

American Farms Disappearing

(Editor's Note: Throughout the nation, the number of farms has decreased while the size of farm units has expanded. U. S. Department of Agriculture figures show there are 1,389,000 fewer farms today than in 1935. The United Press made a survey to determine reasons for this trend. This is the second of two dispatches on the survey.)

By FRANK L. SPENCER
United Press Correspondent

Chicago — (U.P.) — American farmers are doing such a good job that farms are "disappearing."

This country lost 1,389,000 farms in the past 20 years, 57,000 of them last year. We'll probably lose more. Although there is some disagreement, most authorities seem to feel it's a good thing.

Parke C. Brinkley, Virginia's commissioner of agriculture, explains the trend this way:

"When I took over operation of our family farm in Nansemond County 20 years ago, it took nine men to work a little over 100 acres. Today, with new methods, new feeds, new fertilizers, new insecticide and machinery, the same farm is being worked by two and one-half men and we are producing more than we did 20 years ago."

Brinkley said yields per acre of corn have increased 60 per cent in the past 15 years in Virginia; tobacco yields have increased 50 per cent, wheat 33 per cent and peanuts 50 per cent.

Mechanization A Factor
Virginia farmers also are producing 20 per cent more hogs, 30 per cent more milk, 60 per cent more cattle and 35 per cent more eggs than they did in 1940, he noted.

In the same period, he added, "Virginia's population which lives and earns its living on the

farm has dropped from more than one-third to a little over one-fifth."

At the time Brinkley took over his family's Virginia farm, in 1935, there were 83,400 farms in South Dakota, averaging 446 acres apiece. Now there are 18,400 fewer South Dakota farms and the average is 677 acres apiece.

Howard Anderson, South Dakota's assistant secretary of agriculture, said that because of mechanization farmers must have more land to pay for the machines.

Dewey O. Boston, Pennsylvania federal-state agricultural statistician, said the family type of farm is on the way out in that state. A farmer starting out these days must have enough land to justify the use of the machines which he must have for economical production.

Heavy Investment
Boster said that a farmer today must have equipment costing from \$20,000 to \$25,000 to get a return on his investment and must operate a sufficient acreage to bring a profitable return.

A Georgia agricultural expert said the "average farmer" now has an investment of \$50,000 to \$60,000.

Chancellor Clifford M. Hardin of the University of Nebraska said that, in addition to capital and farming skill, any young man launching a farm career today must have "office" ability.

"The average operator 10 years from now will spend far more time with so-called office work than he does now," Hardin said. "He will or he won't be in business."

Officials of the Farmers Union in Minnesota also believe the family-sized farm may be disappearing, but Farm Bureau officials saw the trend as an indication that mechanization is permitting farmers to handle an increased acreage more economically.

Independent farm economists in Minnesota seemed to agree with the Farm Bureau and added that there now are fewer hired hands, indicating that family units are able to do more without outside help than was possible previously.

L. C. Carpenter, Missouri's commissioner of agriculture, said he isn't sure the trend in fewer, bigger farms is "advantageous to the country as a whole."

Average Farmer Older
"If there is ever a lessening of activity in industry, including defense plants, there will be unemployment," Carpenter said.

"This means people will go back to the farms in many cases to earn only a marginal living." But Math Dahl, North Dakota's commissioner of agriculture, doubted the trend would mean an "adverse effect on the economy." The long-range effect, Dahl said, may be a shortage of farm workers, and "it takes workers to run the machines."

John White, Texas' agricultural commissioner, said there was a "crisis of sorts" approaching in the comparative shortage of young men on the farm.

"The average farmers today," White said, "is considerably older than the age average of 1914. More and more young men growing up or the farm are choosing careers in business and professional fields. We need continual replacements of young people who are trained in agriculture and not men who turn to the farm after failing in other enterprises."

The farmer's son of 1955 probably has less reason to leave the farm than did his dad and granddad, a United Press survey on agricultural trends disclosed.

One set of statistics may point this up. In 1920 there were 5,697 tractors on Pennsylvania farms. In 1950 there were 125,907.

Machines Work Longer
Brinkley said that 95 per cent of the farms in Virginia have electricity and nearly have of them have pressure water systems. Three out of five of them have electric washers, one in five has a home freezer and one in four a television set, he said.

