

DRAINED MARSH LAND DEVELOPMENT

I. A. Haverberg, Finley, Wis.

In talking to you on the "Development of Drained Marshland," I wish to present to you some facts which I believe to clearly prove that there is a development, and a real one, in this particular type of land. The history of the land development of the Cranberry Drainage district, the section I am familiar with, can be roughly divided into two parts. The first is the formation of the drainage districts by a few owners of large tracts of land whose main object was to secure a profit on their investment. Poor, inadequate ditches and final failure was the results of their endeavor. The second stage of the development, features the settler who wishes to make a home for himself and family. And it is this stage I am going to talk about today.

In every farming community regardless of where it is we find that crops will not grow if over supplied with water. Such was the condition that existed six years ago in the Cranberry Drainage district. The ditches as then existed could not carry the flood water. To remedy this situation the district was bonded sufficiently to provide money to dig ditches that would carry the water from the land rapidly. From that time on there has been a marked development in the crops of farms in the district. Permit me to quote figures of crop production on my farm which I believe to be typical of most of the farms in this district. In 1920 I produced 380 bushels of oats, 60 bushels of potatoes, 60 bushels of corn, 24 tons of wild hay. In 1925 I produced 940 bushels of oats, 200 bushels of potatoes, 150 bushels of corn, and 18 tons of timothy hay. From these figures you can see I have more than doubled the crop production of my farm in the last five years, and this is due to drainage. The land that produced forty bushels of oats per acre this year was so water-soaked five years ago that it was not practical to drive a team over the marsh. This year I used a tractor to do much of the work.

The crop production of other farmers in the community for this year tell the same story.

In close relation to the crops of the community I would like to mention the financial condition of those same farms. Five years ago not one man in my community and very few in the entire district could say their farm was free from an incumbrance and the least was \$1,000. Today two out of five are free from debt and the others have made substantial reductions in their total debt. And this has been done during a period of times in which thousands of farmers have left their farms because of debt and general dissatisfaction. This is a fact and you will find that every man in that district is satisfied with drainage as a means to success. I will admit that on the average the buildings and general appearance of the farms are not the very best, but you will find that every man is working to

clear his farm of debt first, and to build up his place afterwards. A fine house and barn is not everything to a man, especially if he does not own them. The thought of a debt, too big to meet that has driven hundreds of farmers from well built up farms, does not bother those men for their policy is a cautious one. Try and pay as you go along. That idea may not bring a showy success, but it brings a sure one. There has been a statement made before this convention that, as did Jacob go forth to look for grapes, so did this gentleman go forth to find the fruit in the cranberry drainage district and he claimed he found none. *If such was the case he did not seek, for if those satisfied farmers in the Cranberry Drainage district do not bear evidence that the fruit is there, what does?

CROP REPORT, 1925, ON DRAINED MARSH LAND

Walden Bros., Finley, Wis.

Oats, 40 acres. 10 acres were cut for hay, leaving 30 acres for grain. When threshed it amounted to 1325 bushel, a yield of 44 $\frac{1}{4}$ bu. per acre.

Corn, 36 acres. 16 acres drowned out, leaving 20 acres of good stand corn.

Buckwheat, 14 acres. Threshed 181 bu. Yield per acre, 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ bu.

Soy beans. 14 acres for hay, which yielded 8 tons.

Timothy, 25 acres. 20 tons.

1100 bushels of oats on hand.

Cost of labor, \$200.

I. A. Haverberg, Finley, Wis.

30 acres oats 940 bu., per acre, 31 $\frac{1}{3}$ bu.

4 acres buckwheat, 50 bu. Per acre, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ bu.

2 acres mixed grain, 48 bu. Per acre, 24 bu.

3 acres soy beans, 4 tons hay.

15 acres timothy hay, 18 tons. Per acre 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ ton.

3 acres potatoes, 200 bu. Per acre, 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ bu.

$\frac{1}{4}$ acre alfalfa, 1 ton.

15 acres corn, 150 bu. Per acre, 10 bu.

1925 products sold from farm up to date, \$266.29.

Total number acres of oats, 121. Total number bushels of oats, 4460. Average yield per acre, 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ bu.

John Anderson, Finley, Wis.

40 acres oats, 1500 bu.; per acre, 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ bu.

15 acres rye, 66 bu.; per acre, 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ bu.

18 acres buckwheat, 380 bu.; per acre, 21 $\frac{1}{3}$ bu.

4 acres corn.

1 acre soy beans, 23 bu.

1 acre potatoes, 1 bu.

2 acres flax.

Milking 10 cows, selling 20 gallons of cream per week.

Mrs. Peck, Finley, Wis.

21 acres oats, 795 bu.; per acre, 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ bu.

5 acres rye, 48 bu.; per acre, 9 $\frac{3}{5}$ bu.

3 acres potatoes, 80 bu.; per acre, 26 $\frac{2}{3}$ bu.

9 acres corn. 5 double wagon boxes of husked corn.

Amount of crop on hand: 600 bu. oats; 70 bu. potatoes; 25 bu. corn, and 48 bu. rye.

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres pickles sold, \$225.

6 members in family.

LETTER FROM CLARENCE BROVALD

Babcock, Wisconsin
January 16, 1926.

E. R. Jones
Madison, Wis.

Dear Sir:

In answer to your letter of December 15th which I should have answered long ago, I have been unusually busy as I had about 50 tons of wire grass to bale and haul, besides my regular farm work.

I do not think I will be able to get away to attend the Drainage Convention this year as there is no one around here I feel I could trust with all the chores as I keep no hired man in the winter.

My crops last year were fairly good which consisted of oats, corn, buckwheat, potatoes and $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of beans.

I had 25 acres of oats yielding better than 1000 bu., 13 acres of corn of which two or three acres drowned out in June when we had that wet spell. With this I filled a 12x33 foot silo and shredded 6 double wagon boxes of good corn. In raising this corn I spread a light coat of barn-yard manure and 500 lbs. of 1-8-3 commercial fertilizer, which was not as strong of potash as I wanted, but all I could get at that time, this corn field had not been manured for 13 years.

I have got best results by manuring before corn, raise one crop corn, sow two oats and seed down for two or three years, then manure for corn again, etc.

A little commercial fertilizer for corn sure pays big. Should have said this 500 lbs. I used was for the whole 13 acres. Hay was a poor crop here last year and I do not know why.

I had 25 acres of buckwheat yielding 510 bu. which was the fourth crop of buckwheat on the same ground.

I only raised about enough potatoes for our own use. They were not so good this year. We tried a few string beans this year, selling them to a canning factory and find one can do well with them as a side line.

I believe this drained marsh is productive if handled right with dairy cows, but there are too many people who come here with nothing and who could not make good on the best farm in the state.

Of course as you know these marshes are far from being all