

SELL YOUR 1937 TOBACCO CROP IN WHITEVILLE

THE STATE PORT PILOT

A Good Newspaper In A Good Community

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Whiteville — The
Farmer's Town

VOLUME TEN

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EVERYTHING READY FOR MARKET OPENING

Cotton Replaced By Tobacco As Chief Cash Crop

Farmers Of This Section
Last Season Sold 63,488,-
210 Pounds Of Tobacco
At Average Price Of
21.58 Cents Per Pound

TOBACCO LONG HAS BEEN "MONEY CROP"

Not Only Has It Been Used
To Bring In Cash, But
Often Has Been Used
In Place Of Cash

(By William H. Richardson)
Since long before automobiles,
washing machines and
other chattels used in modern
agriculture and selling came in-
creasingly, tobacco has had a
cash value, as well as a cash
crop. This cash price, unfortu-
nately, is not fixed by the pro-
ducer, but is governed by condi-
tions over which he does not ap-
pear to have any great amount
of control. Perhaps a specific for
this economic malady will be
worked out some day.

In aristocratic early Virginia,
tobacco was the "cream
of the crop" of immigrants from
England, even a wife, it is said,
could be purchased with tobacco.
The idea that fluctuations in
prices of tobacco are confined to
the operation of modern marts is
not borne out by facts. If to-
bacco had ever been going to
slump in the millium or bring
about complete economic disas-
ter, said millennium and flop
would have occurred long ago.

As far back as 1860, records
compiled by Frank Parker of
the federal-state crop reporting
service, show North Carolina's
tobacco crop brought the farm-
ers \$5,637,618, at 14.3 cents a
pound. The yield that year,
just after the close of the War
between the States, amounted to
392,000 pounds. That was be-
fore the day of cigarettes and the
women took up the use of
tobacco. They simply smoked
in cob pipes and dipped snuff.
Contrast these figures with 1919,
that year, just after the close
of the World War, when every-
body was using the weed, the
crop in North Carolina totaled
63,488,210 pounds, which brought
an average of 53.6 cents a
pound and yielded a total re-
venue of \$17,333,000—the largest
figure in tobacco the farmers
of this state have ever engaged
in.

Ten years later, the yield had
risen to 498,593,000 pounds,
at the crop, at an average of
only 15.3 cents a pound—the in-
evitable result of over-produc-
tion—brought growers just \$92,-
260,000.

Fluctuations Nothing New

Six, eight and ten cent tobac-
co, however, is nothing new. The
season's averages remained be-
tween ten cents from 1891 to
1906. That was back when things
generally were cheap and inclu-
ded one war—that fought be-
tween Spain and the United States
in '98-'99. The season's aver-
age in 1890, the year that war
ended, was only 6.6 cents, and
in 1900 it was only 7 cents. The
men smoked cigarettes then; some
men dipped snuff, and most
of the masculine population chewed.

From 1906 until the beginning of
the World War, there was not
much fluctuation in the prices of
tobacco. It remained well above
ten cents, however.

And so, in a general way, goes
the story of tobacco—always the
stratocast of crops in the way
of fairly good yields per pound,
although cotton was for a long
time king in bringing in the lar-
gest total receipts. But now cot-
ton appears to be definitely sec-
ond in North Carolina in the way
of totals as well as price per
pound.

"Jumped Over the Moon"

When the war in Europe was
on in earnest; when foreign pro-
paganda in this country was fast
moving toward its climax that
brought about American partici-
pation, then everything jumped
skyward, tobacco included. That
was the silk shirt era, when
warmer fabrics gave way to that
made from the product of the

(Continued on Page 2.)

TOBACCO BARN MADE INTO ATTRACTIVE HOME



REMODELED. The attractive residence shown
above once was a tobacco barn, but it was remodeled
by its owner, Belton Thompson, as a home for one of
his employees. It is located on Lee street, in Whiteville.

