

We Take You Now to Caswell County

They're putting some real stuffing into democracy in this North Carolina county where farmers and representatives of Government services are meshing their resources and energies through the Land Use Planning Program

GUN GRIPPED IN HIS HANDS, his campaign hat slanting down on his head, and with a pack on his back, a Confederate soldier stares straight ahead across the square into the windows above the garage where the Farm Security Administration offices of Yanceyville, North Carolina, are housed.

Yanceyville, the map reads when you spread it out, is 18 miles from Danville, Virginia; 37 miles from Durham, North Carolina. Altitude, 619 feet. Population, 500. Seat of Caswell County.

Up Route 14 toward Danville you come to a highway marker. In 1852, the highway marker says, bright leaf tobacco was first developed on the Slade Brothers farm. The guide book adds something interesting. "Here," says the guide book, "a piece of gray sandy loam unsuited to other crops was planted with tobacco. It produced a leaf, lighter in color, sweeter, and finer in texture, which proved highly suitable for smoking mixtures, cigarettes, and plug tobacco wrappers."

Look across the fields behind the highway marker, now, and you can see a patch of tobacco growing, a square of bright green hands held up toward the sun, the palms upturned. There it is, the bright leaf tobacco the Slade Brothers first developed in 1852.

In the day you see men stooping over in the tobacco fields pulling leaves off the tobacco plants; priming, this is called. Off on the side of the field, a mule stands reined to a box on wooden runners, a sled. Into this sled the tobacco leaves are piled.

Down the road a mule pulls a sled up to a tobacco barn where women tie the leaves to sticks. Men pass the sticks of tobacco leaves into the tobacco barns where they are hung for curing.



1. Tenancy and tobacco lie behind Caswell County's problems. Tenancy stems from slavery and the War Between the States, commemorated in Yanceyville Square by the Confederate soldier. The present European war has aggravated the problem of tobacco prices.



2. When the Slade Brothers grew the first crop of bright leaf tobacco about 1852, Caswell County was well off. Today with 95 percent of its income derived from the sale of bright leaf tobacco, it would be in hard straits if County Land Use Planning had not come its way.



3. For 90 years, the most important event each year in Caswell County has been the tobacco auction. Here, in a few moments, the auctioneer knocks down a year's labor, often of a whole family. Caswell's income of less than \$2,000,000 this year has to spread over the needs of 20,000 people.



4. Tobacco is hard on people; it is also hard on the soil. Once this land was covered with hardwood trees: oak, elm, birch, walnut. Sixty years from now this land may be covered with pine with the help the people are getting to conserve their land.

Night time in the late summer and early fall, you see small red orange fires burning close to the ground out in the country.

As you drive along you come suddenly on one of these fires. It's burning in a flue underneath a slanting roofed log barn, with timbers grooved into each other, chinks daubed with clay.

A man sits up in a bunk out in the open watching the fires. If you ask him what he's doing, he replies, "curing tobacco."

Day and night, winter and summer, fall and spring, bright flue-cured tobacco, first developed by the Slade Brothers in 1852, determines what the people in Caswell are doing, and thinking, and spending.

TOBACCO IS THE FIRST FACT OF LIFE IN CASWELL COUNTY.

In the broad, Caswell County's 20,000 people (half white, half Negro) had an income of about \$2,000,000 last year. This year it will be slightly less. In 1931, it got down to \$200,000 (\$10 a person). Ninety-five percent of that income comes from tobacco. There probably aren't more than 3 or 4 hundred people in all Caswell County who don't get the major part of their income from tobacco.

Tobacco isn't a tyrant that a young patriot can strike down with a heroic cry of *sic semper tyrannus*, or the North Carolina equivalent of the tattered Latin phrase. But the tyranny of uncertain income from tobacco does have an adversary. It's called Land Use Planning.

Land Use Planning isn't a new secret weapon. It's an idea, like this: When people pull together they can get farther than when they pull separately, and what happens to one man's farm and family is important



5. Only the boxwood flourishes at this once proud home. Houses built before the War Between the States mutely tell what happens when a farm economy gets out of balance and the people dependent on it are left to shift for themselves.

to his neighbors and his neighbors' neighbors. So it is, under Land Use Planning, neighbors get together in community meetings, and from these community meetings delegates get together in a county committee.

