

A FINAL WORD

(Continued from page 2.)

years will be hauled over level earth roads with ruts and mud it will cost us, according to Dr. Pratt's table, \$1,727,290 interest and all, over and above what it would cost to haul it over good level sand-clay roads. This is much more than was figured in my last letter. But in that letter I figured the difference in the cost of hauling over good roads and bad ones away down below what Dr. Pratt's table of costs will justify and assumed that a team would pull only twice as much over good roads as it could pull over bad ones. I did this on purpose that no one might think my figures too big. And while in this calculation I have figured the difference in the cost of the hauling much higher, I have kept my figures within the limits of Dr. Pratt's table. Here then is a loss to our people in the 30 years of \$1,727,290, equal to a yearly loss to our county of a little over \$57,576, or an average yearly loss to each township of a little over \$7,197. And remember, reader, that this loss is on just the one item of hauling tobacco and that we have not figured it as being due to pulling over steep or rising grades, but to the bad surface of roads on level grades. For we have, for the sake of comparison, assumed that this tobacco would be hauled over level roads having a surface of mud and ruts. We have done this, and figured from the outside limits of the table of cost bearing on the matter, in order to get the reader's mind fixed on the part the surface of a road plays in fixing the cost of hauling. Then if bad surface adds such tremendous cost to the hauling over level roads and is a reason why people in level counties should properly surface their roads, should it not appeal to us here in the hills with even greater force? For here the teams have to pull not only against the resistance of a bad surface, but against heavy or rising grades as well. So then, instead of our hills being an argument against our undertaking road improvement they argue all the more strongly that we should make an effort to properly surface our roads.

A Tender Spot.

Reader, do you enjoy reading the daily mail the rural carriers are bringing you? Would it not hit you in a tender spot if this pleasure, enjoyment and source of information should be snatched away from you? Surely it would. Then listen: Here is a quotation from a bulletin sent out by the Postal Department:

"You are directed to inform yourself with reference to the condition of roads and bridges on the rural routes out of your office, and if you find that they require improvement you should present the matter in the strongest and most positive way to the patrons and road officials, informing them that improvements must be made as soon as possible. If, after a reasonable time has elapsed, the improvements have not been made or started, you will report to this office in order that action may be taken looking to the discontinuance of the service.

The department is not immediately concerned in elaborate road improvement, but in the interest of the best service to the largest number of patrons, it must insist upon the roads being kept in good repair."

Bonds As Compared With Direct Tax.

It seems that some think that instead of issuing bonds for money to build our roads it would be better to tax the people a certain amount to be applied directly to the roads each year, and thus avoid paying interest on bonds for money to do the work. This seems to be logic at first thought, and I would be in favor of this method if it would give us enough money to build the roads at once and do the work in such a way as to be of lasting benefit. But our people need good roads now, and to build them piecemeal or

just a little one year and a little the next and so on, it would be many years before we would have good roads even if they could be built in that way at all. And it would cost us a great deal more to keep a competent engineer or road expert with us from year to year than it would to have him do all his work at once or as soon as possible and be done with it. When the roads are completed in this way the people get the benefit of them almost at once, and they last longer by reason of completed work than they would do just a little work on them now and then. I have already stated that Governor Sanders of Louisiana said that the free labor system and this way of making annual appropriations to be spent directly on road improvement had been in use in that State for 100 years, and that under these systems they had, in the last twenty years wasted enough money to build permanent highways from one end of the State to the other, and no roads yet. (This was said a few years back.)

Counties do not build court houses and bridges just a little at a time. If they have not got the money to pay down for them they issue bonds for money to build them so the people can begin to use them, and they pay for them afterwards. It would not be the part of wisdom to pay carpenters to do a little work on a court house or bridge and then let them stop till they could get more money to pay them to do a little more work. The building would deteriorate and possibly rot down before it would be finished, and just so with our roads we should finish them as we go. And hence the need of bonds to enable us to do the work properly.

