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SILVER FOX FARM

By CARL GOERCH

We reprint the following from the November 4 issue of The State, weekly news magazine published in Raleigh by Carl Goerch:
The information about Mr. McCarty and his foxes was given us in a letter from Mr. Evelyn Harris, of Atlanta, an official of the Southern Bell Telephone company. "I have been spending quite some time," wrote Mr. Harris, "in the mountains at Highlands, N. C., and I ran across a story which I think may be of some interest to you. It has to do with a Silver Fox Farm which recently has been established by Mr. S. L. McCarty. The manner in which the foxes are raised, bred and the skins marketed is fairly well known, but from your standpoint the interest would lie in the fact that this is one of the very few such farms in the country, and that the climate of Western North Carolina, particularly the section in which this farm is located, is more ideal for this purpose than in any other part of the country."

A Visit to the Farm
First time we ever had heard of a Silver Fox Farm in North Carolina, but last Thursday we were in Highlands so we made some inquiries and made our way out to Mr. McCarty's place—it's known as the Highlands Silver Fox Farm and is about three miles from town. We found Mr. McCarty, Mrs. McCarty, two McCarty children and 125 silver foxes, as well as a number of other interesting items. We also obtained a lot of information about silver foxes, a subject concerning which we had been woefully ignorant in the past. Our first question almost discouraged Mr. McCarty from giving us any further information.

"How many times a year," we asked him, "can you skin one of these foxes?"
"You only skin a fox once," was his dignified reply. "When you get ready to skin him, you first give the animal an injection of strychnine, which kills him, and then you remove the skin."

Mr. McCarty used to live in Greensboro. At one time he was employed with the Eastern Air Lines. For several years he has interested himself in silver-fox production and in obtaining information about how to raise them. Something over two years ago he bought the farm near Highlands. He has been through two breeding seasons and is now starting on his third. He began with 10 foxes and now has 125. Thus far he hasn't killed off any, because he has been wanting to breed others as quickly as possible. Naturally, if he were to kill them off too fast, his production would be curtailed considerably.

Farthest-South Farm
"This," he told us, "is the farthest-south farm in the country. There's another one in Virginia; also some in Wisconsin, and several more in other parts of the country. Canada also raises a lot of silver foxes and we import some from abroad. Used to be that there was a heavy import duty on fox skins and we imported only around 30,000 skins a year. But the duty has been reduced, so now we import around 300,000 skins. That has helped to hold down the market price to some extent."

"How much will a silver-fox skin bring on the market?" we asked.
"There's a wide difference in the price—from \$15 to \$1,000," he told us. "It costs me about \$50 to raise a fox, and I'll be satisfied to get \$100 apiece for the skins. The price depends entirely upon the texture and markings of the skin."

"The climate here is ideal. In the first place, we have considerable fog in the mountains, which

is a desirable feature. Then, too, it doesn't get too warm in the summer. I believe we'll be able to raise a first-grade quality of skin. Anyway, that's what I'm hoping."

Here are some points about the fox industry that we had never known:
The breeding season starts in January. During the summer months, a silver fox's skin turns brown. Then, as the fall season approaches, they shed their fur and grow the blue-black, silver-touched skin which is so highly prized.

The animals have to be killed at exactly the right time; sometimes if they are skinned a week too soon, or a week too late, the value of their furs will depreciate 50 per cent. Even two or three days will make a difference, Mr. McCarty told us.

He and Mrs. McCarty took us on a trip around the farm. The mature foxes are kept in a long runway. There's a wire fence around this enclosure, about six feet high; with a hangover at the top, to prevent the foxes from climbing up it. It is buried about 12 inches in the ground, to keep them from digging under. Inside this outer fence is another one, of the same type. So if a fox should manage to get out of the inside enclosure, he still would be trapped between the two fences. Thus far, Mr. McCarty hasn't lost a single fox.

As we walked on the outer edge of the fence, we saw dozens of the foxes hiding in hollow logs and other places. When we would come too close, they'd leap out into open and go dashing down the runway as hard as they could go.

And then, there are 50 breeding pens, where the young foxes are raised. Mr. McCarty doesn't believe in polygamous breeding. A fox and a vixen are kept in each pen. The pens are enclosed in wire, about two feet above the ground, to keep parasites from bothering the young. The male and female have separate sleeping quarters at one end of the pen.

"Why?" we asked Mr. McCarty.
"To keep them from fighting, especially after the young ones are born," he explained. "Sometimes they'll get mad and eat up their offspring, so we try to keep them separated as much as possible in order to prevent that from taking place."

There was one fox, a beautiful thing, whom Mr. and Mrs. McCarty called Pee-wee. He was one of a litter of six. Ma and Pa got to squabbling about some family difference and ate up the other five, but Pee-wee survived. Afraid that he might meet the same fate as his brothers and sisters, Mrs. McCarty took him to the house, where he was raised by an old cat. The fox and the cat got along splendidly together and he's just as tame as can be. Does all sorts of tricks and follows Mr. and Mrs. McCarty all over the place.