Cardwell Terms Tobacco Tantalizing Cash Crop

Most Farmers Who Grow Tobacco Are Tormented From Season To Season With Fears Concerning Crop Outcome

BALANCED FARMING PROGRAM IS HELP

Smart Farmer Provides His Own Insurance Against Economic Failure By Planting Food And Feed Crops

(BY GUY A. CARDWELL)
Most farmers of the tobacco
growing counties are tormented
from season to season, and from
seed planting time through the
harvest and curing periods for
fear that something may happen
to lessen the money value of
their so called golden weed. And
then, after making a heavy yield
and getting a good cure, there
may come teasing thoughts that
the prices that the buyers in the
markets will hang over their
heads for this great cash crop
may or may not be satisfactory;
so the torment goes on to the
end.

Those farmers depending too
largely on the tobacco crop, fail-
ing to support the crop with
other cash crops, with food, feed
and livestock in proper propor-
tions, are apt to find themselves
in a fix somewhat comparable to
that of Tantalus, a son of Zeus,
who was punished in the under-
world for revealing secrets of the
gods, by being plunged to the
neck in water with luscious fruit
about his head, both of which
receded when he attempted to
eat or drink.

Unlike Tantalus, our better to-
bacco growers can usually reach
food and drink and other neces-
sities and some luxuries because

(Continued on Page 2.)

Practical Jokes Sometimes Played On Tobacco Curers

Long night watches at the
tobacco barn often give the
imagination of some farmer
boy an inspiration for a
practical joke to be played
upon one of his slumbering
companions.

One night in a neighboring
county a young white youth
turned over the watchful res-
ponsibility to an elderly col-
ored man, who had just
completed his turn at sleep-
ing. Sometime later the
boy awoke and discovered
that the old darky had fallen
asleep almost as quickly
as he did himself.

After mending the fire and
checking the barn tempera-
ture the lad decided to give
his partner a scare. He lo-
cated a piece of rope sever-
al feet long and made a loop

VIRGINIA GOVERNOR POPULARIZED WEED

Ralph Lane, first governor
of Virginia, was the first white
man to become a regular to-
bacco smoker. On one of his
trips to England he carried
some tobacco to Sir Walter
Raleigh, who smoked it in the
Queen's court and was imme-
diately drenched by an over-
zealous court attendant who
believed him to be on fire. It
wasn't long before the entire
English court was enjoying the
pleasure of tobacco smoking.

From the English court, no-
bility all over the world learn-
ed about smoking. When the
noblemen of every country took
up the habit, it wasn't long
before the common people fol-
lowed suit; and soon tobacco
was spread all over the globe
and was fairly easy to get.

Florida Tobacco Good This Year

Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 3.—South
Georgia warehousemen who have
checked the bright leaf tobacco
crop in North Florida give it
their opinion that belt will mar-
ket more than 17,000,000 pounds
this season. Last year's crop was
around 8,000,000.

The Florida crop got off to a
good start and was produced un-
der unusually good weather con-
ditions, warehousemen here say.
For that reason it will grade bet-
ter than the Georgia leaf and is
expected to bring higher average
prices than Georgia farmers will
receive.

Head, Heart, Hands and Health
are 4-H's.

Former Newsman Recalls Early Tobacco Market

W. B. Keziah, Former
Whiteville News pa per
Man, Recalls Efforts To
Make Whiteville "Little
Danville Of The South"

E. F. POWELL RECALLED AS EARLY BOOSTER

Markets At Fair Bluff,
Chadbourn And Tabor
City Also Have Been
In Existence For A
Number Of Years

(By W. B. KEZIAH)

Writing recollections of grow-
ing and marketing tobacco in
Columbus and Brunswick coun-
ties is something like trying to
recall water that has long since
passed over the dam. This article
will have to be purely in a
recollective sense, in which there
will doubtlessly occur many sins
of omission, for which the in-
dulgence of the public is asked.

Fair bluff as a tobacco market
antedates the Wilmington and
Columbia branch of the Atlantic
Coast Line railroad. The tobacco
bought at Fair Bluff in its ear-
lier days as a market was rafted
down the Lumber river to
Georgetown, S. C., or transported
by wagon train into interior
North Carolina where it was
manufactured. Fair Bluff is un-
doubtedly one of the oldest mar-
kets in the South Carolina Bright
Leaf Belt.

After a vain attempt some
years previously, my recollection
is that J. A. Wilson, M. O. Nel-
son, Sr., Frank Wray and others
built the old Myers warehouse at
Whiteville about 1914. The op-
erators were Myers and Nelson.
The next year another warehouse
was built and Mr. Wray oper-
ated it with an associate. Mr.
Wray was a Brunswick county
farmer and tobacco grower, and
one of the pioneers at Whiteville
from Danville, Virginia.

