

# Conservationists Fare Better In Oklahoma Drought Region

(Editor's note: Deserts are on the march again in the southwest. In one county of Oklahoma 60,000 acres of once-productive farm land lie barren and forlorn at the mercy of the winds. The United Press sent Carter Bradley, manager of its Oklahoma City bureau, into the "potential dust bowl" for a closeup view. In talking with dozens of persons he learned why the dust is blowing and what can be done to stop it. He is writing three accounts from the scene. The first, describing the extent of damage and attitude of farmers in the area, follows.)

**By Carter Bradley  
United Press Correspondent**

Anadarko, Okla., Mar. 31—(U.P.)—An elderly farmer squinted grimly into a biting, blinding sandstorm which pushed dunes of dirty-pink topsoil across his once-fertile farm.

"I'm not giving up," said J. A. Lane. "Dust and drought came before and we licked it. We can lick it again."

Lane's 160-acre farm lies in the middle of a "potential dust bowl" which government agencies say extends over 150,000 acres of southwestern Oklahoma. The area hasn't had a soaking rain in six months. An unceasing wind gnaws at Lane's farm, spreading a cancerous growth of dunes and kicking up dirt clouds that swirl far across country.

Lane views the desolation of his farm as an act of God. He prays for relief—for rain.

**Shared by Others**

About 350 farmers within a 10-mile radius of Lane's place share his longing for rain but many of them are better off than he.

Only a few hundred yards from Lane's devastated farm are growing crops, lush and green in amazing contrast.

That land has been handled by modern soil conservation methods different from practices of the 82-year-old Lane, who has worked the same land since 1907.

Lane knows that dry weather isn't the basic cause of his trouble. "I was just unlucky," he told me. "We didn't get anything planted as a cover crop before the last good rain. My land is naked. It doesn't have any protection from the wind."

Local dust storms rise over a 60,000 square mile area in Caddo county, Okla., every day or so. The gritty clouds have spread across the entire southwest and middle west a few times but they form more frequently here.

**Pile Like Snowbanks**

The dunes of drifting topsoil encroach on Lane's farmyard, piling around his outbuildings like snowbanks. In some places the dunes are drifting from eroded land onto growing crops of adjoining farms.

Roads in the area are choked with the powder-like soil. Many are impassable. School bus drivers go several miles out of their way to avoid dust-clogged roads. Mailmen also detour and casual tourists—like news reporters—get stuck in the Sahara-like landscape when they drive section lines without caution.

(At least my automobile was stuck and a friendly farmer with a tractor pulled it out.)

Farm women have despaired of growing their usual vegetables. Housework—if they want to keep the place clean—requires twice as much effort as usual. Hanging out a laundry is risky but the women hurriedly wash their clothes when the wind is calm and try to dry them before the dust returns.

**Some Listen Carefully**

Lane's farm wasn't badly hit during the drought-ridden "dirty thirties" and that may be one reason why he's taking it on the chin this time.

Other farmers in the area who suffered more during the 30's have listened carefully to the advice of soil conservation experts.

Paul Jackson, another old-timer, who lives nearby, experienced years of poverty and crop failure in the 30's.

"We ate blackeyed peas and cornbread for years and I'm not forgetting it," said Jackson.

Jackson now tills 750 acres with an impressive assortment of modern equipment. He has 225 acres of wheat "off to a good start" despite green bugs which have damaged this crop on neighboring fields. He also has 300 acres of pasture for 122 head of livestock, 85 acres of oats and smaller truck garden projects.

**Cashing in Now**

"I've planted shelter belts and grown cover crops on my land for the past 14 years," Jackson said. "Now I'm cashing in but



**CLEARED OF STARVATION CHARGE**—Crying with joy, Mrs. Lorraine Michel (center) is comforted by Mrs. Donald Moore (left) and Mrs. Effie Forrest (right) after a Justice Court jury in Beverly Hills, Calif., acquitted her of charges that she mistreated and starved her foster daughter, child actress Lora Lee Michel, to keep her small enough for film roles. Mrs. Michel and her husband announced they would open a fight to keep the 9-year-old girl who is now in the care of juvenile authorities.

it was rough and rugged for a long time."

The memory of the earlier dust bowl era still lives with Jackson and others. Thousands of farmers fled the disaster from 1930 to 1940. Many became pitiful migrants and the nickname "Okie" then stood for poverty and hopelessness.

The "Okies" will survive drought in better shape this time, believes C. G. Gardner, U. S. soil conservationist for this district.

"Fighting wind erosion must be a personal battle for each farmer," Gardner said. "We know what causes it and how it can be cured. It's just a matter of education and inspiration."

