

Veterans Boost Soil-Test Dr. I. E. Miles Reports

Alleghany veterans on the farm training program along with others throughout the State have done much to expand the soil-testing program according to Dr. Ivan E. Miles, head of the Soil-Testing Division, of the State Department of Agriculture who will be here tomorrow in connection with the observance of the sixth birthday of the New River Soil Conservation District.

In discussing this increase due largely to World War II veterans following modern agricultural practices and testing the soil on every field of their farms, "This is as it should be," Dr. Miles commented. "If a farmer is really to know the lime and fertilizer status on his place," he said.

More and more farmers are realizing that soil testing means dollars in their pockets, he explained, because of the savings when lime and fertilizer are not wasted on soils that don't need them or on soils that are harmed by their application.

For the last several years, Dr. Miles reported, soil-testing work has been increasing from 12 to 34 per cent each year over the preceding year. This appeared to be a normal growth due to farmers' acceptance of the program and recognition of its importance.

Last year, however, the work jumped 64 per cent above the 1945-46 fiscal year. The division tested 28,775 samples of soils, and made a total of 115,100 tests on those samples.

Dr. Miles said the extra growth was brought about by more farmers and agricultural workers realizing the value of soil-testing, and by the cooperation given to the program by the Extension Service and the Soil Conservation Service.

N. C. Farmers Soil Minded

North Carolina, the first state in the nation to have a soil conservation district organized by farmers, now has 21 districts that cover 25,911,000 acres, or 85 per cent of all Tar Heel state farms.

Since the Brown Creek District was formed nine years ago, soil conservation work has moved rapidly, reported E. B. Garrett, state conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service, of Raleigh.

The fastest rate of progress, however, has been made during the past twelve or fourteen months. In the fiscal year which ended July 1, almost 5,900 farmers were aided through districts to plan and begin conservation farming on more than 590,000 acres. Garrett reported that more than 27,600 North Carolina farmers are now receiving assistance through their soil conservation districts.

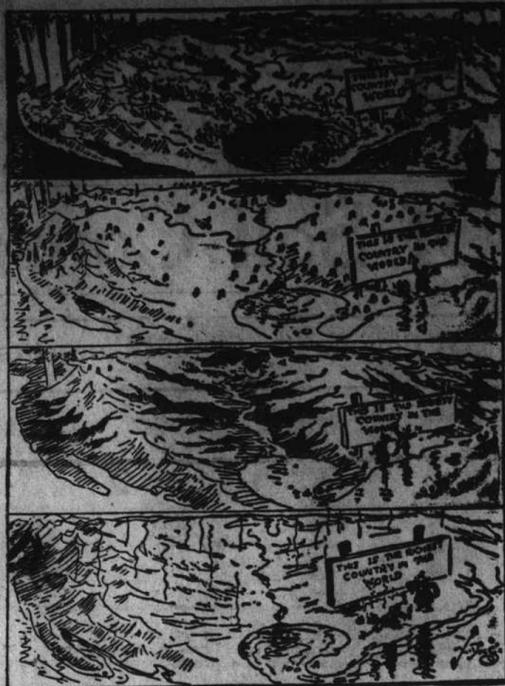
Mary Gilliam Is Given Party

Little Mary Gilliam, of Roaring River and formerly of Stratford, was given a party recently in honor of her eighth birthday, at the home of her parents, with Mrs. Rufus Gilliam as hostess.

Games and contests were played by twenty-five guests under the direction of Mrs. J. P. Pardue.

A large birthday cake topped the center of the table and ice cream and lemonade were served. "Happy Birthday" was sung prior to the cake cutting.

The honoree was presented with many nice gifts.



It Used to Be . . . By J. N. (Ding) Darling

Bennett Hopeful Of Farm Future In Spite Of Record Of Poor Practices In Past

Must Intensify Effort To Conserve Natural Resources For Future

By HUGH H. BENNETT
Take a good look at Jay Darling's cartoon before you read this; Ding is one of the world's best cartoonists and his drawings always are worth study. This one is no exception—in fact I think it's one of his most effective.