All the way along the line, the talk is first about the land, how it is used or misused, what kind of life it yields or could yield, what skills and aids from outside the county are available, how can they be meshed into the life of the county most efficiently. County, State, and Federal agency representatives take part in the planning work. They cooperate in a new way. These representatives aren't there to do all the work under the Land Use Planning idea; they are there to give advice, special, technical, scientific advice, where it is needed. That doesn't mean they don't take advice, too. They do, for it's the give and take, back and forth between people and experts that makes Land Use Planning what it is.

LAND USE PLANNING ISN'T THE SECOND FACT OF LIFE IN CASWELL COUNTY YET. It's something that's taking shape; something that's happening.

The Confederate soldier in the square of Yanceyville, erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy to the sons of Caswell County who served in the war of 1861-65, is a symbol of the second hardest Caswell County fact.

Caswell County, before the War Between the States, was about the richest county in North Carolina; now it's one of the poorest.

Before the War Between the States, sheep grazed on the lawns of the plantation homes. There were blooded horses in the paddocks, meat cattle and milk cattle in the pastures, pigs enough to supply all the hog meat and

fat needed in the county, game in the woods, fish in the streams. There were also slaves in the slave quarters.

When the men returned from Lee's armies, after Appomattox, they found the slaves who had formerly worked the plantations were free men, without work, without food, and without their former slave quarters as shelter.

The plantation owners still owned their lands, but they had no money to hire their former slaves to work their lands.

Sharecropping (and other forms of tenancy) was the device used to arch over the economical abyss between land owners with land but with no laborers to work the land, and land workers without land to work. Unable to pay wages, the land owners offered to let their former slaves work their land on shares.

SHARECROPPING IS A 75-YEAR OLD SCAR OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES.

Two-thirds of the farm operators in Caswell County are tenants. Most of them are share croppers.

In Caswell County, a share cropper is a man who works another man's land with the other man's tools and work stock. He supplies half the cost of fertilizer and in return for his labor he gets half the returns from the crop. The crop is tobacco.

Tom Anderson* is a white share cropper, for example. He's one of 5 share croppers on a farm that lies on the slope up from the Country Line Creek which slants across Caswell County. He lives just about the way half the farmers in Caswell County live, white or Negro.

Last year he worked 3 acres of tobacco, harvested about 2,400 pounds from it, which

* Names used are imaginary.



6. Insecurity of tenure, uncertainty of income, and exhaustion of soil have combined to make life hard for most of Caswell's farm families. It's easier to keep their chins and their spirits up now with the help Land Use Planning brings.



7. Between harvests, tenants and croppers have been getting their meal, molasses, and meat on credit at the country crossroads stores. Before Land Use Planning came, Caswell County was almost as dependent on imported foods as a city is.

he sold for 25 cents a pound when tobacco was auctioned off in one of the long skylit tobacco markets in Danville last September. That was \$600, but half of that went to the land owner. That left Anderson \$300. Fertilizer cost him about \$60, but he got half of his 3-acre share of a Triple-A tobacco payment, \$27. His cash income for a year's work then was \$267.

All of that wasn't clear either. The year before Mr. Anderson had done worse and when he sold his tobacco he didn't have enough money to carry him through the year.

In cases like that, the landlords stand for the share croppers at the country store. That means the landlord guarantees the share cropper's grocery bill. Once or twice a month, Mr. Anderson went up to the crossroads store and charged a slab of fat back, salt pork (that is, "white meat"), a sack of sugar, and a sack of flour, and a sack of beans. When last fall came around, Mr. Anderson owed \$92 at the store and that came out of his \$267 of tobacco money. For the year 1939-40, then, Mr. Anderson had \$175 to go on.

YOU MIGHT LIKE TO MEET MR. ANDERSON and see for yourself how a man keeps his family alive on \$175 a year.

He lives about 5 miles off the hard road, and then another quarter of a mile off a yellow dirt road. The house is shut off from you by a screen of pine trees, but suddenly, as you walk up a slight hill, you step out from under the pine branches and you see a log cabin with a tin roof. At one end of the cabin there is a chimney, broad at the base where the fireplace is, and then triangled toward the top which juts up above the tin

roof of the cabin. White dirt chinks up the cracks between the logs of the cabin.

In front of the cabin there is a flower garden, bright golden marigolds, a purple flower with long beaded tendrils, called Joseph's Coat, and a border of shining green shrubs. Mrs. Anderson calls them "burning bushes."

There's a porch to the cabin and on the porch, instead of a chair or swing, there is a seat from an automobile. Mr. Anderson isn't sitting on the automobile seat, however. He's lounging on the step leading up to the porch, his right leg thrust straight and stiff out in front of him. He was going up to the spring (there is no well or running water in the cabin) when he tripped and sprained a muscle.

