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A FINE LIST OF LIVINGSTON AND GRUNDY COUNTY FARMS FOR SALE

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DWIGHT, ILLINOIS

WORKING FOR FARM IMPROVEMENT.

The Prairie Farmer: In Livingston county, Illinois, a quarter section is called a small farm. Farms of from 500 to 1,000 acres are common. The farmers are all prosperous; many of them wealthy. You can drive down almost any road in Livingston county and find house after house large, well built, and equipped with many of the modern conveniences. Bath tubs, gas or electric lights, running water—these are common in Livingston country homes.

Everywhere in Livingston county you will see grain elevators—portable elevators on the farm to fill the tall cribs and granaries, massive elevator buildings of skyscraper proportions lining the sidings in every town.

Little stock is raised in Livingston county; so that in some places clover hay could be bought this summer for considerably less than five dollars a ton.

A soil that has yielded bounteous crops of grain year after year for half a century or so has made the county prosperous.

This very prosperity has discouraged livestock farming. Many of the Livingston county farmers admit that they could add to their profits by keeping livestock, but they are doing well enough as it is.

They are making all the money they need, and are loath to undertake the extra work that livestock farming means.

So, with the exception of a few farms here and there, the county has gone on producing grain.

But even the rich soils of Livingston county could not go on producing large crops of corn and oats forever.

A good many of the farmers who,

through a combination of hard work and a rich soil, had been supplied with everything they could possibly want in this life, began to wonder about their children. They had farms for these children, but would these farms continue to support the children as well as they had the parents? Evidently not, for already poor yields were coming often, and many of the soils were beginning to run together with a stubbornness that they had not shown in the old days.

Some of these farmers began a systematic course of soil improvement, a few with the idea of getting greater immediate returns from their work;

others with the hope of leaving a farm to their children that should be even richer than the virgin prairie. Many farms in the county are already showing the results of this soil improvement. Field after field of clover breaks up the monotony of corn field and oat stubble. Much of this clover is plowed, for the farmers—most of them—know

that a clover crop sold from the land leaves it no richer.

As more and more of the farmers became interested in soil improvement, the need of some one to help them became apparent. True, they had the excellent advice of the experiment station, the farmers' institute and the farm papers. But they needed something closer than that—someone who could go over their farms field by field and give them the needed information in greater detail and with greater definiteness than was possible at long range.

Following the lead of two other Illinois counties that had hired a trained man to serve their farmers, the people of Livingston county organized the Livingston County Soil and Crop Improvement Association, and the first of last February Roy C. Bishop, a young man who graduated a few years ago from the Missouri agricultural college, was put to work as county advisor.

Fearing that in so large a county as Livingston the advisor would be overwhelmed with work, it was decided to limit the membership to 300. There are something over 200 members at present. In the future the township limit will be twelve, though a few townships had more than that before this regulation was adopted. The membership fee is ten dollars. To the \$2,000 or more raised by the farmers was added \$50 apiece from eight banks, \$1,000 from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and \$1,000 from Mr. Rosenwald. This winter the sum will be swelled by more membership fees, and by a number of other banks that are anxious to help along the good work.

The association is managed by a board of nine directors selected at large by the members of the association at their annual meeting. Mr. Bishop spent the winter making plans and holding local meetings to explain the proposed work of the association. As soon as he could get out in the spring he began to go over the members' farms in a systematic way, township by township. A map of each member's farm is made, with the soil types roughly marked. Suggestions regarding the methods of handling the different fields and types of soil are given.

The last time I saw Mr. Bishop, August 13, he had gone over 15,000 acres of land in this way. This is about half the land belonging to the association members. He hopes to complete this work this fall.

"I consider this season's work largely preliminary," he told me. "It is necessary because we have had no soil survey in this county. Next season I can give these men more definite advice as to what methods of cropping

and maintaining fertility they can follow to best advantage, and will know what I am talking about."

Bishop has found much brown silt loam and some gray loam that is in need of limestone and phosphate. There is also much black clay soil that contains an abundance of all the mineral elements. But all of these, and nearly every other type of soil in the county, are in need of organic matter.

"As soon as these farmers learn the value of organic matter there will be an organized movement to adopt systems that will keep up the supply," Bishop says: "It will be done in a hurry, too, just the way tile were put in when farmers once learned their value."

The great legume crop for supplying organic matter in Livingston county is red clover. A good many farmers sow it with the oats, let it grow during the fall, and then plow the ground for corn the next spring. Others go a step further and let the land lie in clover a year, getting a seed crop perhaps, and returning all the rest of the clover crop to the land.

This is the system that Bishop is recommending. He also advises applying phosphate to the clover before plowing it under, where this element is needed; and on soils deficient in limestone recommends applying this before sowing the clover.

The weak point in this system is that in a season like the present most of the spring sown clover is lost, but in that case soy beans or some annual legume will have to be substituted.

One point that Bishop is emphasizing is that when clover is raised for seed, the first crop must be cut during the first half of June to get ahead of the midge and weevil. We saw some deplorable results of late cutting of the first crop, the heads in the second crop being so full of midge and weevil that it was worthless as a seed crop.

