

# GAFFNEY LEDGER Farm Training Sept. 11, 1954 Is Given Boys In 4-H Clubs

(By W. T. Clayton, Assistant  
County Farm Agent.)

In December, 1908, A. L. Easterling, superintendent of education for Marlboro county organized the first boys' corn club in South Carolina. The year 1909 witnessed the organization of similar clubs in six other counties with a total state enrollment of 327 members. From this small beginning has grown the present day boys' 4-H club work.

The first clubs in Cherokee county were called corn clubs. These, under supervision of the county agent, helped show the youngsters how better methods of farming could improve their yields.

Here are some of the earlier reports of 4-H club work taken from the 1930 annual report written by S. C. Stribling:

"Boys 4-H Club work was organized very much as I had planned, with the exception that community clubs were organized instead of one county club, as listed in my plan of work. This was made possible with the help of Dan Lewis, assistant boys club agent, who assisted me in organizing community clubs at Goucher with 21 members and Prof. J. O. Moore as local leader; at Buffalo with 29 members and Prof. W. T. Davidson as local leader; at Asbury with 21 members and M. B. Harris as local leader, and at Ashworth with eight members. The local leaders did splendid work in helping with these clubs. In addition to the community clubs, there were 24 members from various parts of the county who were listed as miscellaneous members, making the total enrollment 103.

"The following demonstrations were begun by these boys: Fattening Class Pig—11; Breeding Class Pig—7; Sow and Litter Class—7; Poultry—25; Peanut—7; Cotton—11; Sweet Potato—5; Corn—18; Baby Beef—2; Bee Club—2; Dairy Calf—12, which gives a total of 113 demonstrations planned. Some of the demonstrations, for various reasons, were not completed, but we have records from 63 members who each completed at least one demonstration.

"A very successful three-days Short Course and encampment for club members was held at Clemson College on the last three days in August; at the same time boys from Union, McCormick, Greenwood and Colleton counties were having their encampment. Sixty-two boys, one club girl and five local leaders made the trip in three school buses and three cars. A very helpful and interesting program for the three days was arranged by the State Club office and the boys certainly enjoyed the encampment and learned many practical lessons from the lectures and demonstrations, and from their visits to the

college farm, dairy, orchard, hog barns, Experiment Station, poultry, and college buildings. Plans are already on foot for a larger number to attend next year."

For obvious reasons we can not give all the yearly records of the 4-H Clubs down through the years. It may be of interest to know that any member who has turned in a completed record has a file card in the agent's office. On this card is listed his name, address, parents' name, projects completed, gross income, and profit or loss. Any recognitions of outstanding accomplishments or offices held are also listed.

Down through the years the annual membership has varied in numbers from 75 to 399. At the present time membership is 315. Some of the first clubs were organized at Beaverdam, White Plains, Goucher, Corinth, Buffalo, Draytonville, Robbs and Cherokee Falls schools. These clubs usually had some teacher in the school to act as a local leader. The extension agents went to each club for monthly meetings. The local leaders then helped the children as much as possible in between. The agent visited as many members as possible during the year, but without the local leader's help a good job of supervision of each child is impossible.

In those early days going to camp at Camp Bob Cooper or Camp Long were regular features of the club program. The state fair was well attended by clubsters, their agents and local leaders. Club members were encouraged to enter their projects and livestock in shows and fairs. It is of interest to note that from 1931 to 1941 the 4-H members average yields of cotton was 556 pounds of lint and this average yield of corn was 37.4 bushels. The average yield of county farmers was 14.2 bushels of corn and 275 pounds of lint. This resulted in corn yields of almost double in size and one-third more in cotton yields. This speaks well for the club members and the leaders and parents who helped them. Some of the earlier projects were cotton, corn, beef and dairy animals, poultry and peanuts. Today we have these in addition to field crops of all types, farm and home electric, tractor maintenance and operation, land judging, dairy and livestock judging, rabbits, farm safety, plant identification, entomology, soil and water conservation, gardening, forestry, wildlife and home beautification and many other projects. Projects vary in size from the grammar school boy's pair of rabbits to the boy with 750 chickens and another who operates a dairy farm, with all its responsibilities, while attending school.

What is a 4-H club member? What are the requirements? What does he do?  
A 4-H club member is a farm youth or in some cases a city boy or girl between the ages of 10 and 21 years of age who attends regular club meetings and in addition to this carries on some project in which he takes a leading part in the work and management and submits a record of the activities, and profit or loss involved in the project.

