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AGRICULTURAL POSSIBILITIES OF HERTFORD COUNTY

Hertford County Situated in the Midst of the Very Best Farming Section in the Entire South—Contains Best Soil to be Found in the United States—Leads Other Counties in Many Particulars.

By T. E. Browne, Agent State Corn Club Work, West Raleigh, N. C.

"The best farming section of North Carolina." "The blessed section of our State," such are the expressions frequently heard about Hertford, Bertie, and Northampton Counties, and they are true. There is no section of our State where nature has been more bountiful, where the possibilities are greater, than in this Roanoke-Chowan section. This section of North Carolina is "sui generis": the same kind of folks, the same type of soil, the same climate conditions, and these counties must progress or go into decadence together. There can be little separation of interest.

Of the three counties Hertford stands out as pre-eminently the best farming county. The largest yield of corn ever made upon an acre in North Carolina was made by Charlie Parker upon Hertford County soil, when he produced 235 bushels of corn, field measurement, which measured out 196.5 bushels of dry shelled corn. It is among the first in average per acre yield of peanuts in North Carolina, and raises more peanuts in proportion to its area than any county in the State. There is no county in the State which produces a higher quality of peanuts than does Hertford County. As a cotton producing county it ranks among the best in proportion to acreage planted. It is rapidly coming into prominence as a tobacco county. And, when it comes to pork production, it makes more meat per farmer than any county in the State, in spite of the Hog Cholera, and open range.

Do the farmers deserve much credit for this enviable position occupied by the County? I must admit that they do not. This condition exists in spite of, not because of, the methods of agriculture applied. The finest type of soil in the United States for agricultural purposes is typical of the predominating soil type in Hertford County. Some time ago a soil expert of the National Department of Agriculture was asked what was the best agricultural soil in the country, and he replied: "I have visited practically every section of the United States and do not hesitate to say that the best type of soil for agricultural purposes is Norfolk Sandy Loam and Norfolk Fine Sandy Loam." These are the predominating soils of Hertford County. A light grey to dark grey surface, overlaid with red clay subsoil, is capable of producing any crop adapted to the latitude in question. When a man has that kind of soil his success as a farmer is entirely dependent upon his own efforts. Such a soil, well drained, and filled with organic matter is unexcelled in producing power.

I have often stated that if farmers of this section of the State worked as hard and applied as much intelligence to farming as they do in Piedmont North Carolina, where conditions are not so favorable, they would not know what to do with their money. The people in less blessed sections are out stripping us because they have to work. They get in the habit of hustling. Their crops are distributed throughout the year. Livestock farming is introduced into their system, and their natural pace is a hustle. To an Eastern Carolina farmer this section presents a gloomy outlook from a farming standpoint, but, if we don't "get busy," they are going to outstrip us.

Some public man has said that the best index to a section's prog-

ress is the condition of its public institutions, namely, its School, its churches, its public roads, etc. Travel through Guilford, Forsyth, Rowan, or even the mountain county of Buncombe and compare these institutions with those in Hertford and decide for yourself.

I recently made a trip through Hertford and not five per cent of the fields are green with winter crops, in spite of the fact that, in our warm southern climate, more plant food is lost by bleaching and washing during the winter than is taken out by the growing crops in summer. Any kind of cover crop growing upon the land during the winter would take up this available plant food, store it up in roots, and when turned under in the spring return it to the soil, in addition to the large amount of humus or organic matter, that most needed element in our eastern soils. Why do we continue this custom in spite of thousands of demonstrations, and in the face of the high price of commercial fertilizers?

In Hertford County practically all summer and winter legumes grow luxuriantly, added organic matter equally valuable per pound as stable manure, the Nitrogen which makes this high value being taken from Nature's store house, the atmosphere. It is almost impossible to get commercial potash for any growing crops. There are thousands of pounds of this element stored up in the subsoils of Hertford County, unavailable of course, but if these lands were broken deeply in the fall, the clay turned up to the weathering process, and mixed with organic matter our farmers would be independent of the German mines.

Of course in the sandy soils, without the clay subsoil, the potash could be partly supplied by adding organic matter. Knowing this fact as we do, one can drive through the good County of Hertford and he will not find five per cent of the land broken for 1917 crops.