The first two years of opera-
tions brought poor results. To-
bacco growing was not firmly es-
tablished in Columbus and Brun-
swick in 1914-15. There just was
not much tobacco for the two
warehouses and the marketing
system hadn't developed into any-
thing very satisfactory to the
farmers who did grow. Chad-
bourn built its first warehouse
early in 1916, but was not able
to secure an auctioneer that year
and no sales were held.

New Blood Arrives

But for 1917, Myers and Wal-
ton, of Danville, leased the Chad-
bourn warehouse. The Tuggle
Brothers and Harry G. Lea came
on from Danville and bolstered
the Whiteville market. It seems
to me that there were other
outstanding figures there at the
same time, but I do not recall
their names. At any rate, the
1917 season was a great one at
Whiteville and the minds of hun-
dreds of farmers in Columbus
and Brunswick turned to to-
bacco growing.

The year 1918 was a repetition
of the 1917 success. Fair Bluff
had three small warehouses go-
ing full blast. I recall that out-
standing figures on that market
at the time were J. T. (Jolly)
Abbott, of Danville, J. F. Rog-
ers and Hicks Powell, both of
Fair Bluff. Fair Bluff went
strong.

So did Chadbourn. Under My-
ers and Walton, Chadbourn's first
year as a tobacco marketing
town was a great one. Before the
1917 season was over the pro-
gressive Chadbourn folks began
to look around for added facili-
ties in the shape of another
warehouse.

Tabor City, then Mt. Tabor,
also entered the lists strongly as
a tobacco marketing town about
the 1917 season. My recollection
is that it was about the next
year that the idea of a re-
drying plant took hold there. The
plant was ultimately built.

"The Little Danville"

It was sometime in 1918, I
think, that E. F. Powell, cashier
of the Bank of Columbus and ev-
er one of the biggest boosters of
the Whiteville tobacco market,
came into my office with a big
piece of news about a third ware-
house at Whiteville. I think this
was the Lea Warehouse. Mr.
Powell, who could not conceal his
excitation, said:

"We will make Whiteville the
little Danville of the South. You
just watch my prediction and
see if it does not come to pass."
This prediction of a real boost-
(Continued on Page 2.)

Filling Tobacco Barn Takes Every Member of Family

Jobs Range From That of
Hander and Stick Boy
To Those Held By The
Men And Older Boys of
the Family

FRIENDLY CONTEST BETWEEN WORKERS

Continues Throughout Day Until Completed Job Is Celebrated By Water- melon Party

When tobacco curing time
comes around there is a job for
every member of the family from
six-year-old Johnnie up to sixty-
year-old Aunt Arabella.

On days when a barn is to be
filled, truck driver Johnnie leaves
the breakfast table early and
goes out to hitch up the mule to
the tobacco slide so everything
will be ready for the men to go
right to work the moment they
finish their breakfast.

Johnnie is mighty proud of
his job, for this is the first year
he has been allowed to drive the
slide to haul tobacco from the
field to the tying shed. Last
year as a hander he spent spare
moments dreaming of the time
he would be given the responsi-
bility of truck driver and could
work with the men.

By the time Johnnie reaches
the tobacco field and heads his
mule down the first set of rows,
the men are ready to bend low
to their task of cropping the
leaves that are ripe and ready
to be cured. Carrying two rows
at a time, passing swift, sure
judgment upon the ripeness of
the leaves, the croppers lay armful
after armful of tobacco in the
slide before it is filled.

Under the tobacco barn shel-
ter, or beneath a tying shed near-
by, tyers and handers are wait-
ing the arrival of the first load
of tobacco. The loose leaves in
the slide must be gathered into
small bunches, of from two to
five leaves, depending upon the
size, so that it may be looped
and tied on sticks before it is
placed in the barn.

Every move is by hand. The
job of hander that Johnnie was
so anxious to be graduated from
last year is an important first
step. Each bunch, or "hank", of
tobacco must be about the same
in bulk, otherwise the curing will
not be uniform. So almost by in-
stinct a good hander must know
whether it will take two leaves,
four or six to make the right
size.