While soil improvement is the main issue, there are other things, of course, that demand the advisor's attention. This spring he induced about 50 of the members to treat their oats for smut. There is hardly a smut head in the treated fields, while the average loss from smut in untreated fields is about ten per cent and in an occasional field runs as high as 30.

Varieties of grain especially adapted to the county are needed, and Bishop has several co-operative tests under way in the hope of developing such strains. He also is encouraging wheat growing. While some wheat is grown in the county, the advisor believes that the area could be greatly increased with profit to the growers.

While the advisor is not doing much

along livestock lines, he does find time to say a good word for hog raising now and then. The clover fields could be used to good advantage for hog pasture, and corn for fattening is always abundant. The association has arranged to procure serum for its members and superintend the vaccination at any time when outbreak of cholera is threatened.

The directors told the advisor when they hired him that it was permanent rather than immediate results that they were after. Many of the members have told him that they are ready to follow his plans for improving their farms to the letter, and most of them have the money to do it on a big scale. With such a spirit the association ought to mean much to Livingston county.

The president of the association is W. H. Bentley; vice president, J. W. Porter; secretary, C. A. Rollins, all of Pontiac; and treasurer, Herbert Powell, of Fairbury.—Editor.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN ILLINOIS.

The industrial development of the great mineral deposits and the water resources of Illinois is so closely related to the manufacturing and other industries of the State that the work of the United States Geological Survey and the Illinois State Geological Survey must be of especial interest to every citizen.

The work of the Federal Survey includes the investigation of the mineral resources of the entire United States, as well as those of Alaska and the Hawaiian Islands, and an indication

of the extent to which its conclusions are sought is shown by the fact that it replies to more than 150,000 letters a year, besides distributing over a million reports and maps. Although the Western States, as a rule, are now receiving a larger share of attention from the Geological Survey than most of the older States of the East, on account of the requirements of Congress for the classification of public lands, special attention has been given during recent years to the mineral resources of Illinois, both by the Federal Survey and by the State Survey.

The field work of the United States Geological Survey is organized under three general branches—the geologic branch, the topographic branch, and the water-resources branch.

The geologic investigations of the Federal Survey in Illinois are carried on in co-operation with the State Geological Survey, of which Dr. F. W. DeWolf is director. Most of the field examinations are prosecuted in separate areas by parties belonging to one or the other survey. In some districts however, geologists of both organiza-

tions are engaged jointly. In this class is the work being done in the areas known as the Kimmick, Renaul, Chester and Baldwin quadrangles, which lie on or near Mississippi River in the southwestern part of the State. In these quadrangles, each embracing about 230 square miles, the hard rocks, or older strata, and the economic geology are being investigated with a view to description in folio form by Prof. Stuart Weller, of the State Survey, while the younger rock formations are being examined and mapped by E. W. Shaw, of the Federal Survey.

A topographic base map of the Gillespie quadrangle, in Macoupin county, is being prepared this season, and the geologic survey will be undertaken next spring by one of the Federal geologists. An economic report covering this quadrangle, which occupies an important place in the Illinois coal field, will later be prepared for submission to the State Survey for publication. A geologic folio on this area, including maps, will be prepared for publication by the Federal Survey.

The topographic branch of the United States Geological Survey, in co-operation with the State geologist of Illinois, expects to complete the mapping of seven 15-minute quadrangles during the present fiscal year. Work is now in progress on the Equality quadrangle, covering portions of Gallatin, Saline, Pope and Hardin counties; the Shawneetown quadrangle, in Gallatin county; the Marseilles quadrangle, in La Salle and Grundy counties; and the Avon quadrangle, in Fulton, Warren, and Knox counties. This fall, or in the early spring the topographic mapping of the Edington quadrangle, in Mercer and Rock counties; the Sparta quadrangle, in Randolph and Perry counties; and the Litchfield quadrangle, in Montgomery county, will be completed. The mapping now in progress is being done by topographers Frank Tweedy, F. B. Barrett, E. L. Hain, L. L. Lee, and C. R. French.

This work will include the detailed surveys necessary to prepare maps which will show the rivers, towns, roads and railroads, as well as the surface configuration of the country by means of 20-foot contour lines. The complete maps will be published on a scale of 1 mile to 1 inch and will probably be ready for distribution about two years after the completion of the field work.

Plans are also on foot for making drainage surveys, in co-operation with the State, for the publication of large-scale maps. The areas for these surveys have not yet been determined.

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PROCLAMATION

Among the many vital problems which call upon our people for solution the situation with regard to the waste of energy and resources in all parts of the country by fire is one of the most commanding. The subject of the conservation of our resources is at last deservedly receiving the most careful attention. Our forests are being preserved, our waterpower and waterways developed and utilized, and the hidden forces of nature conserved and made subservient to the well-being of man.

Statistics show that the fire waste is increasing annually and the fire loss in the State of Illinois in 1912 averaged \$1,000,000 per month. Besides this, in that year alone nearly four hundred people in this State lost their lives through the agency of fire. The losses thus occasioned constitute an absolute waste and a drain upon our resources such as no nation or state can long endure, and the fact that they are largely preventable is a reproach to our people and calls for an immediate remedy.

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Given under my hand and the seal of the State of Illinois, at the Capitol, in the City of Springfield, this first day of September, A. D. 1913.

E. F. DUNNE,
Governor
HARRY WOODS, Secretary of State.