TWO OF MR. ANDERSON'S SONS ARE SITTING on the ground in front of the porch drawing in the earth with their fingers. As you approach, they look up from their drawing and then, somewhat embarrassed, they stand up. Tanned boys in worn overalls, barefooted.

Not many visitors come by the Anderson cabin, so anyone's welcome, although Mr. Anderson does expect you to state your business.

Once you explain you just want to talk, Mr. Anderson has explanation enough. First thing he wants to know is what's the news. Mr. Anderson subscribes to a paper for only a couple of months after his tobacco has been sold, and there is no electricity and no radio.

If you have a newspaper, Mr. Anderson will offer to listen while you read it, and Mrs. Anderson will come out of the house to listen, and the Anderson daughter will stop cleaning pots in the kitchen to come to the door in her overalls and bare feet to listen,

too. The boys will sit down on the ground again, but they will be watching you as you read. News is precious when there is no newspaper and no radio. Everyone pays attention as if you were reading a telegram.

After the news is read, that leads naturally to what you think of the news, and that leads to talk that comes around more or less to Mr. Anderson and his family.

Mr. Anderson is a man of more than 50, and he's been cropping for 30 of his 50 years. His father owned a farm, but there were a lot of boys and Mr. Anderson's second oldest brother got the farm after settling up with the other children.

TWO YEARS AGO, MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO the farm where he is now—because the land is good up in this section of the Country Line Creek. Land's getting thin and wornout around the county but you can tell by the trees, those hardwoods over there, for example, that this is good tobacco land.

Lately he's taken to having a kitchen garden, and a winter garden with salad greens in it all through the winter, and he's going to have meat from the pigs this year, and Mrs. Anderson has canned some tomatoes and some peaches, and there'll be snap beans to can later on.

In the summer Anderson eats what comes out of the garden with a chicken now and then, and of course, "white meat." After the tobacco is sold the Andersons splurge and buy beef.

Last summer they didn't can much and so they ran out of canned vegetables during the winter, but they managed on "white meat" and beans and gravy.

Mr. Anderson got a cow last fall, too, but she isn't very much of a cow. In the sum-

mer she gives about a gallon of milk; in the fall she gives about 2 quarts; and in the winter part of the time she gives a quart before she runs out. That's because he doesn't have any feed for her in the winter.

His children eat what he eats except when they go to school where they get free hot lunches. Lunches used to be biscuits with butter maybe if there was butter, and with fat meat if there was fat meat, and maybe with some mayonnaise that Mr. Anderson got from the country store if there was nothing else.

Next summer Mr. Anderson is going to plant some corn and that ought to help him with the cow, and he's thinking of planting enough wheat this fall to fix him up on flour. He can take it to the mill and get it ground for a toll.

MR. ANDERSON HAS NO OBJECTION TO your looking inside his cabin.

There is a bed against the wall on the right as you go into the room, and then on the stone mantle over the fireplace there is an alarm clock. The walls are boarded and there is an old magazine cover pinned up on one wall. In the far corner there is a dresser with no mirror. There are a few wooden chairs in the center of the room, a straw palette in another corner, an opening which reveals a ladder leading up into the attic, and on your left a sewing machine with an iron treadle.

A door leads into the kitchen where there is an iron stove in which the Andersons burn wood for cooking; a table with some tin plates on it; in one corner on the floor there are jars full of red tomatoes Mrs. Anderson and her daughter have canned.

Mr. Anderson and his family now want to know something about why you want all this information. You explain.

Has Mr. Anderson ever heard of Land Use Planning?

He can't say that he has. "It isn't relief is it?"

No, it isn't relief. It's an idea.

"Well, if it's a good idea it might be a good idea." Mr. Anderson isn't joking. A good idea is something that is useful, that will work. And if it's a good idea it might work.

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, YOU EXPLAIN TO Mr. Anderson, the people who work on farms and the people who work in the State Agricultural colleges and the Federal Department of Agriculture began to feel that the various farm programs had gone as far as they could go without closer teamwork.

Congress created a Soil Conservation Service and it, with the CCC and the WPA, had impressed farmers with the need for soil conservation.

"You're right, there," Mr. Anderson comments, "10 years ago there wasn't a terrace in this county. Now there are terraces on every farm. Those CCC boys put them in."