There are in North Carolina more than seventy Farm Demonstration Agents and forty odd Home Demonstration Agents. The major portion of the money for their services is from State and National appropriations. All the people of the country pay their pro-rata share of this fund. More than one hundred thousand dollars are being spent in this educational propaganda alone in North Carolina. It is recognized by all the leaders of the country as the greatest agency for rural betterment ever inaugurated. Only about thirty counties of the State are not taking advantage of this opportunity to secure the service of a trained man or woman to help the farmers and farm women solve their problems. Most of these counties are along the sand-banks of the coast and some of those mountain counties where little farming is done. Hertford, Bertie and Northampton rank with the above named counties. These counties are helping to pay the salaries of agents for other counties in order that they may get ahead of us.

When Hertford County wakes up to the possibilities, puts in whole time County Agents for the farmers and their wives, joins the ranks of other progressive counties by voting the "No-Fence" law, instead of having it by common consent, as is so often the case at present; utilizes its wonderful opportunities for stock-raising, with dozens of the

PRESENT CONDITIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR GREATER PROGRESS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

A Synopsis of Educational Advantages Offered by the Schools of Hertford County—Suggestions by One in Authority for the Future Development of Better Schools for This County.

By N. W. Britton, Superintendent of Schools for Hertford County.

I want to congratulate the Editor of this paper and all concerned in the effort being put forward to make our county a greater county, although great in many respects now. And as the proper education of the boys and girls is the foundation stone for all true greatness, I feel it a privilege to have an opportunity to present in this short article a statement of present conditions and some suggestions for the future of our educational policy in Hertford County.

School Census.

The material with which we have to work is five thousand seven hundred boys and girls between the ages of six and twenty-one. What power is stored up in these, and what a force and influence for good they will wield if heart and hand and head are proportionately and properly trained!

Our aim this session is to leave no stone unturned to get every one of these into some school and to keep them there. One thing especially looked after at our teachers' meetings is whether the teacher in each district can account for every one of school age in that district. Be it said to the credit of not a few of the teachers that they know the whereabouts of every one in their district. It takes not only a live teacher to do this, but a wise one, and one who is willing to work. We call upon the parents and friends of the children to come to our help in trying to keep down illiteracy at this end of the line.

School-houses.

We have seventeen houses that are reasonably well suited to school work, several of these being as good as can be found in most counties, but the remaining fifty are woefully inadequate. The county has built seven new houses within the last two years, which are, for the most part, well equipped, and are a credit to the county. That is, we are building at the rate of three and a half houses a year. That is very good as far as it goes, but has

finest pasturage crops, and a market in easy access, then indeed may our section be called the garden spot of North Carolina. Then we shall have in place of one-teacher schools the larger type of modern school with a plot of land, probably a teacher's home, where agriculture and Home Economics are taught by teachers who believe in the country and recognize that plants and animals, the nature world about us, are the best instruments possible for training our boys and girls for the larger duties of rural citizenship. Then shall our farmers realize that our first duty after God has permitted us to make a profit upon the soil he has let us use for a season, is to make our houses comfortable and attractive as possible for our mothers and wives, and boys and girls, that they may stay in the country to enrich our country life. It is our duty to use some of this money for the encouragement of all those agencies which mean a richer, a more wholesome and a more satisfying rural life. Then we shall see country homes with running water, electric or acetylene lights; well painted and tastefully adorned with native shrubs and flowers, and with all those agencies which tend to eliminate the isolation of country life of the past. Then, indeed, shall we be proud of our rural heritage, and glad that we may live in the open country in close touch with nature's God.

any one stopped to think how long at this rate it would take to supply the county with comfortable school-houses for the children of the entire county? It will take not less than fourteen years. How long before the thinking people of Hertford will rise up in their might and do away with the more than barn-like structures in which a large portion of our children have to spend from six to seven hours a day through such winters as we are now passing? When one of these unfortunate children is seized with pneumonia or grip and dies, we wonder why the Almighty has taken away the little one, when the cause may lie at our own doors.

Local-tax Districts.

There are only six of these districts in the entire county, but the desire to establish graded schools seems to be in the air. One community voted recently and lost, but it will try again with success next time, no doubt. An election in another district is pending, and several more communities are circulating petitions. This is fine, for it is the only hope for better houses, better equipment, more efficient teachers, and longer terms of school. We are especially proud of the six graded schools which we now have on account of the splendid work they are doing and for the example they are setting for the others to follow. Some one has said that "Truly it is a back-woods section that would vote against a small tax to establish an up-to-date school." I do not put it in such words, but I am sure that if the people of a community will open their eyes and see the

progress which North Carolina and other states are making along educational lines, they will feel that they cannot linger any longer in ruts, but must come out and join the ranks of progress. Our watchword is a special tax for every district of sufficient size and properly laid off, and thus help hasten the time when Greater Hertford shall be realized.

