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What A Cleveland Farm Boy Saw As He Traveled Westward To Enter Army Of Harvesters

(Written for The Star by Wyan Washburn of Double Springs.)
 When five North Carolina boys left Cleveland county some time ago to enter the great wheat harvest of the middle west, they left a county rich in many things that the more western states do not have. Some of these things, if I may be able, I will show in a small account of our travels, experiences, and observations.

Leaving the good old Tar Heel state one Saturday night under a moon that rightly inspired the writing of a certain theme song, we entered on a little jaunt of possibly seven or eight thousand miles, along with worlds of experience and excitement. All being raised on a small farm and never having traveled any at all were almost green enough to grow and were soon to find that Uncle Sam's estate is a very, very large place.

Passing the Mountains.
 After winding up the hills and over the top of the Blue Ridge mountains we crossed the Great Smokies where, in the making, is a great national park. The Smoky Mountains in their grandeur and wildness are a thing of beauty and

when the park is complete will be a source of enjoyment and pleasure to many tourists passing through. Then came the Cumberland range, in the eastern part of Tennessee which is famous as a cattle country and also a backwoods district in which live mountaineers who still follow the same customs of a half century ago. Although they still, to a certain extent, cling to the old customs of long rifles, duels, feuds, etc., it was this people who furnished the world with a hero such as Alvin York in the big fight across the sea. It was probably from these lanky mountaineers that he acquired the qualities of daring and courage that made him such a hero in the war.

See First Iron Mine.
 At a little town called Rockwood we saw our first iron mine. Iron ore is mined away back in the heart of the hills and brought down to the plant to be smelted in the giant blast furnaces. The ore is brought to an intense heat in these furnaces until it will run like molten lead. The impurities are taken out and it is run into molds to cool before it is re-smelted and refined into steel, thus entering into the nation's industry being made into everything from a tiny needle to a powerful locomotive. Continuing on west toward Nashville we entered, into what might be called the aristocratic part of Tennessee. Everywhere were spreading farms with an abundance of tobacco, corn, legumes, hay crops, cattle, etc., and almost every farm has a fine old house of colonial style. The large house with stately columns set by a grove of oaks, elms, and maples gave quite an imposing appearance. But for all this, progress did not seem more evident than here in Cleveland county.

Through Kentucky.
 Nashville is a town of some note being the capital of Tennessee and also a center of industry. But it is a very smoky town down in a valley and we were glad to head north-west toward Kentucky and the Ohio valley. Kentucky is truly a land of tobacco, blue grass and pure bred horses. Kentuckians take pride in the traditional derbies and in the fact that they produce some of the finest race horses in the world. It seems that the Ohio Valley has quite a reputation as a fruit and vegetable growing center as well as for corn and truly it is a great sector for this because it is well watered, the soil productive and level, and it is also close to such markets at Louisville, Cincinnati, and St. Louis. We crossed the blue waters of the Ohio just at sunset and it seemed as if the rays of the sun in the west on the shimmering waters were beckoning us on to a land of adventure. Crossing the Mississippi river at St. Louis we went across a bridge more than a mile long although the river was no more than a mile wide. While on the crest of the bridge one may look for miles up and down the river, the mighty father of waters and see boats, both great and small plying their way helping to take care of the nation's commerce. On seeing such a river it is very easy to realize the necessity of flood control measures whether done by congress or by the people themselves. It seems strange but it is true one has to go uphill to get to the river. The ceaseless washing of sand and silt each year has caused the river to be higher than the channel through which it flows. Thus if it is not kept in its course and allowed to spread through the valley, the results are disastrous.

St. Louis of Today.
 St. Louis was by far the largest town we had ever been through being about 80 or 90 times as large as Shelby, by population besides all the big buildings and skyscrapers around which we had to detour. We passed only two traffic lights in the whole town, one going in and one coming out. The other crossings were made when the other fellow was ready for us to cross. But St. Louis is a famous old town being about the center of the nation commercially, and many statesmen think should be the proper place for the capital. A few miles west of St. Louis we entered the Missouri river valley, the part of Missouri which has made the state rank fifth in corn and first in mules. If any of us ever doubted that mules grew in Missouri we were convinced that we were wrong. Northern and Western Missouri is a great farming country and it also produces some of the finest black walnut timber to be found. Until a few years ago this fine timber was cut, split into rails for fences, parts of which may be seen along the way. At Independence, Mo., is the place where 50 and 60 years ago the pioneers gathered their prairie schooners together in great bodies to start on the 2,000 mile journey across the prairie and mountains to Oregon and California. More of this trail we were to see in western Nebraska.

