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J. S. KREEGER,
Chestertown, Md.

REVIEW OF COUNTY AGENT WORK

COUNTY AGENT WORK IN KENT 1931

County Agent Work in Kent County during 1931 has been rather different than in former years. Less of demonstration work and more of service has been caused by the changing economic situation.

The drought of 1930 caused drought relief legislation which brought forth the "Seed Loans," twenty-seven of which were secured by Kent farmers. The failure of grass seeding caused an unusual demand for emergency hay crops and temporary crop rotations. Cereal grains were pastured quite extensively. Sudan grass proved especially valuable for pasture and in a few cases was harvested for hay. Oats were cut for hay in a number of cases. Soybean acreage was doubled—usually with splendid results although wet weather handicapped curing. Corn acreage was above normal due to reduced wheat seeding and grass failure in 1930.

Moisture conditions made possible the production of abundant food and feed crops. Cash crops were worth little and were produced at a loss in most cases. Livestock continues to be the best market for farm grown crops. The cow, hen, sow, and sheep have been main sources of cash income. The 'live at home" idea has been well carried out. Gardens were very common—canning and preserving have „come back." Foods and feeds are abundant and assure subsistence. Utilization of farm feeds is being practiced extensively. Reduced income has caused reduced expenditures. This will bring about a sounder economic basis, even though the experience meantime may not be pleasant. Over half the farmers securing Seed Loans have repaid them wholly or in part.

Turkeys have been profitable due to the cheaper feeds and a good market price for those who held their birds for advance in price or had special outlets.

Milk prices are better in this area than in any other large producing area. SSurplus milk prices are low but the surplus can largely be controlled by culling the herds to remove the unprofitable cows The Dairy Herd Improvement Association Work revealed many important lessons. One fact that is outstanding reveals the economy of good feeding. Herd after herd reveals clearly that the amount of return over and above feed cost is in direct ratio with the amount of the feed bill (pasture-silage-fodder-grass-etc., all charged at uniform price). The well fed herd gave good returns, the medium size feed bill produced proportionately less returns, while the poorly fed cows were in many cases kept at a loss. The seventy cows in the five highest producing herds were each six times as profitable to their owner as each of the seventy-seven cows in the five lowest producing herds.

The Boys' 4-H Club Work has made splendid progress during the year. A forty percent increase in active membership is noted, new clubs in nearly all corners of the county are busy acquiirng improved practices. Social values in Club Work are very important. The Dairy Judging Team was 2nd in the State Contest, one member being high man in Ayshire Judging and 5th high individual scores. The Poultry Judging Team was first in the State with two members on the State Team. Catle and Swine won prizes at the Timonium Fair. Very definite progress in projects is apparent.

Altogether, in spite of depression, farm folk are fortunate in that their subsistence problem is assured and their lot far superior to that of the army of unemployed which is as great in number as the farm population.

COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

BY WILLIAM R. HOWELL, PH. D.

A Proposed Plan to save thousands of dollars annually for the farmers and taxpayers of Kent and Queen Anne's Counties.

Mergers constitute the most recent move in the economic activities of the United States. Without doubt the consolidation of many small enterprises into one large unit is an economic benefit to all concerned. Overhead is reduced, efficiency is increased, and the cost of production is lowered, all for the benefit of the ultimate consumer. Already several of our largest enterprises have been built up in the field of manufacturing, and we have United States and Bethlehem Steel, General Motors and Chrysler, duPonts, General Foods, Standard Brands, and numerous others. The movement has started in oils and Standard of New York has taken over Vacuum and there are many others rumored, such as Standard of New Jersey with Standard of California, Standard of Indiana with Standard of Kentucky. For several years, there has been a movement to consolidate the railroad systems in the Trunk Line territory into four or five big systems. Three big steamship lines have recently combined and form one great ocean-going unit. Light and Power companies have been merging for some time past, and now coal companies are considering a movement along this line. Each year the tendency to reduce the number of smaller enterprises to a few larger ones gains impetus, and if properly directed and controlled will effect substantial savings for the consumers of goods.

Now, what has been done and bids fair to continue in the business world should be done in the field of Government. And unless something of this sort can be accomplished the rising tide of taxes will swamp us. When we consider the fact that in 1928 our State Governments cost almost two billions of dollars, three times what they cost in 1917, it almost produces paralysis of the mind to try to think such figures. And that is not all. Our county and municipal governments have entered upon an orgy of spending that has increased the tax burden to a condition all out of proportion to the benefits received therefrom.