Joseph W. Kilgallen, secretary of the New York state's department of agriculture and markets, said 12.9 per cent of New York's farms had electric lights in 1920. In 1950 the figure was 93.8 per cent.

In another department, the U. S. Department of Agriculture said the average net per farm income in 1925 was \$962 annually. Last year it was \$2,209.

But there was disagreement on work hours. Minnesota agricultural authorities said machines have brought shorter hours to the farm.

Dahl said, however, that the machines brought longer hours to North Dakota farms. "Horses could only be worked so many hours a day," Dahl said. "Machines can go all night."

Elroy Hawes, Massachusetts' agricultural commissioner, said today's farmer works just as hard as his dad and granddad who toiled in the pre-tractor era.

But Hawes added that there soon would be a mechanical revolution on the farms that will make the McCormick reaper "look pale."

Effects of Blasts Studied by Device

Chicago — (U.P.) — The largest laboratory device yet developed for simulating the blasts from bombs has been designed at Armour Research Foundation of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

The instrument is called a "shock tube." It allows engineers to study the effects of blasts without actually exploding a bomb.

The new shock tube has a six-foot diameter. Arne M. Wiedemann, associate engineer in propulsion and structural research, said it is by far the largest yet developed in this country.

The tube, built in nearby Gary, Ind., for the Air Force, has an over-all length of 150 feet.

A certain amount of combustible gas is introduced into one section of the tube and is confined by a light diaphragm. The diaphragm is shattered when the gas is ignited and the released pressure wave travels down the tube to a test section, where a model of a building has been placed.

The resulting forces are recorded with electronic equipment.

MORE GARAGES

Chicago — (U.P.) — Construction on the last of Chicago's 10 multi-level garages being built in the city's \$50,000,000 off-street parking program will begin soon. Plans call for a four-level structure of reinforced concrete with a capacity of 261 cars. It will be of the ramp type with open walls. The city-owned garages offer both self-parking and attendant parking facilities.

Back Stairs: Adams Takes Up Golf

By MERRIMAN SMITH
United Press
White House Writer

Washington — (U.P.) — Back stairs at the White House: Sherman Adams, the assistant to the President, and his wife have taken up golf seriously. They play together frequently on a small course near the soldiers' home here in the late afternoons.

Adams, the former governor of New Hampshire, is a great believer in exercise the year around. When his busy schedule will permit, he sometimes slips away on winter week ends for skiing and skating.

Vice-President Richard M. Nixon reports that his golf has been suffering—from overwork. Nixon hasn't been playing as much as he would like to, and consequently, his form has become a trifle rusty. The President is keeping in shape with frequent afternoon practice sessions on the White House grounds.

The National Geographic Society estimates that more than 50,000 people will visit President Eisenhower's Scottish castle this year.

Culzean pronounced cul-lane Castle was given to Mr. Eisenhower in 1945 by the British government in recognition of his leadership of the Allied armies. Actually, only a relatively small apartment is reserved for the President in the castle which has crumbled somewhat against the ravages of time and the weather of Scotland.

The castle took 20 years to build and was completed in the late 18th century. The Chief Executive has visited his Scottish property twice—once in 1946 and again in 1951. When Mrs. Eisenhower saw the castle for the first time, she said it was "just like a fairy castle, the kind we read about in Grimm's story book."

Where will the Big Four meeting be? The President isn't saying just yet, but an official of a

Swiss airline has been in conference at the White House recently, escorted by representatives of Eastern Air Lines.

All the big air carriers will be trying for some of the business in connection with the Big Four conference, wherever it may be held.

There were something like 200 news personnel at the Bermuda Big Three meeting in late 1953. A European meeting of the Big Four undoubtedly will attract closer to 11,000 newsmen and related personnel.

Mr. Eisenhower was deeply moved by a prayer he heard the other night at the dedication of a new Jewish temple here. The rabbi read:

"Cause us, O Lord our God, to lie down each night in peace and to awaken each morning to renewed life and strength. Spread over us the tabernacle of Thy peace. Help us to order our lives by Thy counsel and lead us in the paths of righteousness. Be Thou a shield about us."

