

Letter referred to by Biggers

WHEN THE BOTTOM DROPS OUT

(From The Greensboro Daily News)

I am of the opinion that it is very necessary that we should call the farmer's attention to a very serious situation which he must face sooner or later.

There is grave danger of his getting drunk with the great prosperity now being realized on the farm. If so, he would likely overlook the fundamental principles that underlie successful farming. Why, who ever dreamed of such marvelous prosperity on the farm? Cotton 40 cents per pound, tobacco 80 and 90 cents and even \$1.00 per pound. What will naturally be the inclination of most farmers? To go their length in the cultivation of cotton and tobacco, and to grow these crops at the expense of food crops. What does that mean? A great loss, and in some cases complete failure. I do not mean to discourage the cultivation of cotton or tobacco, but I do mean to say that however successful either may be grown that the greatest profit cannot be realized from a farmer growing money crops at the expense of food.

In order to reap the greatest possible benefit from this great wave of agricultural prosperity now sweeping over our land, I would recommend the adoption of the following:

First, let every farmer resolve that he will not buy a single thing that he can raise on his farm. Second, let each one also resolve that he will not buy anything for which he cannot pay cash. Third, let them resolve to buy only through co-operative associations. If these principles are adopted the farmers are unquestionably safe.

Now, in the first place, farmers can produce their food a great deal cheaper than they can buy it at present prices. Second, they can save from 50 to 75 per cent by paying cash. Third, the best cash prices are only possible through co-operative organization.

The trouble is this, whatever the farmer buys on time now and during the great period of prosperity, he must pay the high price of the present for same at some time in the future, regardless of what may happen. Well, suppose cotton should drop from 40 cents to 12 or 15 cents again, and tobacco from 90 cents and \$1.00 to 25 and 30 cents? What would become of the poor fellow who has to pay for groceries, fertilizer, and other supplies purchased at the time of these high prices with money obtained at the latter prices? In my opinion, he would fare about like a man on a train in a head-on collision, or a fellow who had got caught in the path of a great

cyclone. I am not trying to alarm, but warn. I am not a pessimist, but an optimist. But at the same time I realize that this "awful day" will surely come, and I wonder who will be able to stand. The man who is caught in the tangle of debts made during these prosperous times and forced to pay under such unfavorable circumstances will do well to escape total ruin. So let the farmer make hay while the sun shines, for the clouds may now be seen gathering on the distant horizon. Let him strike while the iron is hot, for it may never be as red any more. The philosophy of my whole theme is this: If this great wave of prosperity should continue, the above is the most economic course to take. If the crash should come by the drop in prices the farmers would be unquestionably safe. Then let our motto be: "Safety first." It is all right to buy automobiles after you have purchased and equipped a good farm and home. You had better not mortgage the land paid for to buy more during these uncertain times. Better be careful about loading up with heavy financial responsibilities unless you are sure you see your way clearly. Figure closely, plan cautiously, and act with great discretion; in other words, be sure you are safe and then go ahead.

The farmer who is able to make a safe landing under such conditions will be safe for all time to come. But the fellow who wrecks his ship on this great sea of prosperity will hardly be able to redeem his boat or even save himself. If things are bought under the influence of the present dollar, which is worth about 33 1-3 per cent, what will happen to the fellow who might have to pay that debt when it will be worth 100 per cent. The bottom in most cases will drop out. For instance, suppose a man goes in debt \$10,000 while the inflated dollar is worth only 33 1-3 per cent, what would happen, if under reverse conditions, it should increase in value to 100 per cent? Why, the same man would have to raise the equivalent to \$30,000. Why? Because a man who now receives \$150 per month would under the new conditions, get about \$50 per month. So it would take him three times as long to pay the \$10,000 debt. So a debt made now will be three times its present value if the bottom should happen to drop out.

JOHN D. WRAY,
Farm Makers' Club Agent,
A. and T. College.
Greensboro, Nov. 17, '19.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK

Whitakers, N. C.
Route #5
8/26/1922.

Prof. John D. Wray,
Greensboro, N. C.

Dear Sir:

I am writing you as I promised, relative to the progress derived from your advice given sometime ago. You will also find a picture of my home and back yard in separate package.

If you can use it to any advantage in fostering the Club Work of course you know I will appreciate it.

After listening to an address delivered by you and Prof. In-borden four years ago. The picture will show the result of your advice relative to home comforts and educating our children.

The next day after you spoke I drew the plan of my eight room home, and decided at once to put three children in high school. During the high prices of tobacco and cotton in 1916, 1919 and 1920 I had some where to use the money.

I also have a plant that furnishes light for both house and lot. There has been some improvement since these pictures were made.

Following your advice relative to autos, I don't owe a penny on anything I present to you. I certainly enjoyed your address given at Red Oak, Thursday (Aug. 24th, 1922). We really had a good time.