In the field of rural government this burden has fallen most heavily on the farmers, and in spite of the fact that the general level of commodity prices has fallen approximately thirty per cent in the last five years, the farmers have not received proportionate relief for the simple reason that the prices of farm products have also been reduced. It is unfair and unreasonable to expect farmers to pay taxes on the same land values that existed five or ten years ago when their incomes have been reduced almost one half. Such a procedure smacks of the severest kind of injustice and ought to be remedied.

There are several ways by which this situation can be remedied. But the most effective cure of the malady would be to reduce the expenses of county governments. But this will be difficult to do as long as we have the multitudinous duplication of county officials in the various small counties of the State. So I am going to propose a plan that would effectually relieve the farm population in this section of some of the financial hardships imposed upon them by the ever increasing expendtures for local governmental purposes. My plan is for Kent and Queen Anne's Counties to consoldate. Kent has a populaton of 14,242, while Queen Anne's has a population of only 14,571, making a total of 28,813, hardly enough for one good sized county. The combined area of the two counties is only 633 square miles, which is none too large for a good government. In these days of good roads and motorized transportaton the government of the two counties combined could be carried on as efficiently as that of one of them was in the days of horse and buggy transportation.

Counties in several other States are uniting to reduce the cost of government and this movement is thoroughly in keeping with modern business methods. Thousands of dollars could be saved for the tax payers in Kent and Queen Anne's by such a consolidation.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

In the life-story of any great man, the incident most certain to interest every human being of every age is the romance of his courtship and his marriage. Greatness may remove him from average humanity in every other respect, but in this element of romance he touches the lives of all where all understand him.

This day, January 6, probably old style, marks the 173rd anniversary of the wedding of George and Martha Washington, in so far as historians have been able to fix the date, says the United States George Washington Bicentenial Commission. While the records do not state the fact, it is probable that George and Martha had heard much of each other before they met. Washington had already established his fame as a daring soldier by his movements against the French on the Ohio and by his courage at the Battle of Braddock's Field, and the young colonel, so often in Williamsburg, the social as well as political capital of Virginia, must have known of the handsome, socially prominent, and wealthy young Widow Custis.

Their meeting occurred when Washington, then commanding the military defences of the Virginia frontier against the Indians, had hurried down to Williamsburg to urge in person certain needed improvements in his command. At William's Ferry, over the Pamunkey River, tradition has it, Washington paused at the house of Major Chamberlayne, which may have been on May 27, 1758, and was pressed by his friend to stop and partake of hospitality. Washington, on his way to see the Governor on important business, at first declined, but at Major Chamberlayne's insistance he agreed to stay to dinner. The arggument that turned the decision seems to have been Major Chamberlayne's remarks that the charming Mrs. Custis was also a guest at his house.

There is almost a humorous note in his snare which fate seemed to cast about Washington's heart. With him was his faithful servant Bishop, whom General Braddock had turned over to him, and whom Washington instructed to stay by their horses until dinner was over. The old orderly well knew his master's punctuality and took it for granted that the pause at the Chamberlayne home would be a brief one. But dinner passed, the sun sank lower in the West, and still Washington had not emerged. At last, so the story goes, Bishop was ordered to stable the horses for the night. It was only too evident that George Washington had found business that to him was more important at the moment than his errand with the Governor.

On the next day the journey to Williamsburg was resumed, but no sooner was the business with the Governor transacted than Washington hurried away to the "White House" on the Pamunkey where the Widow Custis lived. When he left, on June 5, the deeply smitten young Virginia colonel must have been in high spirits, for he took with him the lady's promise to wed him as soon as his military service on the Ohio was finished.

To this day there is a dispute as to whether the wedding of George and Martha Washington occurred at the bride's home or at St. Peter's Church in Williamsburg, but the rector of St. Peter's, the Reverend Mr. Mossom, is known to have officiated at the ceremony, and the date of the marriage is fixed by Jared Sparks as of January 6, 1759. Wherever the event occurred it was a notable and brilliant affair, with the Governor, the military and civil authorities, and the society elite in attendance.

George Washington was arrayed as the most brilliant figure in the whole assemblage. Naturally so important a matter as the bride's attire was not to be lost in oblivion, and we know that Martha's wedding gown was "a satin quilt, over which a heavy white silk, interwoven with threads of silver, was looped back with white satin ribbons, richly brocaded with leaf pattern. There were also elbow sleeves revealing a puff and frill of lace. Strings of pearls were woven in and out of her powdered hair. Her high-heeled slippers were of white satin with brilliant buckles."