A good tyer is a human ma-
chine that works at a tireless
pace throughout the day until
the last leaf is strung on a stick.
This job usually falls to a wom-
an, and two good handers can
keep a good tyer busy. The sys-
tem for speedy work is for the
handers to keep a bunch within
easy reach of the tyer so that
taking the tobacco from the hand-
er and looping the thread is all
one smooth, easy motion.

From eighteen to twenty-four
bunches will load a stick, and
when one is filled, there is a man
waiting to take it off and put
another one on the tying rack.

Among members of the aver-
age tobacco barning crew there
develops a friendly competition
between the workers in the field
and those at the barn. The lat-
ter will try their best to have
a full truck at the barn before
the first is empty; and the tying
crew will work like fury in the
hope of a few moments' rest be-
fore the next load comes up.

When the field has been crop-
ped, and the last leaf is tied, it
is a different story. The men of
the field enlist the women and
children of the tying force in
handing in the full sticks so they
may be hung on the tier poles
in the barn. A line similar to an
old fashioned bucket brigade at
a fire is the most effective meth-
od for rapidly handling the
sticks.

The job of climbing up in the
barn and hanging the tobacco is
one that combines good judg-
ment, strength and the agility of
a monkey. The sticks must be
properly spaced, or again there
is danger that the curing will
not be uniform. The mere ability
to stand spraddle-legged for more
than an hour while handling
heavy sticks and constantly
changing one's position is no
easy task.

When the last stick is hung
and the barn door is closed pre-
paratory to starting up the fire
in the furnace the usual payoff
is a watermelon cutting, a pretty
fine remedy for a tired feeling.

Twenty-Five Million Pounds Set As Goal For Whiteville Market During 1937 Season

New Sales Supervisor Experienced Promoter

Wide Experience In Promo- tion Work Makes Him Qualified For Duties Of Publicity Director And Supervisor Of Sales

The Whiteville Tobacco Board
of Trade was fortunate this year
in being able to secure Dr. M.
S. Smith for publicity director
and sales supervisor. Dr. Smith
has had wide experience in col-
lege promotion work that makes
him eminently well qualified for
his present positions.

A citizen of Fair Bluff, Dr.
Smith is a native of Wilmington.
For a number of years he was
a pharmacist and at one time
owned a drug store in Georget-
own, S. C. He continued in this
profession until ill health forced
his retirement.

Forced to seek employment that
would give him a chance to
work outside a good part of the
time, Dr. Smith became associ-
ated with the Baptist Board of
Education of West Virginia as
assistant secretary. Later he
went to Breneau College, Gains-
ville, Ga., as endowment secre-
tary and as secretary of the
alumnae association. In this
latter role he doubtless earned
the distinction of being the only
man who ever held office in the
graduate organization of a girls'
school.

Later he returned to West
Virginia, where he was associate



to the president of Broadus Col-
lege. Once more in 1931 poor
health forced his retirement from
active duty and he moved to
Fair Bluff.

Since he was employed ten
weeks ago to handle publicity and
advertising preliminary to the
opening of the Whiteville market,
he has proved himself a tireless
worker possessed with boundless
enthusiasm. He is thoroughly
sold on the idea that Whiteville,
located as she is in the center
of a prosperous tobacco-growing
section, will easily attain her
goal of 25,000,000 pounds this
season.

With Exceedingly Fine To-
bacco Crop In Prospect
It Appears Likely That
All-Time Record Will Be
Set

MARKET BOOSTERS HAVE HAD A PART

In Most Aggressive Adver- tising Campaign Under- taken In History Of Market The Citizens Have Responded Nobly

Everything is ready for Tues-
day, and the first sale of the
1937 season, which promises to
be the best, by far, in the his-
tory of the Whiteville Tobacco
Market.

The goal—25-million pounds—
was set, not because of the de-
sire alone to establish a new re-
cord, but after a very careful
survey of the crops was made.
Finding conditions very much
better than they have been in
several years, talking with farm-
ers and parties interested in
tobacco facts stood out which
prompted making the goal 25-
million pounds.

There is a prospective increase
in acreage of ten to twelve per-
cent. Crop conditions are bet-
ter at this time than they have
been in years in the immediate
vicinity; excellent growing seasons
having prevailed. Nature has
blessed this section this year
from planting time 'till now,
with the exception of the hot
days about the middle of July.
These indications favor the es-
tablishment of a new high re-
cord for total sales.

