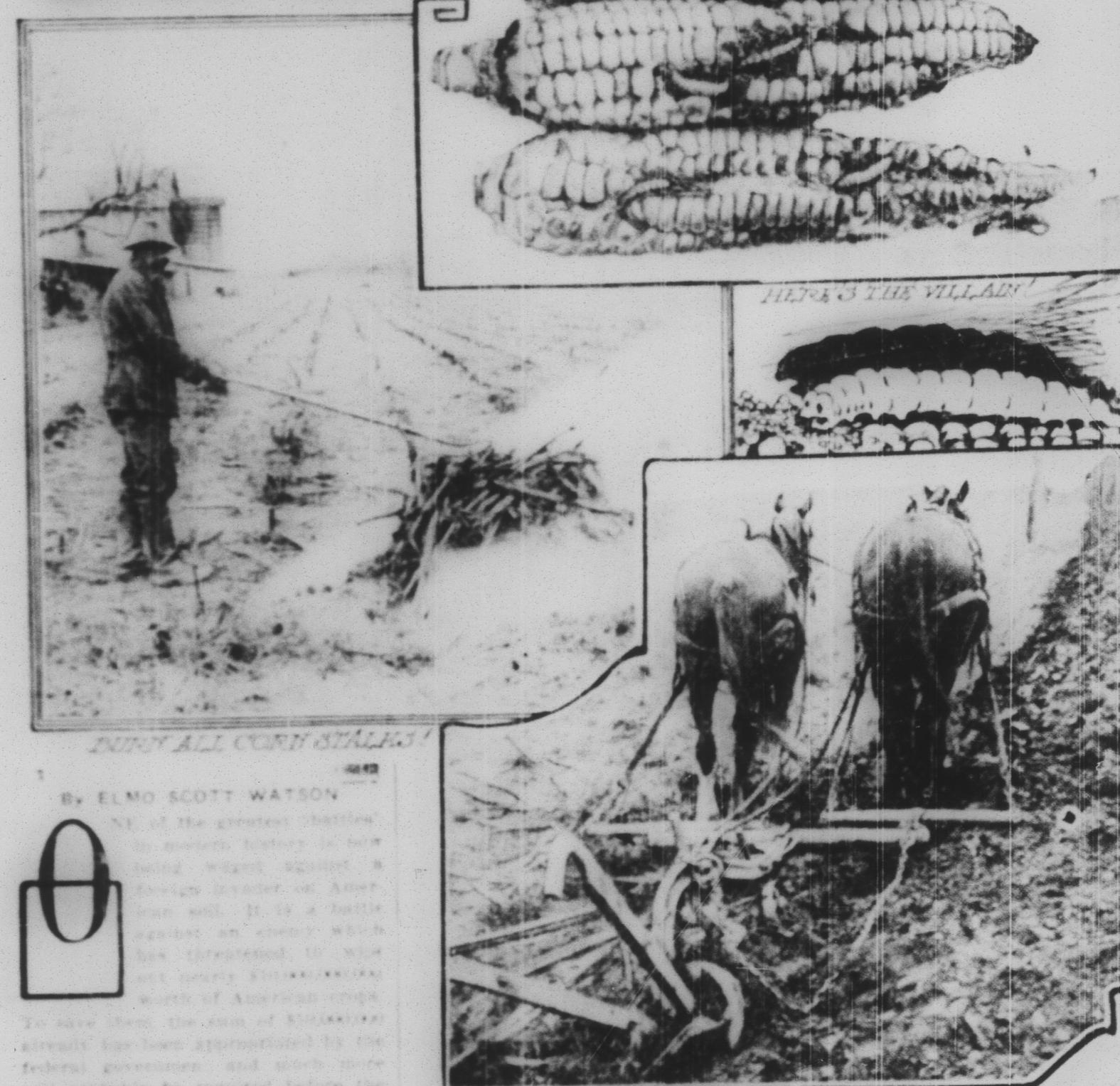


Control the Corn Borer!