No More Following Around
They've discouraged the following business, however, as a result of what happened not so very long ago. They've got a flock of some 20 or 30 chickens. The first time Pee-wee was turned out, he made a bee-line for the hens. Got one of them, too, and killed it before anything could be done to prevent him. So now Mr. and Mrs. McCarty have voted unanimously that Pee-wee will no longer be allowed to roam at large. We imagine that if the hens had been permitted to vote, they would have voted with the McCartys.

You've probably heard of the expression—"Hot as a fox." We never knew the significance of it until we talked to Mr. McCarty. He informed us that a fox's normal temperature is 103, and that it can go much higher than that. Not long ago, one of the foxes became excited and had a convulsion. They took his temperature and found it to be 115. He went blind for three days and his mate took care of him, guiding him around the pen and helping him to get his food.

Another thing he does is to tattoo each fox before it is taken from the breeding pen and put in the runways. That's to keep people from stealing the foxes and selling the skins. If someone were to sneak into the runway some night and kill one of the foxes, he wouldn't be able to sell the pelt, because Mr. McCarty would immediately notify the dealers, and they'd be on the watch for it.

The business has great possibilities and Mr. and Mrs. McCarty are hoping to make a success of it. By the way, the next time you're up at Highlands, go out and see their farm by all means. You'll find them awfully nice folks and very accommodating.

When you get to the intersection of the two principal streets at Highlands (or where the highway makes a sharp turn to the right) you turn to the left and take a dirt road about two miles out of town. Then you turn to the left and wind in through a country lane for another mile or so. You'll see signs all along the way, so there's no excuse for you getting lost.

Hospital News

Park Fisher, eminent wood craftsman who has recently come to Franklin to take charge of the Nantabala Craft Shop, underwent a major operation here this week. His condition is satisfactory.

Rev. I. L. Roberts' little four year old daughter, Norma, is in the hospital suffering from a fractured skull, which occurred as the result of a fall from an automobile Monday afternoon.

Miss Kate Tallent of Franklin, underwent a minor operation here yesterday. Her condition is satisfactory.

William Wilkie who was injured in a game of football several days ago is in the hospital recovering from the injury. His condition is much improved and he will be home in a few days.

'Weedy' Trees Return Cash Income On Farm

When corn is thinned and cotton chopped, the plants or "weeds" cut down are left on the land. The work involved is an expense which can only be repaid through increased growth of the plants left.

R. W. Graeber, extension forester of State college, says that it is just as essential to take out the "weeds" and remove over-crowded plants in growing a crop of trees as it is in successful corn and cotton production.

"But," he emphasized, "when a farmer thins a crop of growing trees the 'weeds' or thinnings pay the labor cost, taxes, and in most cases a profit. At the same time this removal of surplus trees promotes an increased growth on standing timber."

"When we thin a stand of crowded trees, root competition is reduced, and crown competition is relieved by taking out stunted, crippled, diseased, and rough trees, including the species of low value (weeds). The result is increased growth of trees of highest quality."

As examples of farmers who profited from thinning timber stands, the extension forester named: Mrs. Moses Rice, J. D. Smithwick, and T. B. Tadlock, all of Bertie county; William Brown, a Negro of Caswell county; George Jackson, a Negro of Craven county; M. B. Faircloth, P. D. Maxwell, and A. E. Williams, all of Cumberland; W. M. Petren and Henry A. Williams of Davidson; W. R. Carter and R. M. Woodruff of Davie.

LEGAL ADVERTISING

NOTICE OF SALE

State of North Carolina,
County of Macon.
R. S. Jones, Plaintiff,
vs.
R. L. Stewart, et al, Defendants.

Under and by virtue of a decree of the Superior Court of Macon County entered in the above entitled action on the 30th day of October, 1939, the undersigned Commissioner will on the 4th day of December, 1939, at 12 o'clock, noon, at the Courthouse door in Macon County, North Carolina, sell to the highest bidder for cash the following described real estate:

Adjoining the lands of Newton Craig and others, bounded as follows:

Beginning at a stake, Newton Craig's SW corner, on the East side of Fourth Street, runs with the same side of said Street as follows: S 10 W 65.5 feet; S 24 E, 101 feet; S 8 deg. 30 min. E, 116 feet to a stake, the SW corner of said Jeremiah Pierson's home tract; then N 58 deg. 30 min. E with the South boundary line of the said tract, same being Mary P. Douglas' North boundary line 200 feet to a stake; then N 3 W 179 feet to a stake, said Newton Craig's SE corner (and 18 in. leaning chestnut, bears S 13 deg. 15 min. W 19 ft.; a 5 in. hemlock bears S 33 E 26 feet); thence S 27 deg. 15 W with Newton Craig's South boundary line 200 feet to the Beginning.

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE

Having qualified as administrator of Maxine Sprinkles, deceased, late of Macon county, N. C., this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of October, 1940, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate settlement.
This 20th day of October, 1939.
G. W. SPRINKLES,
Administrator

N2-6tp-D7

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE

Having qualified as administrator of Mrs. Pearl Southard, deceased, late of Macon county, N. C., this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 11th day of October, 1940, or this notice

LEGAL ADVERTISING

will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate settlement.