Yours as ever,
Frank Cooper.

P. S. Please let me know at once whether or not you received these pictures.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK

LETTERS SHOWING THE EFFECT OF THE CLUB WORK IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES
AND HOW BE HALF OF FARMERS WHO ARE BEING GUIDED BY INSTRUCTION
GIVEN THE CHILDREN.

Asheville, N. C.
Bertie Co.,
Nov. 28th, 1922.

Mr. John D. Wray,
Dear Sir:

I can say with truth that I have been greatly benefited by following your instructions on the culture of corn and garden. Had I not taken your advice I would have had much less corn than what I have. I have a good garden too. I am asking God and those who are in authority that you may remain our state agent for many years to come.

Very truly yours,
Signed -- George W. Askew.

727 North York St.,
Gastonia, N. C.
Dec. 10th, 1922.

Prof. John D. Wray,
Greensboro, N. C.

Dear Sir:

Having read a letter from you to the farmers of our state it might be of interest to more than yourself if I let you know how it impressed me.

If you can recall a letter written in 1919 or 1920, you advised the farmers not to buy high priced live stock, fertilizers, vehicle, wagons and buggies upon the assumption that they would get high prices for their cotton crop.

It was stated in your letter that values would reduce and cotton prices would drop and farmers would suffer because of the inflation of the dollar. It was to my mind a prophecy from the fact the thing really happened and many farmers who did not hear the warning suffered much embarrassment.

Prophecy again.

Respectfully yours,
Signed -- Paul A. Biggers.

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AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK

LETTERS SHOWING THE EFFECT OF THE CLUB WORK IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES
AND SOME RESULTS OF LABORER WORK WHO WERE GUIDED BY INSTRUCTION
GIVEN THE CHILDREN.

Battleboro, N. C.
Nov. 11th, 1922.

Prof. Wray,
Dear Sir:

I feel that it is my personal duty to write you concerning my progress in poultry and gardening. I have taken your instruction about poultry and now have the Rhode Island red chickens and I won't take \$3 a piece for them, but I only paid \$1.50 a setting for the eggs. I am going to do away with the scrub chickens and have all improved stock. I feel now that I have been benefited \$50 worth, my garden is fine.

I am glad to say that I have been benefited so much I can't hardly estimate it. By reason of your instruction the garden is near the house, my husband had it away in the field last year, and I had to go so far to get my vegetables together until I was always worried out at noon, but I can say now that he has taken your instructions and I feel that you have caused our home to be happy.

I hope that you will continue to come to us.

Yours truly,

Signed -- Mrs. L. B. Milliard.

P. S. We feel that we are also benefited in the educational work.

Battleboro, N. C.
R. F. D. #2 Bx. 38.
11/22/1922.

Mr. Wray,
Dear Sir:

I am trying to write you a few lines to let you know how well pleased I am for being a member of the corn club. My corn all drowned last summer. I followed your instructions in cultivating and I gathered 25 bushels.

One thing that has been a great hinderance to me is, the food proposition. I find if I follow your instruction I can raise a plenty of food, and enrich my land so it will produce better crops. Again I would like to say for the past few years this country has been in debt and knows no way out. But by your instructions it is shown that the only way out is to raise food and feed.

I bought a thorough bred pig, but wish to keep him to raise from and not to kill. I am very much pleased with the improved stock and realize how much I have lost by using scrubs.

Very truly yours,

Signed -- W. A. Jones.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK

LETTERS FROM CLUB MEMBERS.

Battleboro, N. C.
R. F. D. 22 Bx. 38,
11/28/22.

Mr. J. D. Wray,
Dear Sir:

I am very proud of the privilege of saying just a word in behalf of the demonstration work. It has been a great benefit to me in many ways. In my garden and especially among my poultry. I have had the best results this year I have ever had raising spring chickens, also I have some very pretty little ones for Xmas. Yet I see more to do and some of the interesting things are: be very careful and get a good breed of everything you raise. Poultry, or pigs. I am unable to say just how much I have been benefitted and also the community in which I live, so I will close.

Yours truly,

Signed -- Hennie Jones.

Rocky Mount, N. C.
Nov. 30th, 1922.

Dear Mr. Wray,

As I am one of your club members I will write you a letter to let you know how your demonstration work has helped me this year. I have decided to keep your instructions, they are valuable and worth many dollars. I guess I would have been more successful this year if we had had some rain. I am thankful I have done as well as I have. It has caused me to work very hard with your demonstration. I have a very nice garden. It enables me to have three crops of cabbage and we are setting out more now ready to begin growing. I also have lots of rutabagas and turnips.

Your club member,

Signed -- Frank Baker.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS CONCERNING THE CLUB WORK FROM THOSE WHO GOT GOOD RESULTS BY TAKING INSTRUCTION GIVEN THE CLUBMEN.