Farms Follow Buffalo.
 Kansas City is, I believe one of the mid-west's nicest and most progressive towns. Here we saw our first real skyscraper a great white building towering above the streets about 42 stories. Then too there are

the great stockyards of the Armour and Swift packing companies. Here each day are thousands of hogs and cattle slaughtered to satisfy the hunger of the world. Looking in the yards one may see a healthy, happy, live steer or hog and in about fifteen minutes see the same animal in the cooling room a dressed, chilled carcass. The skill with which these great packing plants have developed economy and efficiency is remarkable. On crossing the Missouri once more at Kansas City we entered the eastern edge of our goal, the wheat harvest. The Sunflower state as Kansas is called is a wide level, flat country. It is 400 miles long and 300 wide and after getting to Kansas we had to get used to something we don't have at home. The land is all layed off in square miles or sections, each containing 640 acres. Kansas and all westerners use the terms sections, quarter, eighths, forties, etc. for their fields. They would be surprised to hear of a 13 or a 27 acre field and it would seem odd to them I suppose. The old-timers say that when Kansas was first homesteaded the land was layed off with wagon wheels. Just so many turns of the wheel made a mile and thus it was measured and the roads and farms made. Formerly the state was covered with buffalo and prairie grass but now is covered with farms and each year contribute many million bushels of wheat to the world.

In the Wheat Fields.
 The first day in Kansas we saw more wheat than we had ever imagined was grown. As far as the eye could see were the waving fields of golden grain glistening in the sunlight. Our first real job was in a little town called—well we'll call it Victoria just for luck. Kansas was first settled mostly by Germans and Dutchmen and it was in one of these good families that I got my first job. I could not understand much they would say except when to quit work and eat. This they did five times per day. There is one thing to give these study people credit for and that is they are real good cooks and believe in living at home as much as possible. Each farmer has his few cows, hogs and garden and the good wife takes care of the chickens with much pride. I don't believe I visited a single farm with less than 200 chickens, and some many more. But I suppose they have to do this in order to live because Kansas is a state of tornadoes and droughts, along with dry hot winds that burn and scratch every growing crop. The wheat is mostly harvested by combines, a big machine that cuts, threshes, and takes care of all the straw grain and all in one operation.

Using the Combine.
 One machine can handle from five hundred to a thousand acres in one season. It is an inspiration to see and work in these new and better methods of harvesting and comparing them to the old way of the sything, cradle or even to the binder. Farmers say there are three advantages and three disadvantages to combining. The advantages are that it does it easier, quicker and more economically. The disadvantages are that it reduces the quality of the grain in part, it involves such a capital to buy such costly machinery, and tends to lower the price of grain by getting it on the market so quickly. Victoria is a town of only about 300 people and yet each year there is from three to four million bushels of wheat shipped away.

Entering the Harvest Army.
 On entering the harvest we joined the army, that is the army of the unemployed and it really was

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an army, almost three million people according to the census. The business depression of the country seemed to be centered over the wheat belt. At least men from every section of the U. S. are to be found wanting jobs in the harvest. One may easily meet men from New York, Florida, Oregon, Texas, or California. They are all here for the same purpose to work in the harvest and make a little money until conditions right themselves at home. Until leaving I had never seen the need for a labor bureau but now it looks as if we need two or three more. Then besides the men who want to work are the regular class of drifters, bums, tramps and what-nots. At any railroad town they may be seen in droves. Some work enough to just barely exist while others steal, beg or whatever comes the handiest. It is altogether a very deplorable situation. Also there are the men who are always seeking higher wages and trying to stir up trouble among men who want to work. It is very common for an I. W. W. to deliver an hour's lecture on the subject of labor to this class of men. The I. W. W. may serve a purpose but they seem to be very unreasonable in their attitude toward the relation of labor and capital.

Pathos in Life.
 Yet there is always a serious side to almost everything. These unemployed are here and have to live. They do not know how to do anything except earn a little by manual labor. And with the condition the country has been in since the bottom dropped from Wall street last fall they can hardly do even that. Indeed there is quite a bit of hardship in the life of a travelling laborer. A little incident, touching in its happening and pitiful in its sorrow passed by observation while in Victoria. It happened that a group of men of the type just mentioned were gathered together about sunset one evening. There were probably representatives of a dozen different states, four or five nationalities and maybe some who were ex-convicts or something just as bad. At any rate they were all talking of experiences, harvest conditions, chances of getting to the next town and finally someone mentioned that he was hungry. This alone did not seem strange for it is a very common thing to be hungry among this class of men. But it seemed that there was one man in the crowd who had not said much. He was thin, ill-kempt and poorly dressed and at the mention of hunger broke into tears. One of the men questioned him in broken English. "Say, pardner, 'Yaint got th' willies have ya?" At this query he straightened up a little and for a moment threw off his look of despondency as he began to tell his story. Boys, he said, I ain't complainin' about me having it so hard but over yonder, pointing to a clump of trees and grass, is somebody's wife. She ain't anybody to see afre her for nigh onto a week an' last night, his voice filling with emotion, and with tears in his eyes, "a baby was born. There wasn't no doctor or nothin' an' now the baby's most dead. She aint my wife but she's my brothers but he's left her an, an—His voice could go no further. But it didn't need to. These men though they had no morals had little feeling for common things, their hearts hardened by contact with the cold world were touched. And as the

63-Year-Old Mayor To Wed Girl Of 16
 Tennessee Town People Don't Like It, But Couple Doesn't Care.