This type of activity promotes clear thinking, acceptance of responsibility and the recognition of the importance of learning how to work and get along with people.

In addition to individual projects each club elects its own officers and presents monthly programs. In addition to club officers there is a set of officers consisting of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer called the county council which in conjunction with a sub-committee of the county agricultural committee and the extension agents set up goals for the 4-H club each year and make plans for attaining other goals. They include in their plans an annual training meeting whereby local leaders and officers of each individual club have a banquet and receive training on how to carry out their duties as officers and local leaders. These county officers go to camp once each year where they learn all the duties of officers (how to preside, take notes, plan programs, etc.) At this meeting district officers are nominated from this group. The state is composed of 46 counties and is divided into three districts. District officers help determine the policy for their district. State officers are selected from county officers at a meeting of all county officers at one of the camps. This meeting lasts for a week of training and instruction and is called state officers' training camp.

Each year county winners are announced in most every project. These county winners, accompanied by their project records go to a District Round-Up where these records of their projects are compared with winners of the counties. In this manner the first, second and third place winners of the district are named. Cherokee county is in the Piedmont district which is composed of 17 neighboring counties. The district winners then correct their records and submit them for state honors and then the blue ribbon winners at the state contest compete for national honors.

The records show that in 1941 Cherokee had a first place in dairy judging and that this team made a creditable showing in the state contest. In the period 1949 through 1951 Cherokee county placed in the blue ribbon class five times. Max Mintz, who lived near Blacksburg, became the only state winner in 1949. Max has finished Clemson College and plans to teach vocational agriculture.

In 1952 Melvin Dean Rogers won first place for Cherokee county in fitting and showing dairy animals at the Piedmont Interstate Fair held in Spartanburg and was awarded an educational trip to Chicago. In 1953 four records were submitted to district round-up at Camp Long and two became blue ribbon winners. We are particularly proud of our land judging team which placed second in the state land judging contest and of Melvin Dean Rogers who had the highest individual score of all the participants in this event. Other members of the team were Joe Lipscomb, Bobby Scruggs and Jimmy Queen.

Each year all 4-H club members are invited to a Rally Day where each club competes for team honors in track and field events. County officers report on work completed during the year and new officers are elected. Some of the clubs bring a picnic lunch and a holiday atmosphere prevails throughout the day. One of the amazing incidents of the past year was the shattered egos of the boys when it was revealed that one of the girls, Gloria Addis, broad-jumped farther than any boy in the county.

At present we have Grassy Pond, Butler, Ashworth, Macedonia, Draytonville, McKown's Mountain, Blacksburg, New Pleasant, Cherokee Falls, Buffalo, Beaverdam, White Plains, Gaffney High, Corinth, Goucher and Alma Progressive listed as local clubs. In addition to these we have a countywide teen-age club, a beef calf club, dairy club, farm and home electric, tractor operators and land judging club. These clubs are specialized and meet in addition to attending their regular community clubs. In these special clubs the members get a better chance for a more thorough knowledge and training of the project in which they are interested. Local leaders for the past year were: Mrs. Roy Guest, Alma Progressive; Mrs. David Howell, Ashworth; Mrs. Patsy McCraw, Beaverdam; Miss Mary Martin, Blacksburg High; Mrs. John Lipscomb, Buffalo; Mrs. Violet Powell, Butler; Mrs. H. H. Farris, Cherokee Falls; Mrs. M. P. White, Corinth; Mrs. Frank Bagwell, Draytonville; Mrs. J. H. Hall, Goucher; Mrs. Edwin Sarratt, Grassy Pond; Mrs. Laurice Bogan, Macedonia; Mrs. Sarah Mack, McKown's Mountain; H. L. Price, New Pleasant; Willard M. Hayes, White Plains; and J. W. Price, of Grassy Pond.

What is the most unjust thing you can say or do against the 4-H clubs? The typical thing would be to say "I know a person who belonged to the 4-H club and he or she didn't do anything?" That is true in many cases, due to the fact that we can't, and would not if we could, force any child to do anything he or she doesn't want to do. The fact that many join the club who will not contribute to it may spoil a statistical record, but imagine the injustice of an act that would keep any person away who could be helped.

You as parents, interested friends and local leaders can help make this a better program for better boys and girls by giving support and sympathy. Their motto, "To Make the Best Better," cannot be improved upon, and their pledge "I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service and my health to better living for my club, my community and my country" prepares them well for citizenship, parenthood and the spiritual requirement of a Christian American.

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