

## Burley Culture in Watauga Was First Commercialized in 1930

Burley Now One of Principal Cash Crops of Watauga; Practically All of Weed Produced in Western Section of County; Control and Prices

By HARRY M. HAMILTON, Jr. (Watauga County Farm Agent)

Burley tobacco is a comparatively new crop for Watauga farmers. The culture of burley tobacco was started in this county about 15 years ago. Jim Eggers of Beaver Dam, and John Greer of Mabel, were two of the pioneer burley growers in the county. L. A. Henson of Vilas, claims to be one of the first growers of burley in the county. He states that he knew very little about tobacco production when he grew his first crop, consequently he cut the tobacco and piled it in piles or shocks to cure. The tobacco rotted very nicely, thus exposing Mr. Henson to the somewhat merciless wisecracks of his neighbors. Although burley production was started in the county about 15 years ago, it did not reach commercial importance until about 1930 or 1931.

The first record of burley acreage in the county was made in 1932 under the old AAA program. This record shows that the total acreage for that year was 135. By 1936 the acreage had increased to 257. Since 1936 the average annual acreage has been 327.

Practically all the burley tobacco in the entire county is produced west of Boone because the eastern section of the county is not well suited for tobacco production.

### COUNTY FARM AGENT



HARRY M. HAMILTON, Jr.

County Agent Predicts Favorable Prices at Boone's New Warehouse; Cites Advantages of Local Market; State Tax Here Much Lower

than in 1937. During 1939 there has been no burley tobacco control other than the soil conservation program. A control program in effect for 1940 will stimulate prices for the 1939 crop as well as the 1940 crop.

### BOONE BURLEY MARKET

This year Watauga tobacco growers are fortunate to have a market at home for their tobacco. The Mountain Burley Warehouse at Boone ranks with the best warehouses in the entire burley belt and the prices which growers will receive at this market should compare quite favorably with prices received at any other market throughout the burley area. There are a number of advantages open to growers who sell their tobacco through the Mountain Burley warehouse. For instance the grower will save a great deal of time in getting his tobacco on the floor because of the daily sales. His tobacco will be sold the following day after it is placed on the floor, consequently the tobacco will not become disarranged, damaged or covered with dust through having to remain on the baskets for several days before it is sold as it frequently the case in other warehouses.

This factor alone should result in a higher price per pound for grower.

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### CROP CONTROL VS. PRICES

It is interesting to note the fluctuations in prices since 1931. During the year 1931, '32 and '33 there was no control program in effect in the burley belt and the average price received by growers was 10 cents per pound. During the next three years, 1934 to 1936, under the AAA control program, the average price of burley tobacco climbed to .35 cents per pound. In 1937, without crop control the average price skidded to approximately 16 cents per pound. During 1938 with marketing quotas in effect the price averaged three cents per pound higher

## DISEASES CONTROL TOBACCO YIELDS IN BURLEY REGION

Growers of Both Types in State Annually Lose Millions of Dollars to Varied Plagues. State College Experiment Station Issues Bulletins on Control.

North Carolina harvested this year one of its largest tobacco crops in history, but it would be even bigger if it were not for diseases which Dr. Luther Shaw, plant pathologist of the State College extension service, says annually destroy from 50 to 100 million pounds of tobacco in the state. "In addition to the actual loss in poundage, a number of diseases materially lower the quality of the harvested crop, resulting in further losses to the farmer," he stated.

"At this time when production is high and yields in general are averaging far above normal, there would not seem to be much concern about tobacco diseases," Dr. Shaw continued. "However, all fields are not affected alike by diseases, and no farmer likes to see his neighbor produce a big crop while he watches disease cut his yield, nor do farmers of one section of the state enjoy seeing those of another section outdo them in production because of disease conditions."

The plant pathologist explained that the differences in soil and climatic conditions affect the different types of diseases. In many cases conditions unfavorable for the development of one group of diseases, favors the development of other groups. As a result of complexities arising from such conditions, completely effective control measures have not been found for many of the tobacco diseases. In many cases where effective measures are known the control practices are so complex, exacting and varied in nature to

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## Early Clipping Indicates That Local Realtor Sold First Watauga Tobacco

### PIONEER BURLEY GROWER



S. C. EGGERS

S. C. Eggers' Initial Experiment With Burley Was in 1930, According to Letter Written Farm Journal; First Harvest Was About 300 Pounds

(Editor's note: Mr. S. C. Eggers, well-known Boone realtor lays claim to the distinction of being the first Wataugan to market burley tobacco, and submits an interesting letter which was published under date of April 30, 1930, in the Burley Bulletin, Greenville, Tenn. The letter provides most interesting reading at this time and is reproduced.)

At the request of your Mr. A. L. Brown, I am writing this article giving my experience in growing burley tobacco in Watauga county, N. C.

Watauga county joins Johnson county, Tenn., and has the highest average altitude of any county in North Carolina. Boone, the county seat, has an elevation of 3,333 feet above the level of the sea, and is the highest county seat town east of the Rocky Mountains, and the scenery and summer climate are unsurpassed in Eastern America.

I planted about one-eighth of an acre in burley tobacco, at the suggestion and under the direction of my good friend, M. W. D. Morefield of Johnson county, Tennessee who donated the plants. The ground was plowed and harrowed until it was thoroughly pulverized. Before plow-

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make them border on the impractical.

Research Work Being Done  
"It is, however, encouraging to report that simple, effective, and practical control measures are known for some of the major tobacco diseases," the specialist said. "Also, a large amount of research work is now being conducted by federal and state technical men in North Carolina for the purpose of developing control measures for the diseases now out of control."

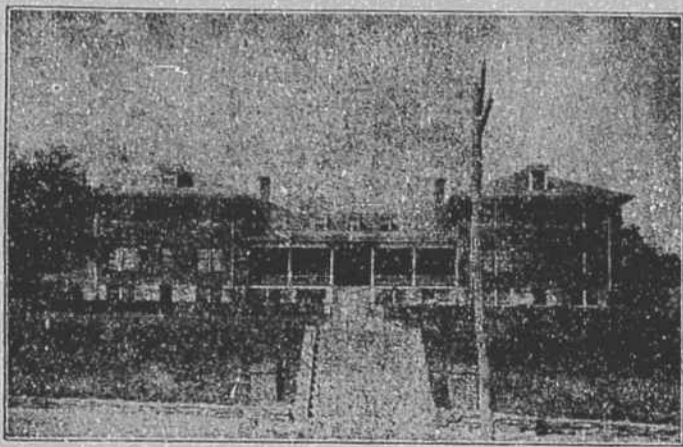
Among the major tobacco diseases for which effective control measures are known are: Mosaic, black mold, angular leafspot (blackfire), wildfire, root knot (big root), black shank, and black root rot.

Other diseases can be controlled to some extent by using crop rota-

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## The Daniel Boone

Clarence A. Price, Manager



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