

TOBACCO GROWING

A Profitable Industry Which Is Extending Rapidly in West Part of Manchester

Manchester is located within six miles of the most fertile tract of tobacco land in the United States. It is said that the tobacco grown in a certain district of South Windsor commands a higher price in the market than any tobacco raised in the United States. While small tracts of tobacco have been raised in Manchester for many years, it is only recently that it has been discovered that much of the land in the western part of the town can be used profitably for that purpose. Whereas ten years ago there was probably less than 40 acres of land in Manchester devoted to the growth of tobacco, it is estimated that fully 300 acres are now used for that crop and the acreage is increasing each year.

This change is due not only to the discovery of the fertility of the soil, but also to the improved methods of growing. Farmers now go into tobacco raising on a scientific basis and use machinery for planting and cultivating. They guard against insect pests by sterilizing the soil in which the young plants are grown and using insecticides on the plant as it is placed in the field. By these and other precautions they hasten the growth of the crop and are less likely to suffer by early frosts than formerly. In curing tobacco also new methods have been adopted. Tobacco growing is more profitable than it formerly was and consequently more and more farmers are making tobacco a specialty.

Hackett Brothers Large Growers

Hackett Brothers are the largest tobacco growers in Manchester. They have become so in the last few years. Born in Wapping, John H. Hackett and Thomas A. Hackett were brought up in the heart of the tobacco raising district. They raised more or less tobacco at the old homestead in Wapping, and 10 years ago came to Manchester, where they bought the 10 acre lot belonging to the Gallup farm. From this period their business has grown very rapidly. In 1906 Hackett Brothers bought the Charles H. Owen property on North Main street. This farm comprised 40 acres and had a large house and stock barn. The new owners remodeled the large barn into a warehouse and for two or three years did a packing and storing business. In the spring of 1913 Hackett Brothers bought 17 ½ acres from Walter W. Cowles. This land adjoined their present farm and all was of the best tobacco land. Last fall they again added 50 acres of the J. B. Barron farm, south of the railroad tracks, and have this spring broken up 20 acres of this on which to grow Connecticut broadleaf. They have a farm of about 120 acres and expect this year to raise between 60 and 65 acres of tobacco. They give steady employment to 15 to 20 hands the year round.

Article in special Homeland Day edition of *The Herald*

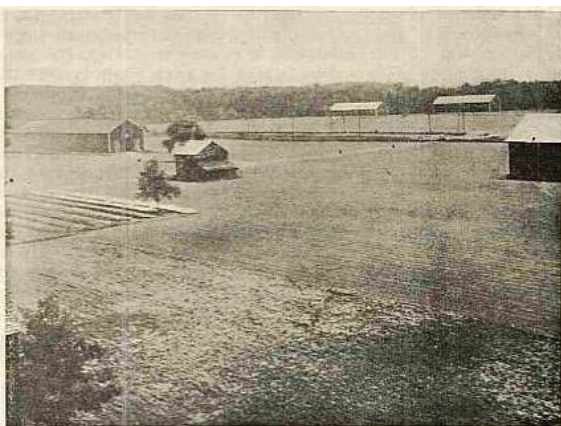


Hackett Brothers not only raise tobacco, but they buy and sell it. Last year the firm handled about 600 cases of Connecticut broadleaf. They dispose of the crops of tobacco they handle both to the manufacturers and to the jobbers. They are known throughout Connecticut as men of good business ability, of sterling character and hard workers. Both men have great confidence in the future of the tobacco industry. They believe that the business is yet in its infancy. Thomas J. Hackett lives in the large Owen house on the farm and his brother, John H., who recently sold the old homestead and farm in Wapping to Everett C. Griswold of Rocky Hill, is with his two sisters making his home temporarily in East Hartford. Mr. Hackett is having plans prepared for a residence east of the present Hackett house on North Main street.

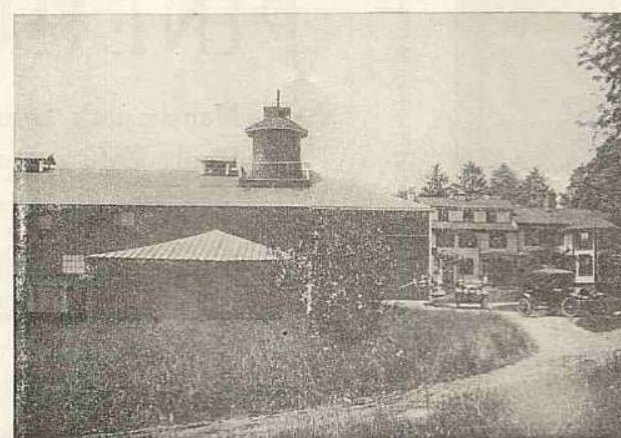
Hackett Brothers believe that the land in Manchester, especially in the Buckland district and south of it, is suitable for tobacco growing. The soil, which is of a light, sandy loam, runs very even and is exceptionally good for Connecticut broadleaf. The fact that the acreage has grown from 40 to 300 acres in 10 years is evidence that the business has a bright future. Of course, in this business as in every other it requires brains, plenty of careful work and some capital to get a start, and with these requirements and a fair amount of good luck prosperity is assured.

Below: two illustrations from *The Herald* article. The entire 8-page special Homeland Day edition is available on the Manchester Historical Society's website www.manchesterhistory.org Go to Reprints and look for Vintage Reprints. "Homeland Day 1914" is near the top of the list of vintage reprints. Thank you to Maureen Hevey for transcribing – Maureen notes that her father worked for Hackett's in the 1940s.

Webmaster's note: Capitalization style was different in 1914 – the word "street" was not capitalized with the street's name as we would today, e.g. North Main street. Also, there's a discrepancy in the middle initial of Thomas Hackett's name, which has been left in this transcription as is.



A Portion of the Hackett Plantation Showing Four of the Eleven Large Tobacco Sheds



The Hackett Residence and Warehouse