Paris, Tenn.—The town may be excited, relatives may storm and a committee of citizens may protest, but the wealthy 63-year-old mayor of Paris has a 16-year-old bride, and both he and the bride don't care what folks say about it.

The mayor is Frank B. McNeill, a wealthy retired merchant. His bride was Miss Myrtle Pauline Clark.

Having moved their wedding date ahead to foil objectors, the two are now establish in their home, and they remark:

"We're going to stay right here and face the music; if we went away people would say we were afraid."

On the day before the announced date for the wedding a committee of citizens met in a lawyer's office and called in Mayor McNeill, requesting that the marriage be indefinitely postponed. The mayor's brother, Henry, was a member of this group.

What the mayor said is not known, but late that night he and Miss Clark were married at the home of a friend, with just four people present. Two of those at the wedding were Mr. and Mrs. James Bishop, the girl's uncle and aunt.

Mayor McNeill says he met Miss Clark when she was a little girl waiting on tables at the house where he boarded.

"I thought there was too much difference in our ages, so I moved and resolved not to see her," he says. "I dodged her when I saw her on the streets."

Then, one day, he met her accidentally and changed his mind.

"I decided it would be better if I did see each other," he said. "We went on an auto ride and I proposed. Two weeks later we were engaged."

Mayor McNeill, a wealthy bachelor, gave his bride an automobile as an engagement gift, and she wears three diamonds he has given her. She still calls him "Mr. McNeill," while he calls her "Pally."

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 H. E. PLEASANTS, DPA.
 RALEIGH, N. C.
 — SEABOARD —

shades of darkness fell on the group they gave cheerfully of what little they had to make the night more comfortable for the stranger and his brother's wife who had given birth to a child under such conditions. Neither of them knew the man and yet they shared with him simply because he was one of their clan and such a dire misfortune had come his way. But I suppose such is life. Perhaps Kipling was right when he said something about so much bad in the best of us, so much good in the worst of us and so much of both in the rest of us.

State Stands Well.
 To take it as a whole the western country is great in many respects. Farming is done on a large scale and all its gigantic resources are a powerful cog in the nation's industry. And still our own state of North Carolina plays its part. On telling people we were from N. C. some exclaim, "Oh fine, that is the state where every man has a paved road to his front door." Thus our reputation for good roads has gone a long way. Eating a meal one day with a man it was interesting for him to learn that the brand of cigarette he smoked were made in N. C., that the towel we used just before lunch was of the Cannon brand and that the chairs we sat in were made in High Point. While discussing this I glanced out in the yard at a goods box on which was this inscription, "One Dozen Wool Blankets," made in a familiar N. C. town. "Well," he exclaimed, "it seems as if there is at least one more state in the Union beside Nebraska. At another time, mentioning the fact that we were from the state of Tar Heels we were told that N. C. was the only state in which real "caw'n tlicker" or mountain dew could be found. We were at a loss to know whether to take pride in this fact or not. Although not having seen many "jake legs" in the west it is my idea that prohibition conditions "might" be worse but should be a whole lot better. Even though we are only green farmer boys we never let an opportunity go by to boost the Old North State and Cleveland county.

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 Information see Agent,
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 — SEABOARD —

BAR SPOONERS FROM CEMETERY WHETHER IN AUTOS OR AFOOT
 Port Jervis, N. Y.—Automobile spooning couples who have been visiting the Bloomington rural cemetery, near Port Jervis, have been barred by officials of the cemetery after 8 o'clock at night.

A constable is to patrol the cemetery and seize any couples who enter the burial ground in automobiles or on foot after the forbidden hour.

Spooners who do not mind spooky places for petting parties have been invading the cemetery in large numbers and most of them are said to come from Port Jervis, Middletown and other nearby communities.

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 FOR CHARLOTTE AND INTERMEDIATE POINTS:
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 FOR WILMINGTON AND INTERMEDIATE POINTS:
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For those traveling in Pullman cars, the usual sleeping car rates in addition to the railroad fare will be charged. Special through Pullman cars or coaches will be arranged for parties.

Please confer with or write to your nearest Southern Railway agent and you will be furnished with the schedules and prices of tickets, etc.

This is an opportunity to visit Texas at the lowest rates ever offered.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY SYSTEM

SOUTHERN RAILWAY SYSTEM ANNOUNCES

Important Changes in Passenger Train Schedules Effective 12:01 A. M., Sunday, August 17th, 1930.

No. 117	No. 35	Lv.	Ar.	No. 36	No. 118
6:35 A. M.	6:30 P. M.	Marion, N. C.	9:37 A. M.	7:45 P. M.	
7:15 A. M.	7:02 P. M.	Blacksburg, S. C.	9:00 A. M.	7:10 P. M.	
8:40 A. M.	8:45 P. M.	Rock Hill, S. C.	5:50 A. M.	3:50 P. M.	
12:57 P. M.		Columbia, S. C.		11:25 A. M.	

Trains between Marion, Shelby, Blacksburg and Rock Hill connect with main line trains at Blacksburg. ---

Trains 113-114 discontinued between Marion and Shelby last trip each direction Saturday, August 16th.

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