Whiteville, the Tobacco Center,
is favorably located, being the
county seat of Columbus county,
one of the largest and best agri-
cultural counties in the two Car-
olinas. Whiteville is only 48-
miles west of Wilmington and
three hours drive from Raleigh.
Hard-surfaced highways from all
sections of the state bring vis-
itors here where six big warehou-
ses with a daily capacity of over
two million pounds, modern in
every detail, are conveniently
located in the business district.

The warehousemen are men
with years of experience in the
tobacco business and have es-
tablished the very highest repu-
tation as successful business men.
They have employed the most
capable forces obtainable, effi-
cient and courteous. Due to
their knowledge and experience
they render service that is more
than personal—it is obliging-
polite-gentle. Tobacco is handled
promptly by a floor force, care-
fully selected, and baskets are
placed by the floor manager to
the best advantage possible.

Representative Buyers

Whiteville has three sets of
buyers, experts in their line, rep-
resenting all of the leading
manufacturers and factories. This
creates strong competition and
the highest price is prevalent
throughout the season. There is
a probability of a fourth set of
buyers on the Whiteville market
for the 1937 season. Due to the
enormous quantity of tobacco an-
ticipated, another set of buyers
has been requested, and is ex-
pected.

Warehouses and Operators

Tuggle's Warehouse will be op-
erated by the owner, H. Gordon
Tuggle, who will have the same
efficient, and courteous force
employed for the past several
years, M. O. Nelson, Sr., and his
sons, Oliver and John, will op-
erate two warehouses—Nelson's
and Farmer's—with Paul Wooten,
assistant manager at the Farm-
er's. Crutchfield's Warehouse
will be operated by Paul Tay-
lor, Gaitner and Raymond Crutch-
field. W. B. Daniel and A. H.
Moore will operate the Star
Warehouse, which has recently
been enlarged considerably, giv-
ing them capacity for a full
day's sale. Daniel and Moore re-
cently purchased the interest of
their associate, W. M. Young.
Lea's Warehouse will be man-
aged by Hunter Y. Lea. This
house will be operated on the
same sound, progressive prin-
ciples established by the found-
er.

The operators of the six big
warehouses will be in active
charge at all times and will give
(Continued On Page 3)

Tobacco Receives Close Inspection In Each Stage

TOBACCO IS NATIVE AMERICAN CROP

Although much is said of
Turkish tobacco, foreign
blends, etc., it is a matter of
historical record that all to-
bacco originally came from
America.

Every plant of the foreign
crop that today is grown in
competition with domestic
production originated from the
seed which early Spanish ex-
plorers took home with them
from Mexico.

Many changes have been
wrought through climatic con-
ditions and different methods
of cultivation and curing, but
there is no getting away from
the fact that this is the native
country for the weed crop.

Kentuckians Must Like Their Smokes

Frankfort, Ky., Aug. 3.—The
average Kentuckian consumed
from 65 to 75 cigarettes in June
on the basis of consumers' tax
paid on 178,071,680 cigarettes, the
department of revenue announced
recently.

From the tax of one cent on
each ten cents or fractional part
of the retail price of cigarettes,
less wholesalers' commissions for
affixing stamps, the state received
\$131,781.14 during June.

High ideals are set by Club
for Youth Guidance.

Crusoe Islanders Experiment With Tobacco Cultivation

Crusoe Islanders who last
year began to experiment
with the cultivation of to-
bacco weren't exactly satis-
fied with the results obtain-
ed.

Last season the crop was
away to a good start, accord-
ing to information from that
section, but when dry weather
made its appearance the
leaves burned up in the field
faster than they could be
harvested and cured.

This year Crusoe Island
farmers again planted tobac-
co, but S. A. Long and J.

P. Clewis, who were in
Whiteville recently, say they
are still not convinced that
it will pay them to divert
any of their corn and pota-
to land to the cultivation of
this cash crop.

These two commodities are
chief among the farm prod-
ucts of Crusoe Island. The
residents of that section are
famed for their live-at-home
program, and Dr. Floyd
Johnson, Columbus county
health officer, attributes
much of their healthiness to
their simple, homegrown
fare.