Then there's the Triple A, you go on. Congress has given farmers a way of adjusting their production to consumption, at the same time looking out for emergency and national defense needs.

"I'm in the Triple-A program," Mr. Anderson notes. "It gives us a chance to treat the land better. We get payments, too, on our tobacco allotment. My landlord gets half, and they send me half. My check was \$27. Got it last May and it came in handy, I'll tell you."

Then, the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation buys up farm surpluses and feeds them to people who need them, like the hot lunches your children here got last year in school.

"Is that what that is?" Mr. Anderson asks. The sons nod; they know what it is.

Anyway, you explain to Mr. Anderson, a Government agency alone can go just so far in helping people. Unless there is full cooperation between farmers and agencies in planning and carrying out agricultural improvements, very few real benefits will result. That's where Land Use Planning comes in.

"Well, what have they done down here in Caswell County?" Mr. Anderson demands.

Land Use Planning came into Caswell County last winter after tobacco selling time. The County Agent, do you know him?

"Heard of him, but I can't say I know him." You explain, he's a man employed by the County and State and Federal Governments all chipping in who's supposed to tell farmers all about new methods of farming. He's a kind of educational adviser on farm problems. He works, too, with farm boys through the 4-H clubs.

"I guess he works with the land owners," Mr. Anderson says.

There's the home demonstration agent, too. She works with farm wives and farm girls just the way the county agent works with farmers and farm boys.

ANYHOW, YOU GO ON, THEY AND THE FARM Security Administration people in the county, and the Soil Conservation people, and people connected with all the other Federal, State, and County agencies in the county were asked to hold a meeting and talk about this Land Use Planning.

8. Just as the year 1852 marks one turning point in the history of Caswell County, 1939 marks another. 1939 was the year when Caswell County decided to shape its own future through Land Use Planning, after meetings such as this.



9. "Conservation can save that land over by the creek." Neighborhood committees meet to work out neighborhood plans, and a county-wide committee fits neighborhood plans into county-wide programs. Women share in planning, too.



"I thought you said it was for farmers."

You ask Mr. Anderson to wait a minute while you explain that these official people had first to learn about Land Use Planning before they could tell the farmers about it. So they were asked to have a meeting.

"That's good. If they would work together then you wouldn't get the runaround, going from one agency to another."

You have to admit that, but then you pick up the idea of Land Use Planning and you tell Mr. Anderson about the first steps.

After these Government people learned all about Land Use Planning, the first thing they did was to form an Agricultural Workers' Council, a single coordinating council with no official status but with a plan to get together and fit their programs together.

"But how about the farmers?" Mr. Anderson is persistent about them. He wants to see where he comes in.

Meetings were called in all the townships of the county: Stony Creek, Locust Hill, Yanceyville, Anderson, Leasburg, Pelham, Dan River, Hightowers, and Milton.

"That's all of them," Mr. Anderson says.

Letters went out to the farmers in these townships and they were asked to come to a meeting at some farmer's house in their neighborhood.

"Whose house did they meet in here in this township?"

J. L. Marsden's.

Mr. Anderson turns to Mrs. Anderson. "Do you hear that? Mr. Marsden." Explaining to you Mr. Anderson tells you that's his land owner; this is Mr. Marsden's farm. "He's a good man," Mr. Anderson says, while Mrs. Anderson nods.

They had this meeting, you explain, and

there was an expert on soil conservation there, and other farm experts too, and then a big map of the township was spread out.

"A map?"

Yes, a map. Each farmer looked at this map and the first thing he did was mark his farm out on it. Then they marked the map to show where woods were, and where tobacco was planted, and wheat, and where there were steep hills.

"Then what?"

Then they began talking about the soils and what condition they were in, and whether a piece of land should be farmed at all, or whether it was too steep to be farmed. Maybe someone thought a piece of land could be farmed if it was terraced, or that a piece of land in corn should really be put into pasture.

Then they thought that maybe some land shouldn't be farmed at all.

THAT WAS AS FAR AS THEY GOT AT THAT meeting.

"Did they hold any more meetings?"

Yes, there were a lot more meetings. At them they talked over their problems some more and began working on recommendations and a program for their township.

"You say these meetings were held in each township?"

Yes, you answer. Of course the talk differed but the idea was the same.

"I'd like to know what they decided needed to be done in this township," Mr. Anderson interrupts. He still hasn't made up his mind on Land Use Planning.

In this section, this committee of farmers looked over the land and found 2 kinds of soil, sandy loam which is good for tobacco,

and clay soil which is best used for pasture and grain.