School Districts.

We have a number of districts of sufficient size and properly arranged, but there are yet too many small ones. The best schools can never be realized until there is a consolidation of these one-teacher schools into larger two and three-teacher schools with suitable houses and adequate equipment. There are many people who yet seem to think that there should be as nearly as possible a school-house at every man's door. Good roads are the things we need, in order that the children may get to and from school dry-foot. Then it will be good for any healthy boy or girl to walk one and a half or two miles to school. If the distance should be too great, it would be infinitely better to arrange for conveying the children to school at public expense than to have little school-houses here and there over the county. It would be cheaper to the county, to say nothing of the advantages the children would receive.

Officers' and Teachers' Meetings.

There are two meetings of this kind each year for general purposes relative to our school work. These meetings are of prime importance. They bring together teachers, committeemen, attendance officers, and the Board of Education to make plans and arrange to execute their plans in a proper way for the best interest of all concerned. The real good these meetings do cannot be over-estimated. To undertake to run the schools of a county without a system, or with a system, and that system unwisely planned and just as unwisely carried out, is well-nigh a waste of time and a waste of the people's money. In the humble judgement of the writer, there is

great wisdom in the coming together of the people that they may exchange ideas on a matter so important as the training of the boys and girls committed to their care. It is earnestly desired that these meetings may continue to create broader and deeper enthusiasm for carrying out plans for the administration of the public school system of the county.

Also there are group meetings of teachers for the purpose of professional study. There are four such groups in the county. Of course these meetings are not supposed to take the place of special training which every teacher should have at schools prepared to give proper training for general school work. There is an idea abroad that any one who has a little book-learning can teach school, but the day is approaching when this error will be seen and corrected; when no intelligent parent will allow a makeshift to undertake to teach his children any more than he would allow a quack to treat them for pneumonia or typhoid fever. The time has been when the quack was admitted to the home, but now he is shut out by the intelligent people, and may the day speedily come when no person shall enter a school-room as a teacher until he shall have had special training for this most important work of developing the whole child and of giving him the chance that God intended he should have.

Many of the teachers are showing a fine interest in these group meetings and group study. They see the importance of such study, and they are applying themselves in a very commendable way. Such men and women are the ones that will be called for future service, and I predict that adequate salaries are in store for them.

Public High Schools.

It would be interesting to write of the splendid work done in many of the short term schools, but space forbids. We are justly proud of our public high schools, because of the fine record and progress they have made since they were established. They are intended to furnish

instruction free of charge for all pupils in the county that have finished the work below that of the high school.

Ahoskie High School has just completed a splendid new building which was much needed, as the school had out-grown the first one. The buildings seem now sufficient for present needs except, perhaps a dormitory for teachers and boarding pupils.

Winton High School is sorely in need of a new building out right. A plan suggested, if not on foot, seem to be meeting with favor to turn the old house into a dormitory to accommodate teachers and boarding pupils, and to erect a new up-to-date school building. This would be a fine step for the school. Both schools should have dormitories as soon as practicable.

Co-operation.