In this drawing, Ding compresses the history of North America's soil and other natural resources during the last 350 years into four small panels. That's why it's so effective; when you condense three and a half centuries into four little drawings it's bound to have punch. And Ding's cartoon which he calls, "It Used to Be . . ." certainly has punch.

The history of our soil, water and forest resources, as Ding pictures it, is not very pleasant, but there's a lot of truth in it—too much truth, in fact. Of course, he's had to exaggerate a little—cartoonists usually do, to get their points across—but in the main he's drawn the truth in those four panels.

When the white men came they found a rich land, the richest in the world, everything considered. Well, most of Europe had been pretty well worked over for several centuries and this new continent was an El Dorado, and our ancestors proceeded to work it for all they could get out of it.

They moved from the Atlantic coast settlements back into the Piedmont country; then they crossed the Appalachian Mountains and swarmed down into the rich central valleys, cutting and burning the timber—countless millions of dollars worth—as they went. And they plowed up land that shouldn't have been plowed, and when it was worn out they fanned out first across the prairies and then across Great Plains—natural grasslands—and plowed and overgrazed that part of the country. And then they headed for the Pacific Coast and continued their exploitation. We're still continuing it today as a matter of grim and tragic fact, and if the Pacific Ocean hadn't stopped us I suppose we'd still be working our way West.

Well, Ding has drawn that story in these four panels and he's done it well, but I wish he'd gone ahead and drawn three or four more panels showing the next 350 years—or even the next 50 years—because there still is hope if we continue and intensify the effort we're making to spread our national soil and water conservation program across the land. The future needn't be quite so gloomy as Ding might have you think, but we've got to work to prevent it—hope-like faith, has to be backed up with work.

Now if I were going to draw four more panels to show the next 50 or 350 years, I think they'd be something like this:

Panel No. 1 would show some tree plantings being made here and there across the barren continent, and some contoured strip-cropping would begin to appear on some of the worst slopes—maybe some dams in some of the gullies.

Panel No. 2 would show another development: it would show soil conservation districts being organized in various places over

Trees Valuable In Soil Conservation



G. L. Fletcher, of Idlewild, looks over his growing pines that have proven that it not only pays to conserve trees for their own value, but practice suitable for many hill-sides.

Increasing Value Of Trees Is Cited By Idlewild Farmer

G. L. Fletcher, Soil Conservation Farmer Takes Proper Care Of Trees

"The man I bought this farm from said he cut a good crop of buckwheat on this field, 33 years ago. Now look at the size of the trees. Some of them are almost

two feet through." G. L. Fletcher of the Idlewild community was speaking of a fine field of white pines on his farm.

"I have done some thinning and pruning but Mr. Beck (Roy R. Beck, formerly with the Soil Conservation Service in the New River District) says I should do some more thinning and prune the other trees, at least high enough to get a log of clear lumber 16 feet long when they are cut," Mr. Fletcher continued. "The hardest job I have is getting rid of buyers. I have been offered \$22.00 per thousand feet for the timber. I would be losing money if I sold them now for they will grow more board feet of lumber in the next 15 years than they have in the last 30 years."

Mr. Fletcher is equally as enthusiastic about his well treated pastures, his three year contour strip rotation on his hillside and his fine crops in his bottom land, his wildlife border of sericea and bicolor lespedeza, and other soil conservation practices on his farm.

"I do not have to worry so much about the creek flooding the crops in my bottom land as I used to. Many of my neighbors up the creek are also following a good program of soil conservation and the creek does not flood as often as it once did."



Test Or Guess?

What's the use of guessing When you're sure by testing. To find out your soil need So you will not overfeed?

When you're hungry for meat And suffering from heat You don't call for apple pie And have Doc treat your eye.

So see what your soil lacks, Feed it this and you'll get it back, All you expect and more, For it has been tried before.

It's as simple as can be Get a little sample and see What Dr. Miles has to say, We assure you it's the only way.

The average price received by farmers for eggs in mid-June was 41.5 cents per dozen, 8 cents above the previous June 15.

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The New River Soil Conservation District

Since It Was Established 6 Years Ago

This has meant much toward the improvement of farming practices in this county. We urge all farmers, who do not have plans, to have them worked out.

The above picture shows ladino clover, being grown on the Thompson farm in Alleghany county.

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