They found out that the woodlands had been cut over clean, mostly because curing tobacco makes it necessary to burn large quantities of wood.

More than half the people are tenants in this neighborhood and most of the tenants have one-year oral agreements instead of written leases.

Tenancy plus tobacco growing has made soil erosion a serious problem.

Roads, they discovered, became impassable during the winter and children are unable to get to school then.

"That's what they found. What are they going to do?" Mr. Anderson asks.

First of all, they decided that a good farm in this area should have from 40 to 60 acres of cropland and from 50 to 100 acres of woodland.

Mr. Anderson thought that was funny. Was somebody going to buy him a farm?

You explain the Farm Security Administration through its tenant purchase program lends money to farmers in Caswell County to help them buy farms, and with this recommendation in mind they see to it that when a tenant is lent money to buy a farm he gets a farm that is well-suited to good farming. Farmers who already own farms plan to balance up their acreage.

MR. ANDERSON WAS PARTLY CONVINCED. "What else did they say?"

More crop rotation. For example, Mr. Anderson had farmed the same 3 acres for 2 years with tobacco. Under this new recommendation, tobacco would be rotated with a grassy crop which would be left on

10. More Caswell County farmers than ever before now spread lime and phosphate on their land, thanks to the education through Land Use Planning and the help that Government brings. Caswell County land is going to be richer.



11. Soil-conservation experts advised Caswell County farmers to grow lespedeza to restore nitrogen to their over-worked soil. Triple A, through its soil-conservation payments, encouraged the practice. Farmers are beginning to see results.



the ground for a year to give the soil a chance to recover from producing tobacco.

Then the committee recommended that the land be planted with some crop in the winter so that it wouldn't be left bare to wash away in the winter rains.

Mr. Anderson volunteers his opinion. "They know how to farm all right, if they said that."

More terracing, and more grassy strips in between row crops to hold the rain and the soil, and they recommend that equipment be made available to farmers so they can keep up their terraces.

Mr. Anderson wants to know if the committee had anything to do with all the new terracing machinery that had come in to the county during the last year.

Very likely. Farm Security lent some farmers money to buy terracing equipment with the understanding that these farmers would rent the equipment out to other farmers at reasonable rates. The county was persuaded to buy some machinery, too. Then the Caswell County farmers said that a good standard would be for every farm to raise at least 2 cows, and 3 or 5 hogs, and from 35 to 50 chickens. That would mean better food for farm families and more income, more pasture and manure, and better soil.

THEY THOUGHT TENANTS OUGHT TO HAVE written leases to sign and they ought to be for longer than one year. They thought that landlords and tenants could reach agreements on improving tenant homes and sharing the expense.

"What kind of improvements?" Mr. Anderson asked.

Well, screens, for example.

"Well, I'll be dawgonned. Mr. Marsden gave me screening this spring to screen this house. Maybe that was this Land Use Planning. What other improvements?"

Well, a sanitary privy.

"He talked to me about that."

And electricity.

"He mentioned that, too. I'm beginning to see things."

Then the Home Demonstration Agent and the Farm Security Administration are to work with families to get better gardens and more home canning.

"Mrs. Marsden talked to Mrs. Anderson about that."

YOU GO ON TELLING MR. ANDERSON ABOUT Land Use Planning. The committee also asked the State Highway Department to fix up the secondary roads so people won't be winterbound.

They asked for recreational facilities in the county, a park, and a community clubhouse.

"A place to hold church picnics, you mean?"

That's one thing recreational facilities could supply.

"We need it," Mr. Anderson agrees.

"Now all this," Mr. Anderson asked, as if he were assessing Land Use Planning in his own mind, "goes on in each township? What about the county?"

Each township meeting elected a committee and then the committee elected a chairman. All the township chairmen together made up the farmer membership of the county committee. This county committee met, too. They looked over the county as a whole, examined countywide problems and made their own recommendations. Then these recommendations were taken back to the township committees and ratified, so to speak.

"That's committees!" Mr. Anderson is skeptical of committees. "What did the committee *do* in the county?"

THE BASIC RECOMMENDATION HAD TO DO with the land in the county. First, they decided no one knew enough about the soil in the county since a scientific soil survey had not been made since 1907. So they urged the Department of Agriculture to make a new soil survey. That's been done.

