

# Reclaimed Land to be Soldiers' Heritage

By Robert H. Moulton

Millions of Acres,  
Especially in West and  
South, Available for  
Farm Homes if Prop-  
erly Developed



TO MAKE part of the farm wealth of the nation an assured heritage of the men who fight the nation's war against Germany is the plan of Secretary Lane, who urges a vast reclamation scheme to meet the requirements for returning soldiers after the war.

It is Secretary Lane's belief that the time has come when thought should be given to the preparation of plans for providing opportunity for these men. And because his department has handled similar problems in the past, he has made it his duty to bring the matter to the attention of the president and congress. He points out that every country has found itself face to face with this problem at the close of a great war. From Rome under Caesar to France under Napoleon down even to our own Civil war, the problem arose as to what could be done with the soldiers mustered out of military service.

At the close of the Civil war America faced a somewhat similar situation. But fortunately at that time the public domain offered opportunity to the home-returning soldiers. The great part of the veterans of that war played in developing the West is one of our epics. The homestead law had been signed by President Lincoln in the second year of the war, so that out of our wealth in lands we had farms to offer the military veterans. It was also the era of transcontinental railway construction. It was likewise the period of rapid, yet broad and full, development of towns and communities and states.

To the great number of returning soldiers in the present war land will undoubtedly offer the great and fundamental opportunity. The experience of wars points out the lesson that our service men, because of army life, with its openness and activity, will largely seek out of doors vocations and occupations.

This fact is accepted by the allied European nations. That is why their programs and policies of relocating and readjustment emphasize the opportunities on the land for the returning soldier. The question then is, "What land can be made available for farm homes for our soldiers?"

We have not the bountiful public domains of the sixties and seventies. In a literal sense, for the use of it on a generous scale for soldier farm homes as in the sixties, the public domain is gone. The official figures at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 1917, show that we have unappropriated land in the continental United States to the amount of 230,657,755 acres. It is safe to say that not one-half of this land will ever prove to be cultivable in any sense. So we have no land in any way comparable to that in the public domain when Appomattox came—and men turned Westward with army rifle and roll blanket—to begin life anew.

While we do not have that matchless public domain of '65, we do have millions of acres of undeveloped lands in the Northwest, lake states and South, and also swamp lands in the middle West and South, which can be made available through the proper development. Much of this land can be made suitable for farm homes if properly handled.

But it will require that each type of land be dealt with in its own particular fashion. The arid lands will require water, the cut-over land will require clearing and the swamp land must be drained. Without any of these aids they remain largely No Man's Land. The solution of these problems is no new thing. In the admirable achievement of the reclamation service in reclamation and drainage we have abundant proof of what can be done.

Looking toward the construction of additional projects, Secretary Lane announces that plans and investigations have been under way for some time. A survey and study has been in the course of consummation by the reclamation service on the great Colorado basin. That project, undoubtedly, will appeal to the new spirit of America. It would mean the conquest of an empire in the Southwest. It is believed that more than 8,000,000 acres of arid land could be reclaimed by the completion of the upper and lower Colorado basin projects.

It has been officially estimated that more than 15,000,000 acres of irrigable land now remain in the government's hands. This is the great remaining storehouse of government land for reclamation. Under what policy and program millions of these acres could be reclaimed for future farms and homes remains for legislation to determine.

The amount of swamp and cut-over lands in the United States available for farming is extensive. Just how much there is has never been determined with any degree of accuracy. Practically all of it has passed into private ownership. For that reason, in considering its use, it would be necessary to work out a policy between the private owners and the government unless the land was purchased. It has been estimated that the total area of swamp and overflowed lands in the United States is between 70,000,000 and 80,000,000 acres. Of this amount, about 60,000,000



RECLAIMED LAND IN COLORADO BASIN  
WHERE GOVERNMENT PLANS FARMS  
FOR SOLDIERS

acres can be reclaimed and made profitable for agriculture.

The undeveloped swamp lands lie chiefly in Florida, in the states along the Atlantic and gulf coasts, in the Mississippi delta and in Missouri, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and California.

What amount of land in its natural state unfit for farm homes can be made suitable for cultivation by drainage only through surveys and studies will develop. It is known, however, that authentic figures show more than 15,000,000 acres have been reclaimed for profitable farms, most of which lies in the Mississippi river valley.

The amount of cut-over lands in the United States, of course, it is impossible even in approximation to estimate. These lands, however, lie largely in the south Atlantic and gulf states, lake states and the Northwestern states. A rough estimate of their number is about 200,000,000 acres—that is, of land suitable for agricultural development. Substantially all of this cutover or logged-off land is in private ownership. The failure of this land to be developed is largely due to inadequate method of approach. Unless a new policy of development is worked out in co-operation between the federal government, the states and the individual owners a greater part of it will remain unsettled and uncultivated.

The undeveloped cut-over lands lie chiefly in the Pacific Northwest (particularly in Washington and Oregon), in the lake states (Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin), and in the south Atlantic and gulf coastal states (Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas).