This 11th day of October, 1939.
FRANK J. SOUTHARD,
Administrator.

O12-6tp-N16

National Forest Timber for Sale

Scaled bids will be received by the Regional Forester up to and including December 9, 1939, for all the live timber marked or designated for cutting, and all merchantable dead timber located on an area embracing about 774 acres within Younce Creek drainage, Burningtown Creek watershed, Nantabala National Forest, North Carolina, estimated to be 1,182 M feet, more or less, of yellow poplar, northern red oak, ash, basswood, white oak, black oak, chestnut oak, birch, red maple, sugar maple, cucumber, black cherry, buckeye, scarlet oak, beech, southern red oak, post oak, chestnut, pitch pine, and hemlock, and an unestimated amount of hickory and black gum sawtimber, chestnut extractwood, and chestnut oak and hemlock tanbark. The removal of extractwood, tanbark, and hickory and black gum sawtimber will be optional with the purchaser. The timber on an additional 60 acres, carrying a comparative light stand, may be cut at the option of the purchaser. No bid of less than \$10 per M for yellow poplar; \$8 per M for northern red oak, basswood, sugar maple, black cherry, ash, and cucumber; \$7 for white oak; \$3 for black oak, red maple, and birch; \$2 for chestnut oak, and post oak; \$1 for chestnut, hemlock, scarlet oak, southern red oak, beech, buckeye, hickory, pitch pine, and black gum; \$0.40 per unit (100 cubic feet) for extractwood; and \$1.50 per ton (2000 lbs.) for tanbark will be considered. \$250 must be deposited with each bid to be applied on the purchase price, refunded or retained in part as liquidated damages according to the conditions of the sale. The right to reject any and all bids is reserved. Before bids are submitted, full information concerning the timber, the conditions of the sale, and the submission of bids should be obtained from the Forest Supervisor, Franklin, North Carolina. N9-2tc-N23

NOTICE OF SALE

North Carolina
Macon County

Under and by virtue of the power of sale vested in the undersigned Trustee by deed of trust executed by T. M. Grist and wife on March 17, 1931, and recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Macon County, North Carolina, in Mortgage Book 31, at page 415, I will on November 27, 1939, at 12:00 noon, at the court house door in Franklin, North Carolina, expose to public sale to the highest bidder for cash, the following described real estate:

FIRST TRACT: All the lands described in a deed from J. C. Strong and wife to T. M. Grist, said deed bearing date of November 20, 1928, and registered in office of Register of Deeds for Macon County in Book R-4 of Deeds, page 183, containing approximately 540 acres.

SECOND TRACT: All the lands described in a deed from Mrs. Lizzie Ballew and E. H. Brown to T. M. Grist, said deed bearing date of March 12, 1930, and recorded in the Office of Register of Deeds for Macon county in Book Q-4 of Deeds page 542, containing approximately 120 acres, subject however to a mortgage now held against this tract of land by Mrs. Lizzie Ballew for \$500.00.

This the 25th day of October, 1939.

G. A. JONES,
Trustee

N2-4tc-N23

NOTICE OF SALE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

North Carolina
Macon County

Pursuant to an order of the County Board of Education of the County and State aforesaid, I will, on the 30th day of November, 1939, at the hour of 12 noon at the Court House door in Franklin, Macon County, North Carolina, sell to the highest bidder for cash the following tract—a parcel of land known as the Morgan School property and more fully described as follows:

Beginning on a sycamore on the bank of Burningtown Creek, witnessed by two poplars, runs S 62½ W 8 poles to a stake and rock on the East bank of the public road. This corner is situated S 76 W 2 poles and 8 links from the NW corner to the new school house; then with the East side of the public road 20 poles and 23 links to a Spanish oak on the bank of said creek, witnessed by two maples; then down the creek as it meanders to the beginning, containing 1 acre more or less.

A deposit of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required of the successful bidder at said sale and upon failure to make such deposit property will be immediately resold.

This the 30th day of October, 1939.

G. L. HOUK,
County Supt. of Schools.

N2-4tc-N23

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE

Having qualified as administrator of Stanhope W. Hill, deceased, late of Macon county, N. C., this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of October, 1940, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate settlement.
This 4th day of October, 1939.
G. L. HOUK,
Administrator.

O12-6tc-N16

NOTICE OF SALE

North Carolina
Macon County

The undersigned, will on the 27th day of November, 1939, at the Courthouse door in the Town of Franklin, North Carolina, at 12 o'clock M, sell to the highest bidder for cash the following described land:

In the Town of Franklin, North Carolina and being Lot No. 4 in the J. M. Moore sub-division, recorded in plat book in the Office of Register of Deeds for Macon County, North Carolina, and more fully described as follows:

Beginning at a stake on West side of Riverview Street; runs west 144 feet to a stake; north 50 feet to a stake; east 144 feet

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