DUST ALL CORN STALKS!

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

ONE of the greatest battles in modern times is now being waged against a pestilential insect known as the European corn borer. It is a battle which has been threatened to wage since the first European corn borer was found in the North American crop.

To have been the victim of European insects has been appropriated by the federal government, and much more will probably be required before the fight is ended.

The enemy is the "assassin of the corn field," the "most dangerous enemy of farmers" that has ever appeared in America. This enemy is an alien that first appeared in America and in Canada in 1923. After ravaging the corn fields of that country and at most totally destroying them in the short space of six years, it invaded the country and spread up into the United States. Ohio and Michigan were the first states which it infested and there the losses mounted to as high as 30 per cent of the total crop.

Its present became widely known, the pest had spread into New England, New York, through Pennsylvania as far south as Pittsburgh and into one corner of West Virginia. Then it began to work farther west into Michigan, invaded the northeastern corner of Indiana and within the last year it struck at the heart of America's famous corn belt by appearing in Kankakee county, Illinois. As the result of its operations on an area of 200,000 acres covering 10,000 square miles, it has been infested and if it is controlled, it is predicted that "the entire agricultural map of the world's greatest farm producing area will be changed."

Threat to Crops.

If the corn borer threatened only the corn crop it would be bad enough. But in striking at King Corn, this little insect is a menace also to the very foundations of the dairy, pork, poultry and other farm industries. It is estimated that 80 per cent of the corn is fed to live stock and sold in the form of meat, milk, poultry. Forty per cent of the corn is fed to hogs and 15 per cent to cattle. Last year these hogs were worth \$100,000,000, and cattle \$160,000,000. The value of the poultry was estimated at \$100,000,000 and the dairy products at \$100,000,000. Add to these the value of the corn crop itself, \$2,000,000,000, and it gives the staggering total of \$10,000,000,000 which the European corn borer is threatening to reduce. Of course this does not mean that the corn borer can wipe out of existence that much wealth, but it is a potential danger to it unless the ravages of the pest are checked.

Alarming as the situation has been, there is one ray of light in a recent statement by Secretary Jardine of the United States Department of Agriculture that even though the corn borer might spread over the entire corn belt, by then his department would have developed effective and economical methods of control and the damage would be kept to a minimum.

The Agricultural department has recently completed a survey of the results of the 1923 and 1924 spring control campaign in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Michigan authorized by Congress. Although this survey shows one and a half times as many

borders in 1927 as in 1926, this is only one-half of the number increase in the number of borders in the infected areas and is shown in the estimate of four times as many in 1926 as in 1925. The significance of this is shown in the remainder of Secretary Jardine's statement which reads as follows:

The reduction of the rate of increase in the number of borders this year indicates the effectiveness of the control measures adopted in the recent spring campaign, but these results also show most emphatically that the work is far from done. The department's opinion continues to be that the spread of the borer into the entire corn belt is inevitable and that it is a matter of time before the entire agricultural departments of the states and the state agricultural colleges must adjust their plans.

At the present time the measures adopted in the spring were sufficient to effect the lead the department to believe that serious commercial damage to the nation's two-billion dollar corn crop could be avoided for the next few years.

The results of the 1927 campaign are due in a large measure to the cooperation given by farmers in the infected areas in carrying out the clean-up measures recommended. The department's efforts have resulted in a vigorous action by all farmers in the areas in putting effective control measures into practice in the only immediate way in which commercial damage can be prevented.

These measures include the destruction of all cornstubs, remnants of stalks, and cobs in the fields or near the premises, before the emergence of the caterpillars. The method of holding down the increase in the number of borders has not yet been adopted, but the farming practice generally or seriously readjusted so that the greater part of farm labor can be spared and will become necessary, as has already occurred in Canada since 1923.

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For the sake of safety the clean-up should be completed by May 1, but no later date can be fixed as the plowing practice used. The important thing to remember is that all corn remnants must be disposed of before the corn borer changes to the moth.

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