Any plan for the development of land for the returning soldier will come face to face with the fact that a new policy will have to meet the new conditions. The era of free or cheap land in the United States has passed. We must meet the new conditions of developing lands in advance—security must, to a degree, displace speculation.

There are certain tendencies which must be faced frankly in our consideration of a policy for land to the home-coming soldier. First, the drift to farm tendency. The experience of the world shows without question that the happiest people, the best farms and the soundest political condition are found where the farmer owns the home and the farm lands. The growth of this tendency in America shows an increase of 32 per cent for the 20 years between 1890 and 1910.

Second, the drift to urban life. In 1880 of the total population of the United States, 29.5 per cent of our people resided in cities and 70.5 per cent in the country. At the census of 1910, 48.3 per cent resided in cities and 51.7 per cent remained in the country.

It is evident that since the war in Europe there has been a decided increase in the trend toward the city because of industrial conditions. The adoption by the United States of new policies in its land development plans for returning veterans will also contribute to the amelioration of these two dangers of American life.

A plan of land development whereby land is developed in large areas, subdivided into individual farms, then sold to actual, bona fide farmers on a long-time payment basis, has been in force not only in the United States under the reclamation act but also in many other countries for several years. It has proved a complete success. In Denmark, Ireland, New Zealand and the Australian commonwealth it has completely



IRRIGATION PRODUCES FRUIT FARMS LIKE THIS  
ONE IN NORTHWEST

changed the land situation. One of the features of this plan is that holders are aided in improving and cultivating the farm. In a word, there is organized community development.

Its beneficial results have been well described by the Canadian commission which was appointed to investigate its results in New Zealand. There, the commission reported, the farmers had built better houses or remodeled their old ones, brought a larger acreage of land under cultivation that would otherwise have remained lying idle; had bought and urged more labor-saving machinery on the farms and in the houses. They kept more sheep and pigs and had so largely increased the revenue from their farms that they were able to meet the payments on the mortgages and to adopt a higher standard of living and a better one. Throughout the country a higher and better civilization was being evolved; the young men and women who were growing up were happy and contented to remain at home on the farm and found ample time and opportunity for recreation and entertainment of a kind more wholesome and elevating than can be obtained in the cities.

It may be said that this country, outside of Alaska, has no frontier today. Of course, Alaska will still offer opportunity for pioneer life. And, of course, Alaska likewise has yet unknown remarkable agricultural possibilities, but unless we make possible the development of this land by the men who desire a life in that field we will lose a great national opportunity. Furthermore, this is an immediate duty. It will be too late for these things when the war is over, and the work of definite planning should be done now.

The plan outlined by Secretary Lane does not contemplate anything like charity to the soldiers. He is not to be given a bounty. He is not to be made to feel that he is a dependent. On the contrary, he is to continue, in a sense, in the service of the government. Instead of destroying our enemies, he is to develop our resources.

The work that is to be done, other than the planning, should be done by the soldier himself. The dam or irrigation project should be built by him; the canals, ditches, the breaking of the land, and the building of the houses should, under proper direction, be his occupation. He should be allowed to make his own home, cared for while he is doing it, and given an interest in the land, for which he can pay through a long period of years—perhaps 30 or 40 years.

The farms should not be turned over as the prairies were—unbroken, unfenced, without accommodations for men or animals. There should be prepared homes, all of which can be constructed by the men themselves and paid for by them under a system of simple devising by which modern methods of finance will be applied to their needs.

## THE VOICES OF BULLETS.

One hundred steps more would have brought me inside of Cantigny. But I was doomed never to enter Cantigny; just then I went into a shell hole. The reasons that made me drop into the shell hole were, I think, two. For one, there was in the crater a wounded boy, a boy shot through the shoulder, together with three hospital corps men who were starting to dress him, and I went in with some vague idea of offering help.

But also something was after me by that time. I had not noticed it at first; that is, when finally I became aware of it, it was the knowledge that it had been going on for quite a while. Little "zips" were passing by me; small, short whistles, hardly attaining the volume of sound, and gone almost before they were heard—discrete, quick, little zips like the lightest of pencil strokes—zip, zip, zip, and zip.

Now and then, though, just as brief, one reached a higher volume of sound, something like a short cat meow, but more resonant. Pee-a-oo-ow!—thus—a spiteful cry. Some sharpshooter was after me, some ambushed Boche who did not approve of Collier's Weekly. That is really why I dropped into the shell hole, I think—not so very much to help the three hospital corps men.—James Hopper in Collier's.

## ROAD BUILDING

### IDEAL CONVICT ROAD CAMP

Prisoners Worked Without Armed Guards and Without Special Inducements of Reward.

Without a single attempt to escape, an average of 40 negro convicts were maintained for ten months in the Fulton county (Ga.) honor camp conducted under the observation of the United States office of public roads and rural engineering and the United States public health service. This notwithstanding the facts that the convicts were worked without armed guards, without exceptional conditions as to hours of labor, without special rewards or other unusual inducements to good behavior and with the camp located near a trolley line and within 11 miles of the city of Atlanta, from which most of the convicts were sentenced, a condition admitted by all competent authorities to be most unfavorable to the successful operation of an honor camp.

