

SPECULATOR GETS TOO MUCH PROFIT

Department of Agriculture Makes Severe Thrust At The Cotton Traders

FARMERS FAILED TO GET A PROPORTIONATE SHARE

Co-Operative Selling Suggested By Department of Agriculture As Remedy For Problem; Washington Official To Address North Carolina Postmasters This Week

The News and Observer Bureau, 603 District National Bank Bldg. By S. R. WINTERS.

(By Special Licensed Wire.) Washington, D. C., Aug. 16.—The cotton speculator, or the more dignified designation as the middle man, is the object of a severe thrust by the United States Department of Agriculture, in a statement today as emphatically applied to North Carolina conditions. The agricultural authorities make bold inquiry as to why the Tar Heel cotton mills—the consumers—should pay fifteen million more for the lint crop in 1918 than the producers or farmers received for it.

More concretely expressed, the Department of Agriculture says North Carolina farmers who produced a bale of cotton lacked \$11.50 of getting what it was worth to the cotton mill. Of course, the agricultural authorities take cognizance of the fact that a small percentage from the marginal difference of \$11.50 went to the railroad for hauling the fleece to the mill. "As most of the cotton consumed by the North Carolina mill is grown in North Carolina and nearby sections of South Carolina and Georgia," says the official, "the freight item did not amount to a great deal—probably thirty cents a hundred, or thirty points on the cotton involved. The average cost of exchange on the draft bill was probably one-eighth of one per cent. Including other necessary costs of selling and delivery with these items, the total expense would be about \$2.50 to \$3.00 a bale in practically all cases."

Direct Selling Remedy.

What is the conclusion of the Department of Agriculture? Here is what Secretary of Agriculture David F. Houston, who was born in Monroe, union county, subscribes to:

"The natural conclusion is that the farmer is getting less for his cotton than he should have, or that the consumer of cotton cloth is paying more for it than he should pay—maybe both—while the middle men are making a profit out of proportion to the service they render."

The direct selling of cotton is the first corrective offered to remedy the wide marginal difference between the producers selling price and the figures paid by the consumer. In other words, eliminate the speculator or middle man by the organization of co-operative selling organizations dealing directly with the cotton mill. The Department of Agriculture submits a group of suggestions which it claims apply to the entire cotton growing territory, but more particularly to sections like eastern North Carolina, where cotton mills are in close proximity to the cotton fields."

Briefly summarized, these are the con-

structive suggestions: Produce the kind of cotton the mills need; establish a compress and ample storage and shed space at accessible points in the main producing area; establish a disinterested clearing service that would serve the interest of both producer and consumer, enabling the farmer to know the value of his product and through co-operative selling easily enable him to realize that value in dollars and cents.

"As to North Carolina, better ginning facilities are needed," says the Department of Agriculture, "the old ginneries are not capable of pressing large or average sized bales to the density usually obtained in other States. As a result, the average weight of bales in North Carolina is low and the mills complain about it."

"Less damaged cotton should be shipped to the mills. Mill owners say that they have neither the inclination nor the facilities for conditioning cotton and wish to buy only from shippers whose cotton has already been put to the best possible condition. This objection could be met by farmers organizations."

"The final suggestion is that farmers grow better varieties of cotton. There again the benefits of organization are apparent. Many buyers, knowingly or unknowingly buy the better staples without paying a proper premium for them. The result is that the farmer is inclined to stop growing the better variety of which the buyer makes an abnormal profit, but for which the grower receives practically no more than for an inferior variety."

To Address Postmasters.

Goodwin D. Ellsworth, the capable superintendent of postoffice service, United States Postoffice Department, left last night for Wrightsville Beach, where on Monday he will deliver an address to the convention of North Carolina postmasters. Mr. Ellsworth will discuss the subject of postal regulations and other topics regarding the improvement of postoffice affairs. Mr. Ellsworth will spend Saturday and Sunday visiting old friends at Wallace and Warsaw. Upon the adjournment of the convention of postmasters he will proceed to Blowing Rock, where Mrs. Ellsworth has been enjoying the mountain atmosphere since July 1.

A group of North Carolinians composed of Miss Mary Lou Powell, of Whiteville, Columbus county; Mrs. J. L. Scott and Miss Blanche Scott, both of Graham, Alamance county, arrived in Washington today from a two-weeks' tour north. Their itinerary included Canada, Buffalo, Boston and New York City. They will leave Washington for their North Carolina homes Monday. Miss Powell is a sister of J. K. Powell, assistant cashier of the Washington Union Savings Bank.

General Samuel I. Faison, of Clinton,

Simpson county, is a visitor to Washington. He will go to Winston-Salem August 21 attend the annual meeting of the North Carolina Bankers Association. General Faison will be stationed for a time at Camp Lee, Va.

With Census Department. C. B. Webb, of Statesville, who formerly served as assistant clerk in the office of Senator Simmons, has obtained an appointment in the United States census bureau under the direction of Director Samuel L. Rogers. Mr. Webb has been slightly indisposed for some time but will soon resume his duties in the newly assigned capacity. He is known favorably throughout North Carolina, being one of the chief officials of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics. He has filled every office in the fraternal organization from the most insignificant job to that of Supreme Councilor.

The Navy Department has yielded to the request of citizens of Winton, Bertie county, to furnish a band for the Hertford county fair which is scheduled for October 23.

A marriage license was issued in Washington today to Luther Knowles, Jr., of Draper, N. C., and Miss Grace V. Harting, of Washington, D. C.

Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Moore left today for Burgaw, where Mr. Moore will spend his vacation. He is the hard working secretary to Representative Samuel M. Brinson. Mr. Moore will remain in Burgaw until August 23, the date on which Representative Brinson will deliver an address to Pender county citizens.

Jos. F. Taylor, of Washington, N. C., arrived at the national capital today for a brief visit.

WARNING

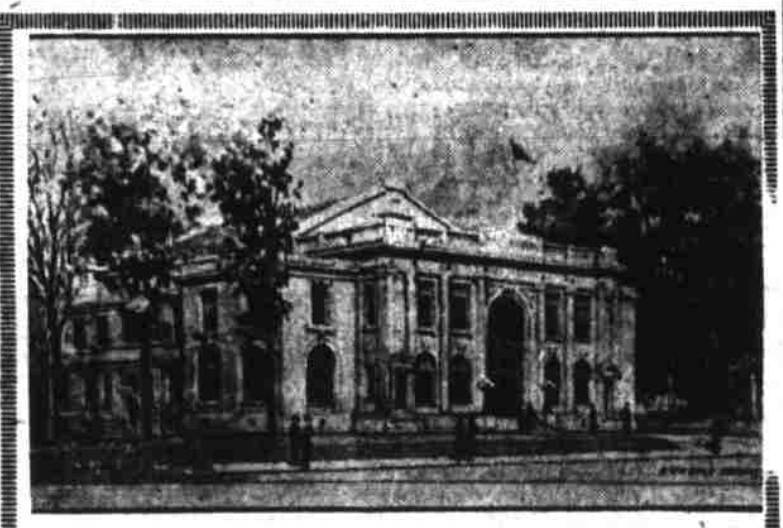
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