Then they began to examine the problems and conclusions as they were worked out by the township committees. One thing that came out of these discussions was an analysis of the use of the land. Here they divided the county up into 3 areas: blue, where land is being farmed but shouldn't be; red, where farming is going on under doubtful conditions; and yellow, that is okay for farming.

They urged that a good part of the blue land be bought up by the Federal Government and made into a land utilization project.

You tell Mr. Anderson more. The Land Use Planning committee has urged, too, that farming be diversified in Caswell County. Farmers have been urged to grow more livestock for home use and as an additional source of income.

ISN'T IT TRUE THAT COLD STORAGE EGGS ARE imported into this county and sold here during the winter? You ask Mr. Anderson.

"Sure, they're sold to people who can afford to buy them." Mr. Anderson doesn't think it's strange that a farming county should have to buy cold storage eggs when it has all the resources for raising its own fresh eggs. But now that you mention it, he does think something ought to be done.

You ask if Mr. Anderson doesn't buy pigs from a peddler. Well, the committee thinks

there ought to be more brood sows in the county so he can raise his own pigs. They want to see more pure bred animals in the county.

They have persuaded the County Commissioners to appropriate money to take part in the Federal-State program to eradicate Bang's disease.

The County Committee also saw a danger in the exhaustion of the forest resources of the county and it plans to undertake a reforestation program through the farmers in the county.

Roads need improvement off the main highways; streams need to be worked over to reduce flood hazards. Programs were worked out so that farmers and government agencies can get this essential work done.

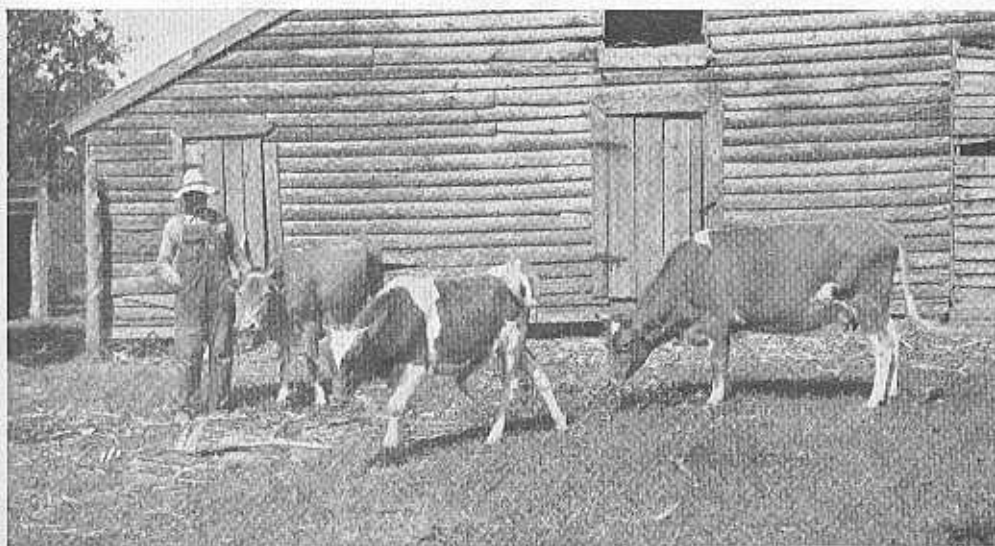
More phosphate and lime should be used to return fertility to exhausted Caswell County soils, and the Committee asked the Triple A to set up its goals so these practices would be encouraged. At the same time the Committee discovered that the method by which Triple A lime was shipped into the county was hard on some farmers, so the committee found a way to get the method of shipping changed.

With many farmers alert to soil conservation practices, more workers skilled in these practices are needed in the county to give farmers technical advice. The committee asked for additional home demonstration workers, and an assistant to the county agent; a Negro home demonstration agent to work with Negro families in the county; more vocational education instructors in the county school system; and additional technical staff in the Farm Security Administration to work with the tenants in the county.

SOIL CONSERVATION REQUIRES EXPENSIVE farm machinery and Caswell County farmers are not overloaded with cash. To get around this problem the committee worked out a program with the Farm Security Administration. Under this program community service loans are made to master farmers for the purchase of farm equipment. Then the master farmer rents this machine to his neighbors when they need the equipment. In this way, with everyone sharing in the cost, it's possible for everyone to have a turn at the machine.

At the same time arrangements were made with the County Commissioners to purchase some farm machinery and rent it out to farmers.