Martha Washington had been born Martha Dandridge. At the age of seventeen she married Col. Daniel Parke Custis, a wealthy man who died eight years after their marriage, leaving her two children and the mistress of a large fortune. After her wedding to George Washington, months had still to elapse before the happily wedded pair could settle down at Washington's estate of Mount Vernon. Having been elected to the House of Burgesses, Washington was obliged to attend its sessions, and the couple remained at Williamsburg until May, 1759. Then they went to the beautiful estate on the Potomac, to make it their home for the rest of their lives, and to leave it a shrine forever to millions of Americans who hold it reverent memory every incident in their life together.

Nothing in all history outdoes in beauty Washington's attachment to his wife, as she in turn was his best reliance, a source of encouragement in all his trials, a dignified figure in herself, as firmly planted as her great husband in the affectionate memory of succeeding generations of Americans. So January 6, will linger in our history as the beginning of one of the stately and lovely romances of all time.

"ELECTRA" AT FORDS THEATRE

On Monday, January 4th, The Theatre Guild will present Eugene O'Neill's "Mourning Becomes Electra," at Ford's Theatre, Baltimore. By this token we know then that Baltimore will be given the first view outside of New York, of the play which is the sensation of the current season in the metropolis, of that play which has been declared by some twenty critics to be Eugene O'Neill's masterpiece.

Neither O'Neill nor the Theatre Guild need any introduction in Baltimore. Mr. O'Neill's "Strange Interlude" is one of the most successful plays ever presented in Baltimore but word from New York is that "Mourning Becomes Electra" has eclipsed "Interlude." Many critics have agreed on this point. Take this, however as a matter of critical opinion. One thing is certain. "Mourning Becomes Electra' is a longer play. Like "Interlude" it begins at 5.30 p. m. but its dinner intermission will be but an hour from 7 to 8 p. m., and from 8 o'clock on it runs until 11.20 p. m. And where "Interlude" was set down as a single play in nine acts "Mourning Becomes Electra" is described by the Guild as three separate plays, totalling fourteen acts. The first play is call "Homecoming" the second "The Hunted" and the third "The Haunted." The same set of characters goes through the three plays.

The story is that of the old Greek legends of Electra, Clytaemnestra and Orestes applied to more modern characters and set in New England at the close of the Civil War. We have mother and daughter in love with the same man, the mother loathing her husband and eventually killing him; the daughter forcing her brother to kill her mother's lover; the mother's suicide the brother's suicide and finally only the daughter left, last of her family and doomed to live in, that veritable tomb of a house which has bred such dire unhappiness. This, of course, is the stuff of true tragedy and the theatre, as you may or may not realize, has always thrived mightiest on tragedy. The enormous popularity of "Mourning Becomes Electra" in the worst season that the theatre has yet known would indicate that it like its predecessors, has moved many people and that it will continue to do so for some years.

STILL POND

Mrs. W. Tomb has returned to her home after visiting her father and aunt, Mr. C. W. Hague and sister.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Haddaway spent Christmas with their daughter, Mrs. Carrol Hadaway and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Norris and family spent several days this week with her mother in Philadelphia, Pa.

Mrs. J. W. Robinson has returned home after visiting her daughter, Mrs. Wm. Davis in Baltimore, Md.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bidwell, of Philadelphia, Pa., spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Harper.

Miss Jane Bowers, of Brooklyn N. Y., spent the holidays with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Bowers.

The Ladies Aid Society will meet on next Wednesday afternoon with Mrs. H. G. Anthony. New officers for the year will be elected.

The Christmas service of story and song on last Sunday evening was quite interesting. The leader for the Epworth League tomorrow evening will be Miss Virginia Jones.

The Boy Scouts had a very enjoyable reunion at Betterton School House on Monday evening.

Rev. and Mrs. Oris Robinson and children, of Westminister, Md., with Miss Minnie Medders. Miss Clara Medders, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Mr. Wm. Medders, Jr., of Philadelphia, Pa., were visitors of Mr and Mrs. Wm. Medders during the holidays.

—The P. T. A. of the Chestertown Elementary School will meet in the auditorium of the elementary school building on Tuesday, January 5th at 8 p. m.

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