I understand that some who oppose the bond issue have suggested that a tax of \$1.50 be put on the poll and 50 cents on each \$100 property valuation, and be applied to road improvement. But it seems to us that this is more than our bonds here in Yadkin township will cost us. We will figure a little along this line. But we will not put the tax on the poll as high as \$1.50 as has been suggested, but at one dollar, and we will put it at 50 cents on each \$100 property valuation. These are the figures representing the rate of tax another good farmer tried who seems to be against the proposed bond issue, says he is willing to pay for good roads. Now we have as I understand a little over \$800,000 property valuation in our township. But we will count it at only \$800,000. And we have at least 500 taxable polls in the township. So we will take these figures and the suggested tax rate as a basis from which to make our calculation. Our bond issue is for \$50,000. And while we think the bonds could be placed at 5 per cent, we will figure the interest on them at 6 per cent. This would at the end of the 30 years amount to \$90,000, making \$140,000 principal and all. This sum is large and looks scary to some. Yet, if the tax on our property and polls is levied at the rate some of those who are opposing the bonds say they are willing to pay for good roads and is set aside as collected and put at interest as a kind of sinking fund, it will, at the end of the 30 years, pay pay off the bonds interest and all and leave us \$116,500. Besides, we would have the roads the \$50,000 borrowed money would build. With this \$116,500 we could pay \$20,000 for collecting and machinery, \$5,000 for an engineer, \$25 per mile per year for the up keep of 50 miles of the roads built, and have \$54,000 left to pay supervisors and build more roads. So you see reader, the bond and sinking fund plan would enable us to do all this work with even less tax than some of those who are fighting the bond issue say they are willing to pay for good roads. I know they claim that too much of the money would go out of the county as interest on the bonds to get a little spent on the roads in the county. But this so-called waste is more apparent than real. What matters it to us of Yadkin township if we do pay out \$90,000 interest on our \$50,000 bond issue if we get back \$121,500 interest on our own money, or \$31,500 more

interest than we pay out? And this is just what we would get back, even if our property value should not increase another dollar, and the present valuation be taxed at the rate some who oppose the bond measure say they are willing to pay. But reader, do not understand that I am claiming that in case the bonds are voted, just such a tax rate will be levied and such sinking fund provided as I have figured from in the above calculation. I have made the calculation simply to show that the bond method will give us the roads sooner, and need not cost us as much tax as some of our opposers say they are willing to pay and that the interest we would pay on the bonds would not be so much a real loss as an apparent one.

Hon. Logan Waller Page, Director Office Public Roads U. S. Dept. Agriculture, after speaking of the great financial benefits resulting from good roads, said: "But there are other elements which more urgently recommend the improvement of our roads. Advantages which deserve far more serious consideration than any financial advantages which we may gain, and which cannot be measured by any monetary standard, but must be looked for in the elevation of citizenship and the moral and intellectual advancement of our people. *** They live apart from each other and have no roads such as afford easy and convenient means of transacting business, of social intercourse, and regular attendance upon church and school. To them will flow the maximum of benefits from improved roads. Improved roads will bring them in closer touch with the centers of progress. It will give them enlarged ideas and assist them to adopt the new methods which are so necessary for them to keep pace with the march of progress along other lines, and as they advance, so will civilization. As they advance, so will our entire country, and in equal ratio.

"Good roads will revolutionize our country schools. Contrast the lot of the country child on his way to school in winter with that of the child with only a few blocks of paved streets to walk. Our country child, with satchel over shoulders and lunch basket in hand, must leave the cheerful home from half an hour to an hour before school opens in order to be there on time. The roads are wet and muddy many months of the year. The country is open and the cold winds are unmerciful in their attacks upon him. So that, by the time he reaches the school house, which is often unscientifically ventilated and poorly heated, his feet are so cold and his body so chilled that he is unfit for study or recitation most of the day, and the exposure and chilling of the body invite pneumonia and other diseases;

I cannot close this letter without giving a short article from Henry Wallace, Editor of Wallace's Farmer. Mr. Wallace, (Uncle Henry as he is called), was a member of the Commission appointed by President Roosevelt to investigate or look into the condition of country life. And on matters pertaining to agriculture and rural life he is considered one of the foremost authorities in the United States. The article follows:

Married Land.