The methods of discipline contrasted sharply with those practiced in the other camps of the county, state and section. So far as can be learned, similar methods never have been applied to any convict camp in the South, and for this reason the success of the system is one of the most striking and important results of the experiment, which appears to demonstrate conclusively that there is little foundation for the belief that negro convicts are amenable only to the discipline of locks, shackles and lash.

In this camp no guard was armed and no convict was shackled; the only building locked night or day was the commissary. Plain gray clothing was substituted for convict stripes and the use of the whip was prohibited. In place of negative measures, order, security and obedience were obtained by the positive measures of attractive food, light, airy quarters, clean and comfortable beds, reasonable, kind treatment and greater privileges. During the day on the work the constant menace of the gun was removed and



Repairing Concrete Road in Georgia.

the men worked under the foreman as free men work. Instead of putting the men "on the chain" immediately after the evening meal, in this camp they were permitted to remain outside the building, reading, smoking, playing quoits or baseball until dark, or in the messroom to enjoy a phonograph which was provided for them. Saturday afternoons, during the summer, were holidays, and the time was devoted to baseball and other games.

Minor infractions of the rules, disobedience and unsatisfactory work were punished by demeriting the offender. When the number of such demerits exceeded the established limit the convict was returned to the county headquarters camp to be placed again under the more rigid discipline of one of the other camps. Attempted escape would have been punished in a similar manner, but it was unnecessary to administer any punishment for this cause during the ten months the camp was under observation.

The full measure of the success of the system of discipline is realized when it is understood that no attempt was made to hold the men by rewards of money or allowances of "good time" greater than those granted to other county convicts. The only measure of this kind was the granting of the customary ration of tobacco. This was used at the rate of about one-quarter pound per convict per week.

The morale of the force was excellent. With few exceptions the men were content with the treatment they received, and freely expressed their appreciation of it, not only in words, but in a willingness to work and a prompt response to orders, such as is observed seldom in convict camps.

## NETWORK OF ROADS NEEDED

Connection Between Centers of Population Embracing Farming Districts Is Favored.

What is needed throughout the land is a network of highways connecting centers of population and embracing the farming districts so that it will be an easy matter to go from farm to town, and from town to town all the year round. Of course, for years to come, we must depend on the common dirt road to help us.

## Helpless as a Baby

Bent Like an Old Man and  
Suffered Terribly—Quickly  
Cured by Doan's.

Jno. Blumke, Jr., 2553 Courtland St., Chicago, Ill., says: "I was down with my back suffering from lumbago. I walked like an old man, all bent over. My back pained terribly and when I moved my arms my back hurt. I finally had to go to bed and just sat sick all over and was helpless as a baby. My kidneys acted too frequently, the secretions were scanty and highly colored. I had terrible pains in the back of my head and I felt drowsy all the time. I finally used Doan's Kidney Pills and soon felt one hundred per cent better. When I finished the one box I was entirely cured. The pains left my back and head and my kidneys acted normally. I am glad to recommend Doan's to other kidney sufferers."



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## SWAMPLAND LIVER PILLS "DO"

It is illegal in Saskatchewan, this year, to destroy straw stacks in accordance with a general farm custom in the Canadian as well as in the United States West. In the past, farmers, after setting aside sufficient straw for their own use, burned the apparently useless remainder. The war is as in town, that there are such things dispelling the belief, in country as well as useless remainders. Straw has become a necessary raw material, and the order prohibiting its destruction may be followed by another forbidding the wholesale burning of autumn leaves, instead of using them for fertilizing purposes.

"Cold in the Head"  
Is an acute attack of Nasal Catarrh. Persons who are subject to frequent "colds in the head" will find that the use of HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE will build up the system, cleanse the blood and render them less liable to colds. Repeated attacks of Acute Catarrh may lead to Chronic Catarrh. HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE is taken internally and acts through the blood on the mucous surfaces of the system. All Druggists Sec. Testimonials Free. \$10.00 for any case of catarrh that HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE will not cure.  
F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio.

Vigilance.  
"Many a man would be proud to stand in your shoes."  
"I don't doubt it," replied Senator Sorghum. "Politics out my way got so fierce for awhile and leather was so expensive that a man might expect to lose his shoes almost as easily as his reputation."

FOR SICK HEADACHE  
TRY THIS MILD AND  
SURE REMEDY. FINE  
FOR BILIOUSNESS

Bilious headaches are due to inactive liver. Stir up your liver, get it working right again, get your bowels regulated, the poisons cleaned out and you will feel like a new person. Do this by taking BOND'S LIVER PILLS, one each night for two or three nights. A large bottle costs only 50c at any drug store. They are mild, safe, never gripe, yet thorough in action.—Adv.

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If neglected, often leads to serious trouble. Safeguard your health, relieve your distress and soothe your irritated throat by taking

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