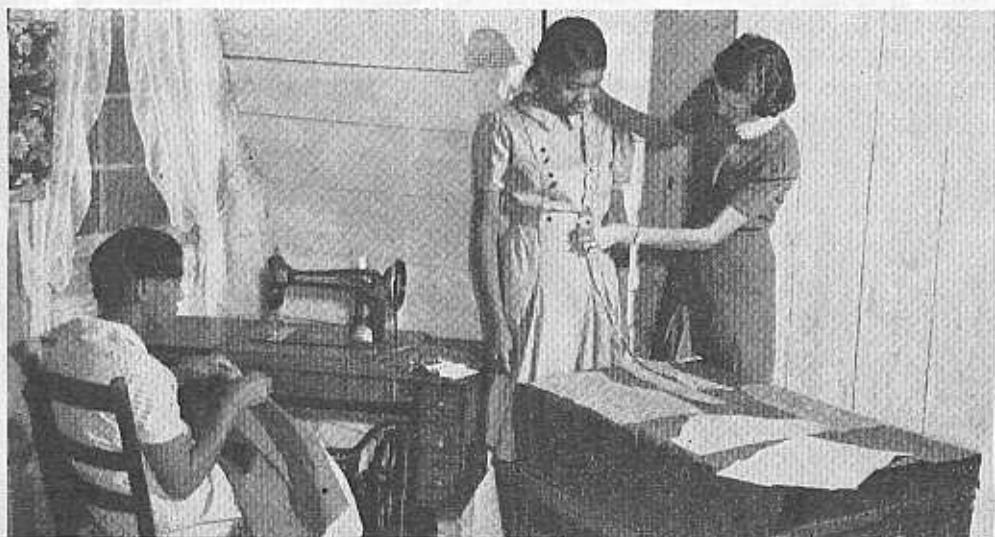
Then there's the health department. Caswell County has no health department. Mr. Anderson knows about that. "If you can't afford to pay for a doctor, chances are you



12. Land Use Planning Committees said there ought to be more cows in the county, and more thoroughbred bulls. The roguish bull calf in the foreground is one result of the recommendation. He was purchased with a Farm Security Administration loan. There's going to be more milk for children, thanks to Planning.



13. Tobacco farmers who can't afford to buy adequate diets can afford to raise them. Land Use Planning is helping. Agents of the Extension Service and Farm Security Administration show how to plan balanced meals, how to can and preserve foods. All the different foods on this table, the sign says, were produced on one farm.



14. Land Use Planning has a way of ramifying. When families begin to plan for better living, the women begin to think about clothes. The Farm Security Administration home supervisor here is helping this mother and daughter to plan and make a fall wardrobe. Shanties, long neglected, get spruced up, too, inside and out.

can't get one," he says. The committee has urged that steps be taken to establish a county health department.

Mr. Anderson lowers his voice and makes his own comment on this. "I reckon," he says, "there must be a lot of blood disease in this county."

You mean venereal diseases?

Mr. Anderson nods his head. Just a feeling that he has; he doesn't know for sure.

Of course, you say, no one knows because there is no county health department. Other people had a feeling there might be tuberculosis in the county, too, a great deal of it, but no one knows about that either. A county health department would find out and do something about it, and the Land Use Planning Committee, you explain to Mr. Anderson, is working on that.

Did Mr. Anderson remember the Bookmobile?

"Sure," he remembered it, "but it only was in the county for a couple of months."

That was right, the Bookmobile, a truck stocked with books and fitted up like a library was brought into the county after the Land Use Planning Committee worked out an arrangement with the State Library Commission. That was what they called a demonstration. It toured the county on a regular route for 3 months.

"Is it coming back?" Mr. Anderson wanted to know.

Yes, it was, for another demonstration, and in the meantime the Land Use Planning Committee was working on plans to see if it couldn't be a permanent undertaking in the county. Maybe half time in Caswell and half time in an adjoining county to cut down the cost.

Mr. Anderson looks over toward his children. "They'll like that," he says. He's not much of a hand at reading.

Then the County Committee has set up a special school lunch committee.

Mr. Anderson's boys come closer to hear about school lunches.

DID MR. ANDERSON KNOW ANYTHING about malnutrition in Caswell County?

"You mean people not eating enough?"

Yes, particularly children not getting enough food and not getting the right kind of food.

Mr. Anderson reckoned that there was a lot of that. He'd been hungry himself sometimes. He supposed most share croppers were hungry sometime every year.

Mr. Anderson knew probably that when people are hungry they are more likely to be sick.