"That is a very beautiful picture of an ideal rural civilization that the prophet Isaiah draws in the 62nd chapter:

"Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah (my delight is in her) and thy land Beulah (married). For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

Married land: a farm in which the owner acts: "My delight is in thee." Is not this a beautiful conception of the real, first-class, up-to-date farmer toward his farm? That farm is not for sale. He expects to live there all his life. He expects it to grow more beautiful and more fruitful every year. He is not thinking of giving it up to go into a new country, nor to move to town. He knows every foot of that farm, what it can raise best, and what will give him the greatest profit. He dresses his farm as a wise man dresses his wife, not for display but for

comfort and utility, and to bring out her best in spirit as well as looks. His fences are practical and always kept in repair. His barn is a model of comfort for live stock, his house a home and place of comfort for himself and his family. The plan of his house is not for display, nor yet unlovely. His lawn is always kept trimmed. He has a well kept orchard. There is a flower garden as well as a vegetable garden. He has an eye to the artistic and the beautiful as well as the useful and practical.

"This is a married farm." We see them now and then; not perfect but showing that the man has an ideal which he is striving to reach from year to year. The married farms are examples—preachers of good farming to the entire neighborhood. It may be taken for granted that it is not owned by a speculator nor is it for sale or for trade. The man who lives there expects to live there and die there, and be carried out by his children and friends to God's acre to rest until he has an opportunity to take part in the ideal civilization, whether in this world or another.

"Perhaps in the same neighborhood, and almost certainly in the same township, you will find the desolate farm, owned, it may be, by a man who is not married to the land. He does not like farming. He would like to trade his farm for a dry goods store or a grocery store or for wild land out west. He is getting all he can out of it, selling all he possibly can for all he can get for it.

Possibly this desolate farm is owned by some speculator, who has entered into a contract with a one-year tenant, the main object of that contract being to render that land desolate and divide the proceeds between them. That's what a one-year lease means: a contract to render desolate the farm that is leased.

The renter usually gets the blame for that, and often unjustly; for if he is to live at all and support his family he must rob the land and render it desolate. Look around you and see how many married farms there are in your neighborhood, and how many desolate, or becoming so. Don't lay all the blame on the renter; for the poor fellow is doing what he has a legal right to do, and doing it to the best of his ability; and the landlord who consents to the rape of the land, compelling the tenant to grow grain and nothing else is a sharer in rendering it desolate."

I trust the reader will excuse this apparent digression from my subject. I have made it to lead up to the thought I wish to impress. Mr. Wallace's idea is that the married farms are those the characteristics and surroundings of which are so attractive and enticing the farmers are loath to part from them, but delight in and rejoice over them as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride. Where this splendid relationship exists between the farmer and his farm, the earth yields its increase and there is contentment and plenty; for the husbandman is married to the land and bends his energies to bring forth the fruits thereof. But can this relationship exist where the products of our farms are shut off from market by almost impassible stretches of slush and mud? You may be married to your farm, reader, but the time will come when by reason of age and decrepitude you will be divorced from it. Then you would like for your children or some good tenants to be married to it and care for you and it as you would have it cared for. But you could not reasonably expect this if you have not the advantages of good roads.

Some time back the Governor of New Hampshire said: "Since the construction of a system of good roads throughout the State during the last five years, nearly all of the abandoned farms in New Hampshire or at least the majority of them, are now in a state of cultivation."

In conclusion, I will say to you

reader, that I have studied these things seriously and honestly, and tried to tell you just how I see them. And I trust that no unkind feelings will be engendered by anything I have said. And remember that if the proposed bonds are voted we will carry the burden, whether heavy or light, for the sake of a noble cause. All we want is for you to inform yourself as best you can on the subject and continue to study it, and then be governed by your conscience when you go to vote. If you feel that you should vote against the bonds why then vote against them. But if you should feel that you should vote for them, it would be your duty to go out and vote for them, and not stay at home, or not vote at all.

W. A. PETREE.

Mr. A. P. Adams and son, of Sandy Ridge Route 1, were here Saturday on their way to Walnut Cove. On the way there Mr. Adams in trying to drive around a bad mud hole in the road hit a stump and had considerable trouble in getting his buggy extricated, narrowly averting a more serious accident.

Mrs. J. D. Humphreys is visiting her parents, Rev. and Mrs. D. A. Binkley, at Lewisville, Forsyth county.

Mr. Thomas S. Petree, of Walnut Cove, spent Sunday here with home folks.

Nice fresh milch cow for sale at J. Walter Tuttle's, King Route 1.

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