

# Soil Conservation Wages The War Against Waste

**Editor's Note** This is the first of five articles describing how the Lancaster County Soil Conservation District came into being. The other articles will be printed in following weeks.

Dust storms sweeping topsoil off the Great Plains in the early 1930's blew right into Washington, D.C., and helped awaken the nation to the need for wise land use.

Congressmen looked at the great, swirling dust clouds and

top soil—the foundation for much of her national wealth—down the creeks and rivers.

The dust storms, Hugh Bennett and the stark facts of the depression all helped start America's unique soil conservation program. The story which began with stopping gullies in the South in 1933 and eventually led to the creation of the Lancaster County Soil Conservation District in 1937 is a dramatic one. One emerging fact is clear: soil conservation no longer begins and ends on the farm. It reaches out into the economic life of every urban and suburban community as well.

### Why Soil Conservation?

The plundering of America's natural resources is a familiar story. Our forefathers saw on this continent an inexhaustible source of wealth. They cut and burned the forest and cleared the land for farms. In place of the blanket of trees and grass that sponged up rainfall, they created a patchwork of raw, earthen fields, ignoring the lay of the land.

Farmers mined the soil with little thought for the future. Single-cropping and soil exhaustion caused by ignoring crop rotation are sad chapters in the history of American agriculture. At the same time, plowing square fields up and down hill built a tradition of soil erosion into the farming system. Every plow furrow and cultivator mark channeled a mixture of rain and soil swiftly down the slopes.

In Pennsylvania, taming up and down hill has cost us 50 to 75 per cent of our topsoil through sheet and gully erosion by water. The silt washed from farms has filled countless

stream channels, clogged city water intakes, buried fish spawning beds and filled up reservoirs. Hugh Bennett might say the squandering of our soil resources has truly been a national disgrace.

Every farmer didn't allow uncontrolled runoff to carry his soil seed and fertilizer away. In fact, some of the earliest efforts to fight erosion with strip cropping were made in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, over 100 years ago. Educational agencies encouraged changes in farming practices. But farming habits and the ruggedly individualistic thinking of farmers proved to be tough obstacles. It became obvious that a concentrated fight would have to be waged against soil erosion.

The first major step was the organization of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, operating first in the Interior

Department and later the Department of Agriculture. The first chief was Hugh Bennett. Research began on the causes of erosion and a world-wide search for cures that could be scientifically adapted to American conditions was instituted.

A body of scientific knowledge was developed on the prevention of erosion and the use of engineering knowledge to classify soil capabilities, drain wet lands, improve desirable cover and increase wildlife cover on farms. The big problem then became how to get farmers to utilize this knowledge and remodel their cropping systems.

### The Social Problem

Agricultural leaders tried to find ways of translating this new soil conservation knowledge into action on the farmer's land. Field days were held. (Continued on page 7)

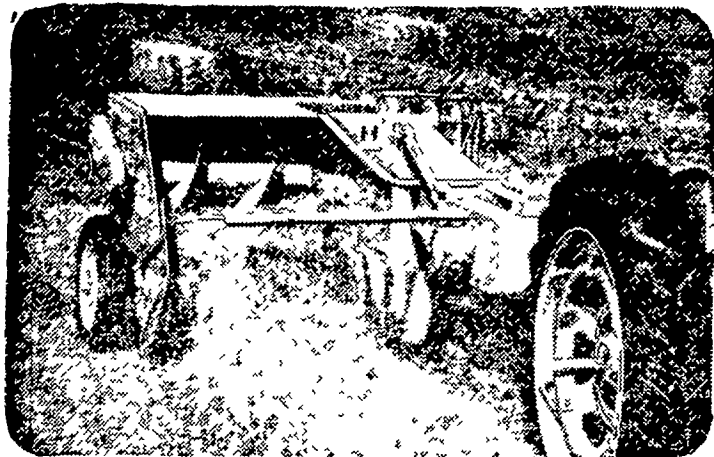


**THAT WALL AGAIN . . .** Dead end is Red end, two West Berlin mothers discover on a stroll in the sunshine, as they reach the huge concrete wall dividing the city.