Sure he did. "You ought to be up at our church sometimes in the winter and listen to

10 the prayers for the sick. Sometimes it seems as if everybody is sick."

The point is, you explain to Mr. Anderson, children need balanced adequate diets if they are to grow up to be healthy people, and grown people don't have much chance in the world if they are licked by sickness before they even start fighting poverty.

That's the idea behind the school lunch program. Give children hot lunches at school and you're helping them toward health.

The Land Use Planning Committee saw it that way, too. And it has established a special committee on school lunches. It was going to try to keep hot lunches where the schools in Caswell already had them, and to get them in schools where they weren't being served.

Mr. Anderson thought most of the white children were getting hot lunches. It was the children of the Negro families who were missing out. They went to school in one-room schools where there weren't any facilities for preparing lunches.

Yes, the committee knew that, and it was trying to work out a way to get hot school lunches into these schools, too.

Mr. Anderson suddenly thought of something. "Didn't this surplus thing give food to families, too?"

Yes, it did, but only to families eligible for relief. "There's no relief here," Mr. Anderson said.

That's right, there isn't money for relief except for old age pensions, and the blind, and for children. Families that were eligible to get relief, however, did get surplus commodities.

Mr. Anderson nodded his head. He knew. "One thing they get is powdered milk and people I know use it with flour and water to make gravy. Makes good gravy, too."

A home beautification program is on, too. Flower gardens grace the front yard of every home in the county from the shack of the poorest share cropper in the county to the most impressive restored plantation mansion. The women of the county have got together and put on a drive to get more and better kitchen gardens to improve everyone's diet.

"FUNNY ALL THIS WAS HAPPENING AND I never saw how it all tied together," Mr. Anderson comments.

"Didn't you hear about the Short Course?" you ask.

"What's the Short Course?"

Each year the women who work with the home demonstration agent arrange to have a one-day educational meeting. The women

take their families and basket lunches to town where they hear experts from Raleigh and Washington talk about hygiene and home management, poultry care, and interior decoration.

Mrs. Anderson looks interested, but Mr. Anderson doesn't seem to follow the conversation.

This spring the women got together (there are almost as many women on the Land Use Planning Committees as men) and decided that this year their Short Course would be on Land Use Planning.

So they arranged to get the moving picture theater in Yanceyville for 2 days. Then experts came in and talked at the movie house to the white families on dairying, and gardens, and soil conservation, and forestry, and poultry management. The Negro families met in the courthouse and heard the same talks.

Mr. Anderson did recall those meetings. In fact, he had been invited to attend but he didn't have a car and he didn't get to town for those things. Besides he and Mrs. Anderson didn't have the right kind of clothes for a meeting like that.

You tell Mrs. Anderson how the Farm Security Administration, as part of the Land Use Planning Program, was lending money to women to buy pressure cookers and rent them out to their neighbors to pay back the loan. That was a community service loan. About 25 pressure cookers had been bought that way in the county.

"How many people went to this Short Course?" Mr. Anderson wanted to know.

About 700, white and Negro.

After a pause, Mr. Anderson has one last question.

15. This youngster is going to get a Land Use Planning benefit in the form of hot lunch at school this winter. One Land Use Planning Committee works full time to fit the Department of Agriculture's School Lunch Program into the new scheme of things in Caswell County, so that Caswell's next.



"Well, what haven't they done?"

Well, they haven't reached you yet.

Mr. Anderson rises to the defense of Land Use Planning. "In a way they have. I see all these things happening, though I do say I didn't know what it was all about. The results are getting to me. But I'm not in on it. I guess that'll come. Takes time."

Land Use Planning is stirring up things in Caswell County. And it's getting going because the people are joined together in committees to give direction to what happens in the county from now on.

For 75 years, tobacco and tenancy shoved the Caswell people down a road they didn't even know they were taking until they reached the end of it.

Now they are not being forced anywhere. They are working out their own directions and they're heading forward.

One direction Land Use Planning must still take, however, is one which leads to wider participation by the Mr. Andersons of the county. But as Mr. Anderson says, that will come.

ACTUALLY WHAT CASWELL COUNTY IS doing, any agricultural county in the country can do, and many are doing. Land Use Planning is a technique whereby all the people can work to end the persisting crimes of omission committed by all of us.

"Stop doing nothing!" is Caswell County's theme song, you might say.

No one, peering deep down into the life of a community, has ascertained all the good things of life which a people, determined to win a decent life for everyone, can attain. No one doubts, however, that we are more than a million miles from where we could be.