Mr. W. R. Smith,- My corn this year made a failure, the wet weather drowned it out. But I tried to work it by your plans. I hope next year the rain will not effect me. I find your advice good.

I raise more corn on the one acre than I did on three acres elsewhere. But I am going to try it again next year.

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EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS COMMENDING THE CLUB WORK FROM THOSE WHO GOT
GOOD RESULTS BY TAKING INSTRUCTION GIVEN THE CHILDREN.

Mr. W. C. McCauley,- It affords me no little pleasure to write you in regards to the club making. It has been a great advantage in my part of the country this year. The people all around came to see my corn plot and many others out of the club spurred up trying to grow a nice plot.

Mrs. Leah H. Hilliard,- I have been successful this year by following your advice. I raised one hundred and fifty chickens, that is more than I ever raised since I have been in the poultry business. I would not take \$300 for them. My garden was just fine. I thank you very much.

Mr. Allen Hilliard,- I am proud to say that you have been a great help to me and I heartily appreciate it as I am able to make my report of corn, fifty-one and a half bushels to an acre. As I have been farming six years and haven't been making but twenty bushels to one acre.

Mr. E. L. Bryant,- In regards to your demonstration work I feel like I have been greatly benefited by taking your instructions. Now in regards to my corn, where I have been making 35 bushels per acre, now I am making 60 bushels per acre. My live stock seems to be very prosperous. We have raised more poultry than we have in some time.

Mr. H. H. Hilliard,- I am very glad to say that I have been benefited five-hundred dollars worth since you have been coming to us. I made fifty bushels of corn, to the acre. I have a plenty sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes and vegetables for the winter.

Mr. John H. Henderson,- I am under the impression that the demonstration work has profited this section not less than \$10,000, because we have learned that there is something we can do that will produce a livelihood except tending a world of cotton.

Our farm products for the past have been cotton corn, peanuts, cow peas and potatoes. The land never was broken and never cultivated properly, so you will see the condition of this country change if you will continue your visits.

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COUNTY AGENT WORK

LETTERS SHOWING THE EFFECT OF THE CLUB WORK IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES
AND SOME RESULTS OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS BY INSTRUCTION
GIVEN THE FARMERS.

Nashville, N. C.
Nov. 30th, 1922.

Prof. J. D. Wray,
Greensboro, N. C.

Dear Sir:

In regard to your services to our farmers in Nash County this year I wish to say that we have made good by following your instructions. We have made more corn than we ever made before and cultivated less land. Our rye and other grains has shown us how valuable your services are.

As to our cotton we made good crops by following your teaching. We made a great deal more than those that did not follow your instructions. This shows that there is something in the Departments Method of farming.

I made the biggest potatoes I ever saw in my life. I was able to feed thirteen persons at one meal with it. I am fifty two years old, but I never saw anything like this in the way of a potato before.

We seemed to have had general prosperity under your leadership. Last Saturday morning when my wife became sick I was expecting a child to be born and behold two came. Mr. Wray we want you to continue your services with us in 1923. I beg to remain.

Yours very truly,

Signed -- S. D. Hilliard.

Smithfield, N. C.
Nov. 21st, 1922.

Prof. Jno. D. Wray,
Dear Sir:

I wish to tell you how I appreciate your work for us in Johnston County. In your March meeting you aroused my ambition to grow better gardens and plenty of food and feed stuff; so beginning April 26th, my garden and odd things have kept up my grocery bill and current expenses, also I have the best supply of corn and feed I have had in years.

I see that I can make farming pay if I never grow any more cotton and tobacco. Prof. Wray, I feel very grateful to you for the help you have been to me and my people; only wish we had a whole time County Agent, it would mean so much to Johnston County.

Yours Truly,

Signed -- Jno. W. Mitchener, Jr.

Expenses of President Inboden to and from the Bricks School and returned to attend the Semi-Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Negro Farmers' Congress, January 23-24, 1923.

The itemized account of his expenses is as follows:

From Bricks to Lumberton and returned by way of Fayetteville and Hopewell, in training at Whitaker's and returning by way of Enfield two hundred fifty-six miles at three and sixteenth cents per mile	\$9.21
Three automobile trips @ 25¢75
Meals and lodging for two days and nights	2.50
Total	\$11.46

JOHN D. WRAY, SEC. TREASURER

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Three automobile trips @ 25¢ -----	.75
Meals and lodging for two days and nights -----	2.50
Total -----	\$11.46

JOHN D. WRAY, SEC. TREASURER

MEMBER

(On this Ribbon)

Fifth Annual Session,
Negro Farmers' Congress,

A. & T. College,
Greensboro, N. C.

August 9th & 10th, 1923

N.C. State

Agricultural Building,
A. & T. College,
Greensboro, N. C.

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