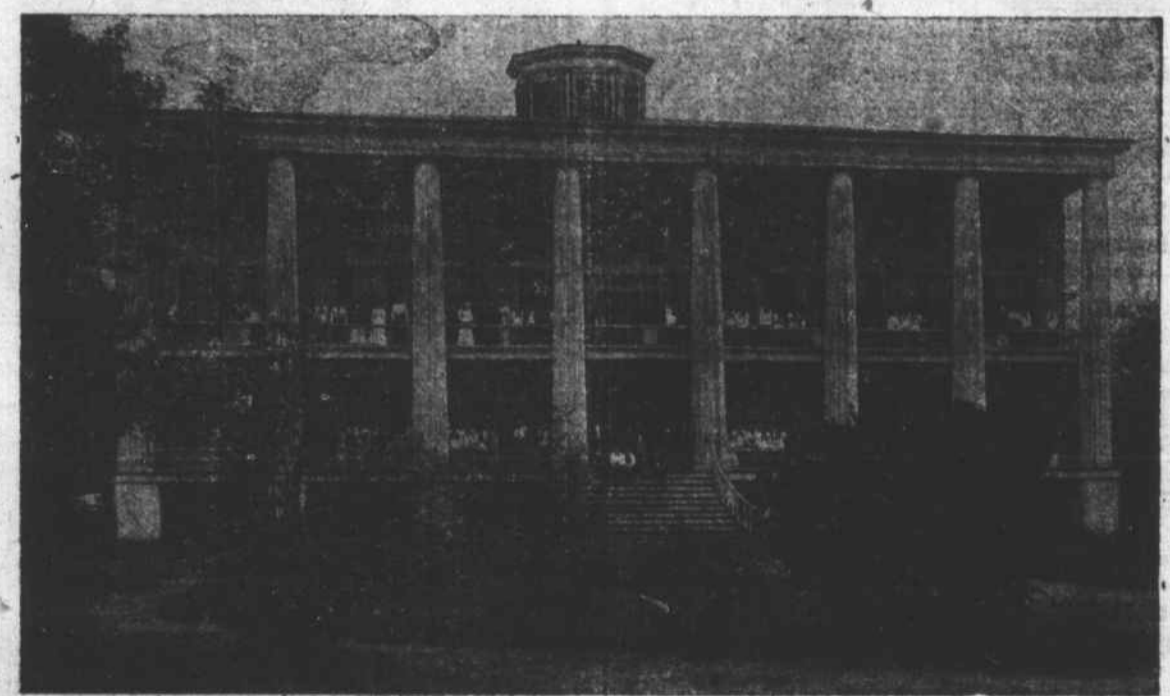
No more important word is found, and no finer spirit can exist than that of Co-operation on the part of all people for the common good. Let every Hertford County citizen show by word and act that he stands for such a spirit.

With a county so rich in splendid young man-hood and young woman-hood, with middle-aged and elderly so ripe in experiences of life's duties and obligations, with a class of business and professional men whose ability is recognized on every hand, with an abundance of as good farming lands as can be found, with seventeen thousand people possessing an amount of wealth equal to the average state—with all these, what possibilities there and what opportunities are ours for training the rising generation of this good county, if we but use all these forces in the spirit of co-operation!

If you knew how much print paper cost you would never kick on paying \$1.50 for a news paper the size of the Hertford County Herald.

Remember

That every added subscriber helps to make this paper better for everybody



Chowan College for Girls and Young Women

ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST PROMINENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES OF EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

The Chowan College for Girls and Young Women is one of the best known educational institutions in Eastern North Carolina and, in fact, in the entire State. Established in 1848, this college has always maintained the highest standard of excellence, and a diploma from "The Murfreesboro College" is indisputable evidence of good training and a finished education. During its nearly seventy-five years of existence the school has been the means of fitting hundreds of young women for the duties and responsibilities of life, and in all that long period it has never deviated from the high standard established at its organization.

This School, located in the town of Murfreesboro, Hertford County, is located in the midst of a beautiful campus; the surroundings are homelike, and the most careful supervision is exercised over the student body. It is a Baptist denominational college being operated by the Chowan and West Chowan Associations. Standard courses are taught leading to B. A. and B. S. degrees. Diplomas in Piano, Voice, Art and Expression. Excellent courses are given in Pedagogy and Public School Music. The school operates its own farm and dairy, and every care is taken to make the

cuisine wholesome, appetizing and sanitary. In fact, the environment, and the courses of instruction are all that could be desired by the most fastidious, while the rates are most reasonable. There is an annual enrollment of about one hundred and thirty-five students, principally from North Carolina and Virginia, but also including young ladies from more distant states. There is nothing more important to the welfare and stability of a Commonwealth than the education of the future mothers of its citizenry, and the utmost care should be exercised in selecting the persons entrusted with this duty. Prof. G. E. Lineberry, the

President of Chowan College, is a man eminently fitted for the work he has in hand. He has been engaged in educational work for a number of years, and for the past three has been the head of the institution under discussion, during which time most excellent results have been achieved. Pres. Lineberry is a man of the highest character and of proven ability as an educator. The interest nearest his heart is that of the young women under his supervision, and under his administration no effort has been, or is being, spared to maintain the high standard of the institution, and to improve and better the conditions there where possible.