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**MILNE MFG. CO., 678 North St., Monmouth, Ill.**

Our advertisers are guaranteed.

## FROM A BOY DIXIE TO A TRACTION-PLOW OUTFIT\*

Making Implements Pay Is a Matter for Thought and Study; This Man Tried Them All—And Succeeded

J. W. Fountian, Reeves, Georgia

**I** AM going to write you a story of my experience with improved farm implements, from the "Boy Dixie" one-horse turning plow to the tractor and gang plows I am now using. I hope it may prove instructive to someone who is contemplating the use of improved farm implements.

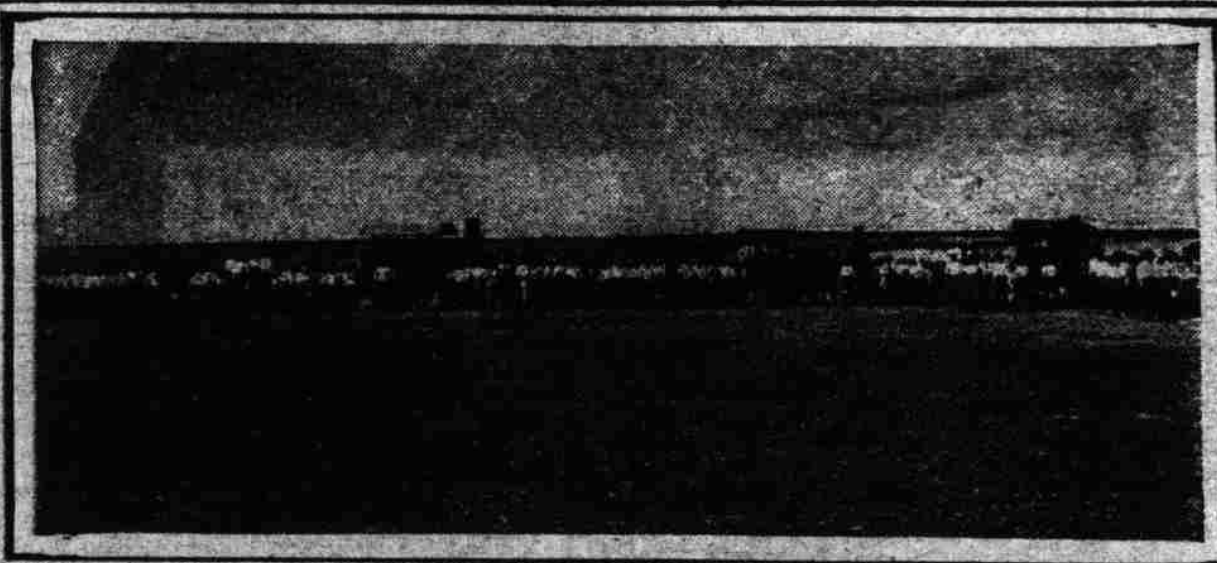
It is better to begin at the first. My story dates back to the year 1893 when I quit school and married. There was nothing that appealed to me like the farm. My father owned a large plantation, and I being the only child, he turned it over to me, he being engaged in other business. The farm was growing pine bushes, briars, persimmon sprouts and a crop of hound dogs and negro children. I had no tools and no stock but a buggy horse and an old mule. I bought a disk harrow and a Boy Dixie plow, and with these and some other old Georgia ratchet stocks I made my first crop—about 400 bushels of corn, with some truck patches. That fall I traded 65 bushels of corn to a merchant for a disk plow, the second one I ever saw. It was not a success, owing to the hilly fields, gullies, stumps and rocks, but I used it everywhere I could and watched for results in the next crop. There was no great difference in its favor, but there was some. That plow put me to digging stumps, filling gullies and terracing. I used it for a few years and

acres of grain in. To solve the harvest problem, I bought a binder. Next season the heads were well filled with grain, but the straw was so short the binder wouldn't tie it, and I lost out again and had to use the "turkey wing" on most of the crop.

After that I sowed rye instead of wheat and had good success. Later I bought a smoothing harrow to smooth the ground as an aid in harvesting. Long before this I had replaced those chilled plows with good steel ones, and my troubles were over there. Then I began to "middle burst" and subsoil and my crops increased to quite a decided gain. Father had an engine, so the next important implement was a corn husker and shredder. It was the first machine that I had bought that really paid. I had that year about a thousand bushels to shred, and there was such an immense amount of stover I was forced to buy a hay press, which was a very poor excuse for a press. My corn crop having been cut with hoes and shocked, it got tangled and crossed and was difficult to shred, so the only way to avoid it was to use a corn binder. I bought one.

### Home Water Works and Electric Lights

**I**N THE following few years I had quite a reputation for buying every cheap, worthless device that came along. I had all the shelters full of



TRACTION PLOWING DEMONSTRATION, COLLEGE STATION, TEX.

quit, but it paid—not in plowing—but by causing me to clear my fields of stumps, stones and gullies.