New Haven, Conn. — (U.P.) — Minnie Landau, 65, didn't plan it, but she easily thwarted a hold-up of her grocery. Two timid teenaged bandits fled without taking anything when she faint-ed.

protecting us from hate and war, from pestilence and sorrow. Curb Thou also within us the inclination to do evil, and shelter us beneath the shadow of Thy winds. Guard our going out and our coming in unto life and peace from this time and forevermore."

Rubber Crossing Eases Bumps for Motorists

Akron, O. — (U.P.) — There's a railroad crossing here, and motorists don't mind driving over it at all. It's the first rubber one in the world, installed over the main track of the Erie Railroad.

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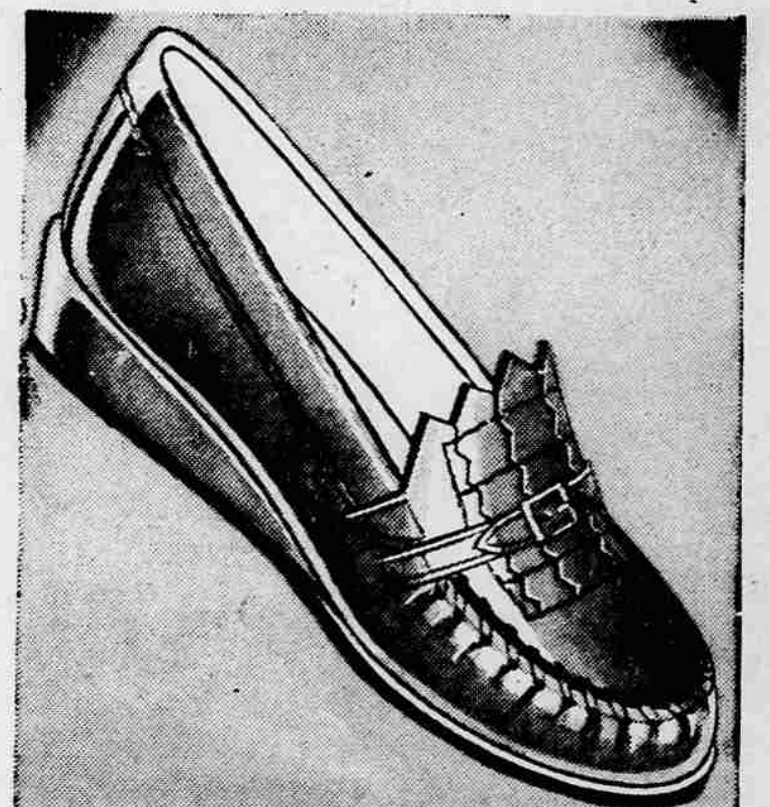
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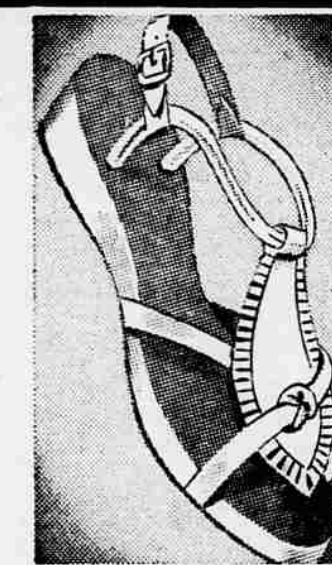
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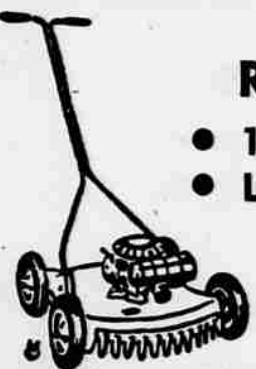
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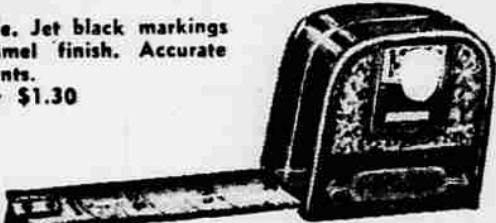
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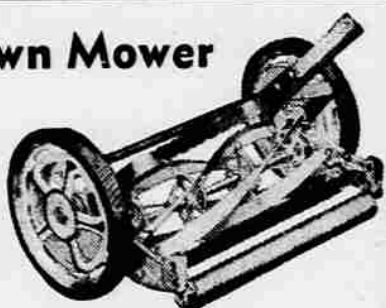
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