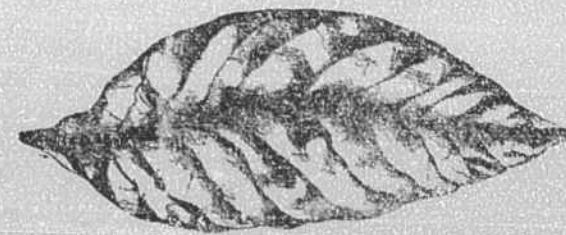
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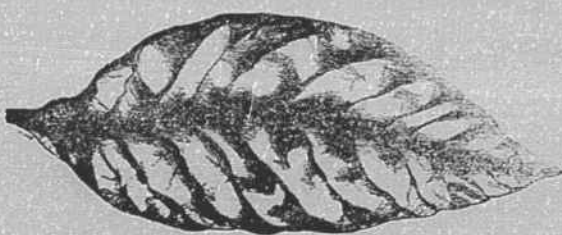
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