Lane's "act of God" theory isn't shared by farmers of Gardner's persuasion. Drought may be as inevitable as death and taxes but they contend wind erosion can be controlled.

**\$10,000 HIS, ALL RIGHT**

Phoenix, Ariz. (U.P.)—A shabbily-dressed, 50-year-old man was taken to police headquarters for questioning when officers found him carrying more than \$10,000 in bonds and cash in a paper bag. The man convinced police the money was his. He said he earned it through "hard work and self-denial" as a yardman. Police told him a bank might be a safer place to keep his savings.

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Yes, sick of looking at 'em. We thought they were pretty when they first came in. But 8-piece doily sets such as these no longer look good to us. Come and get 'em for 79c set.

MAIN FLOOR

**We Sure Over-Parked On This One!**

Parked is the word—Ski trousers. Yee gods, they have parked on our shelves too long. Anyway who wants to ski now. The ticket on them reads \$16.95. We would be tickled to death to get \$7.95.

MEN'S DEPT. MAIN FLOOR

**Don't Shoot, We'll Marry the Girl . . .**

Yes, we'll marry the girl and throw in one of these printed luncheon sets for just \$1.29. Throw in a 54x54 inch cloth and 4 napkins . . . Just to get them out of sight.

MAIN FLOOR

**Hearts and Flowers!**

Boy, oh boy, such classy robes. One of these and 10 dozen roses and Mr. you're in. Sure some are Quilted. Others dressy. Should get as much as \$35 for them—settle for \$15.

SECOND FLOOR

**WE DON'T BELIEVE IT!**

And you won't believe it either. But the crystal ball says 2 big fluffy camp pillows for \$1.89. Can't camp here at Mann's. No room to pitch the tent.

LOWER FLOOR

**JUST ONE OF OUR BUYERS!**

That's right. One of our buyers trying to get in after buying this batch of long sleeves shirts for boys to sell for what he thought he could get, \$3.50 and \$3.98. We would love to take 98c and \$1.98.

MEN'S DEPT. MAIN FLOOR

**SO YOUNG AND SWEET!**

Oh yeah! That's what we thought when we first had a whiff of these bath crystals and water softener. We bought big 3 lb. bags to sell for 69c. Please, please take a bath with them for 29c bag.

MAIN FLOOR

**A Picture no Artist Could Paint**

And what a picture. They looked so lovely in all the fashion books. But so help me, no one has yet figured out how to get into these Drape-ette skirts. Thought we could get \$7.98. Yours for 1 buck.

SECOND FLOOR

**THIS ONE IS HOT STUFF!**

Anyway we thought so when our buyer bought a car load of Hold-tite spring action skirt hangers. Thought we could sell them for 39c ea. Wonder if you'll give us 15c?

MAIN FLOOR

**What To Do With This Mess**

of rayon crepe blouses. We wish we knew. Tailored and dressy styles. At least we thought they were when they first came in. But so help us we can't get \$5.98 for them and would some poor soul part with \$3 for just one.

SECOND FLOOR

**WE'RE THE FOOL!!**

When we thought we could get \$6.95 for these black and white saddles. The shoe buyer thought they were saddles for horses. No foolin' they're shoes and you can have them for \$3.99 pair.

MAIN FLOOR

**THE EARLY BIRD Etc.**

We thought that some early bird this winter would snap up these rain coats at \$17.98, but one look and they said: "I'd rather get wet. Perhaps at \$12 our customers will change their minds."

SECOND FLOOR

**LOOK PRETTY PLEASE!**

We thought that most any young thing would look pretty in girdles and panty girdles such as these. But I guess not. Tried to get a \$1.98 for them. No dice. Please take two for 79c, please.

MAIN FLOOR

**Boy Whata Sweetheart!**

of a rug for the Old Homestead. The gent on the right is reading our ad in the Trib of days gone by. But they are old homestead rugs of woven chenille. And they have homesteaded here too long. 24x48 \$3.98 . . . 36x60 \$7.69. Lower Floor.

SECOND FLOOR

**READ ALL ABOUT IT!**

That's what we said in one of our ads last summer. No sale. So we still have these children's sundresses and overalls, but not for as much as \$3.98. No sir, take 'em home for 79c.

SECOND FLOOR

**BETTER HURRY SISTER!**

If you want one of these skirts . . . at least try and get here in a week or two. We've had these all wool and corduroy skirts all season and guess we'll have them when you get here. Just bring \$3 not \$7.98.

SECOND FLOOR

**MANN'S**

WE ARE JUST AS CLOSE AS YOUR PHONE, DIAL 2-6133