My next move was to get more stock, a pair of chilled two-horse turn plows and a planter. With these plows I turned over those old hills, terraced, and spent more for repairs than the first cost of the plows, there were so many stumps and underground rocks. I could make a very good seed bed and plant, but had nothing to use in cultivation but a "scooter an' scrape." I planted cotton for a year or two, but those old washed-away hills did not yield more than you can predict, so I lost money on that.

### Failures at First

**I** SUBSCRIBED for a farm paper and got interested in sowing small grain and following with peas to enrich the soil. That struck me favorably. It leaked out, and an agent soon had my order for a grain drill and mowing machine and rake. That fall I put in quite a lot of wheat (for that section.) The harvest came, it was wet; crops all in the grass and no help. I came very near losing my crop harvesting my wheat. I used a nine-pound "turkey wing" cradle, and did my own binding. The crop when threshed made two bushels per acre. I swore it would be the last. This was followed by peas, and I made quite a lot of hay, sprouts, weeds and grubs all raked up together. My mower was about torn up the first season. That fall, looking back over my difficulties, I concluded to use my drill again and got a good

tools. How I ever paid for them all is a mystery, but they must have aided in the work to a great extent or I never could have done it. I had invested in everything I could hear of—a "Little Joe" harrow, Gee Whiz, cotton chopper, stalk cutter, walking planter, riding planter, sulky plow, two-horse cultivator—riding and walking, besides all the other things mentioned. At last, when I could think of nothing more, I determined to reward my wife for her cheerfulness and forbearance. I bought a gasoline engine and a wood saw. No more was she without good dry wood. Then I added a pump, tank and complete system of water works. She had water in every room from cellar to upstairs. I bought her a power washing machine and wringer, also put up an electric lighting plant which lighted up the house, yard and all outbuildings at our pleasure. She also had a large electric fan in the dining room. My! she was pleased, tickled and happy. Next, I bought her an automobile and we had luxury, and as three little children had come to brighten our home we were quite happy in our conveniences and good fortune.

Here I pause. One cold December night our little family were grouped in sadness around the smoking remains of what had been so lately our home.

Those old hills had responded to my labors; they were producing twice as much as before. Now there were no stumps, no washes and no rocks. This was the "home place" on which I lived. I decided to make a change. The entire farm was offered for sale.

The home tract was about one-third of the plantation, the other tracts having been rented out. Prospective purchasers came and looked and wanted the home place but were not anxious for the rest. After several days the home place was sold for one-third more per acre than I could get offered for the other part, so I considered that by using improved implements on this part not only had I made money by increasing my capacity, but had enhanced in value this farm more than \$3,000 in its selling price. It was not one whit better land, but smooth, machine-worked fields caused the difference.

### Stumps and Stones Must Be Out of the Way

**I**N PURCHASING another farm I had a mental picture of what I wanted, and strange to say, I found it: all level, fertile land, free from stumps and stones. Soon after moving to my new home I made another break for modern implements. My first important purchase was a tractor-plowing outfit. Other tools have been added and will be until I shall have stocked this farm with conveniences as the one I once had. Last year, 1913, which was my first one here, with the aid of one man, I broke, planted and cultivated 130 acres in cultivated crops, besides 40 acres in grain which was followed in peas. This would not have been possible with the one man and four mules had I not used the tractor-plowing outfit, two-row planter, riding cultivators and other tools of like capacity. The year before this (1912) there were six men and nine mules employed on this same area, with about the same production, although a more favorable season. We broke, disked and harrowed 12 acres per day and five acres at night in addition to the day's run; we planted 20 acres per day, cultivated 20 acres a day; harvested 10 acres of grain a day, plowed, harrowed, drilled and rolled 15 acres to peas in a day and night's run. We cut and raked 10 acres hay per day, and with the large power press baled 15 tons, but that was the only instance in which we two did not do all the work, as baling required several men and teams.

With these implements on this farm, which is ideal for their use with one helper, except a few days in the fall, I have gathered around \$3,500 worth of farm products at present prices, and the season was very dry in this section. My helper cost me \$500 and board, but I had to have a man with judgment enough to operate machinery properly. Other expenses, outside of feed were \$200 for fuel and outside labor. My machinery is practically as good as new. I now have 40 acres in grain and a good acreage of plowing done for this year's crop—done mostly at night, as there was no time to lose in the day from the gathering of the crop.

Do modern implements pay? That depends. If your land is level and free from obstructions, if you select the implements suited to your particular line of work and properly operate them they will pay, and pay well. I am confident that with the tools I have mentioned, under favorable conditions, I can make \$1,000 worth of farm products to each mule used in the cultivation of the crop, prices being the same as now. Last, but a very important factor, is the ease and comfort there is, both in body and mind, as you sit comfortably in the shade if you like, and ride over the field to do your work.

In writing this I have not drawn any imaginary or "heard tell of" instances, but held strictly to the facts in my case. That is why, possibly, as a farmer and not a newspaper writer, this story may be consigned to the waste-basket or the boiler room.

There hasn't been enough rain in three months to get the ground too wet to plow, but much plowing has been done. There have been times in the past when the farmer didn't think of sticking a plow in his field till February, but that was the days of the plug farmer. His day is passed.—Dothan Eagle

\*This article won first prize in our Machinery Special competition.—The Editors.