**BEARS INVESTIGATING . . .** Polar bears prowl across ice and snow of the Norwegian Bay wasteland, not minding the cold at all.

# Call Today . . . to SAVE MORE HAY!



**There's still time to put the extra capacity**

**of the NEW McCORMICK® NO. 46 BALER to work for you.**

- Krotter has less parts and they are chrome plated.
- Ask for a demonstration

**We invite Comparison!**

**International Harvester**  
Sales and Service  
1 PHRYAFA RE 3-2283

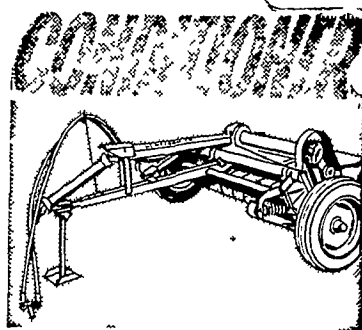
**C. B. Hooper**  
INTERCOURSE  
SO 8-3501



**J. Paul Nolt**  
GAP  
RI 2-4183

**Come in and see the**

**McCORMICK® No. 2 HAY**



**See how you can make better hay..50% FASTER!**

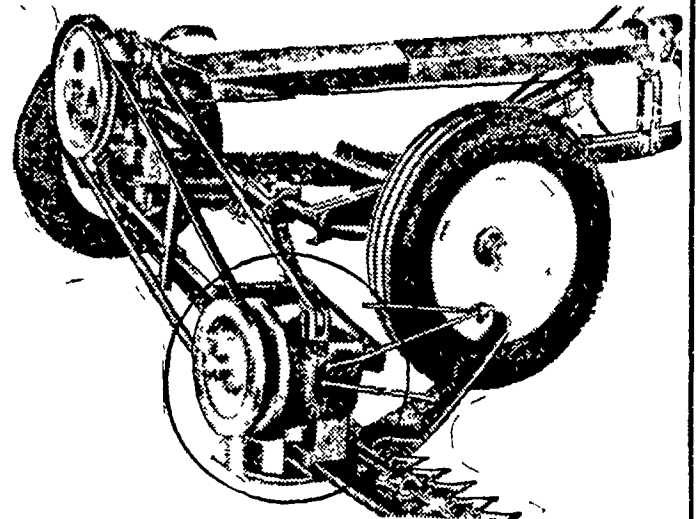
Crush hay stems gently, completely, uniformly—and get 50% faster drying! Exclusive rubber rolls crack entire length of stems . . . give you more nutritious, higher quality hay.

**Kauffman Bros.**  
MOUNTVILLE  
AF 5-9151

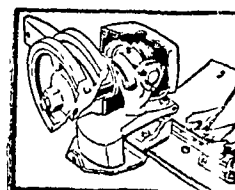
**C. E. Wiley & Son**  
Quarryville - Wakefield  
ST 6-2895

**David Kurtz**  
MORGANTOWN  
AT 6-5771

**Here's why you'll get MORE YEARS of USE from your NEW McCORMICK® "BALANCED HEAD" MOWER**



**McCORMICK No. 100 MOWER**



No pitman, no gears, no connecting rods. Rugged, precise construction and simple design insure long life, trouble-free operation. "Wrist-action" drive is smooth, whisper-quiet.

**with "Wrist-Action" Drive**

Come in . . . let us show you why the new "wrist-action" drive (enclosed) of the new McCormick No. 100 Balanced Head mower will outlast them all! "Wrist-action" drive replaces the conventional mower pitman. There are no gears. Vibration is cut to a minimum. Try this new No. 100 in your toughest mowing. Mow up to 50 acres a day. Trailing or Fast-Hitch models.

7 models — fits all tractors. 2 point and 3 point hitch or standard draw bar with or without hay conditioner.

**Cope & Weaver Co.**  
WILLOW STREET  
EX 3-2824

**J. B. Hostetter & Sons**  
MOUNT JOY  
OL 3-3721