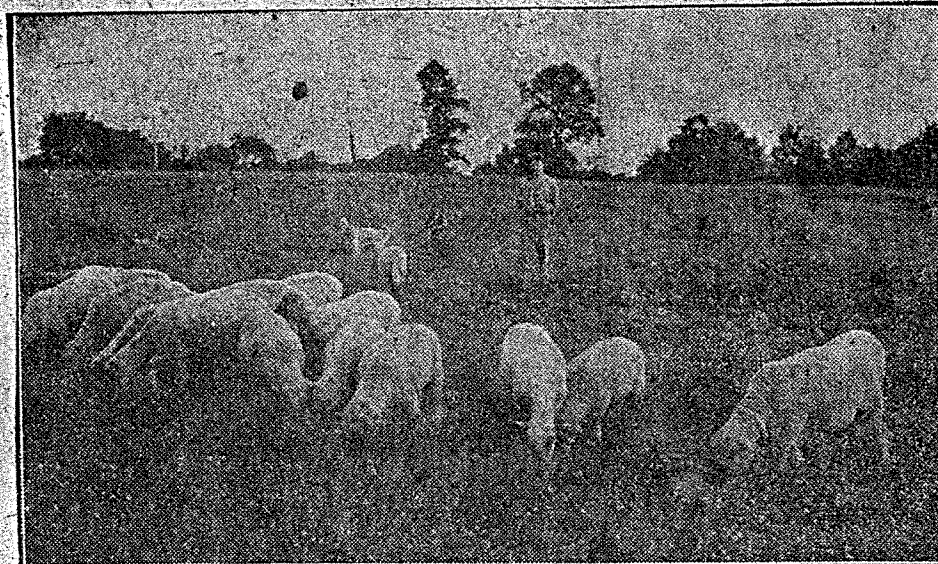


CONNECTICUT FARMS CAN BE RECLAIMED THROUGH SHEEP

Does farming pay? Ask Stanley H. Downs of Bethany, who is probably the youngest farmer in Connecticut and certainly the youngest member of his class at Storrs Agricultural college from which he will be graduated this year. Stanley is one of the few 17-year-old arm lads of the state who have decided to stay on the land and let the city ribbon counters take care of themselves. So far he has justified his faith in the productiveness of a New England farm by raising and selling 150 sheep, having their wool woven into cloth which is sought by people who want real material in their suits, and by beginning to develop a herd of Jersey cows to produce grade A milk.

"If a man sticks to his job and is interested in it he can make anything profitable," said his youthful farmer, caught the other day on his return from a hunting trip. "I think that a farm will pay as well as anything else if it is developed in the right way. This place has certainly helped me so far. It bought me my first sheep and cows and it is putting me through college. Of course, it must be remembered that I started in with a big advan-

Stanley H. Downes, 17-Year-Old Bethany Farmer Wears Clothing Made From the Wool of His Own Sheep—Market for Connecticut Grown Wool Steadily Growing and Association Is Formed to Weave Cloth Within the State—Hard Work the Only Requisite for Success.



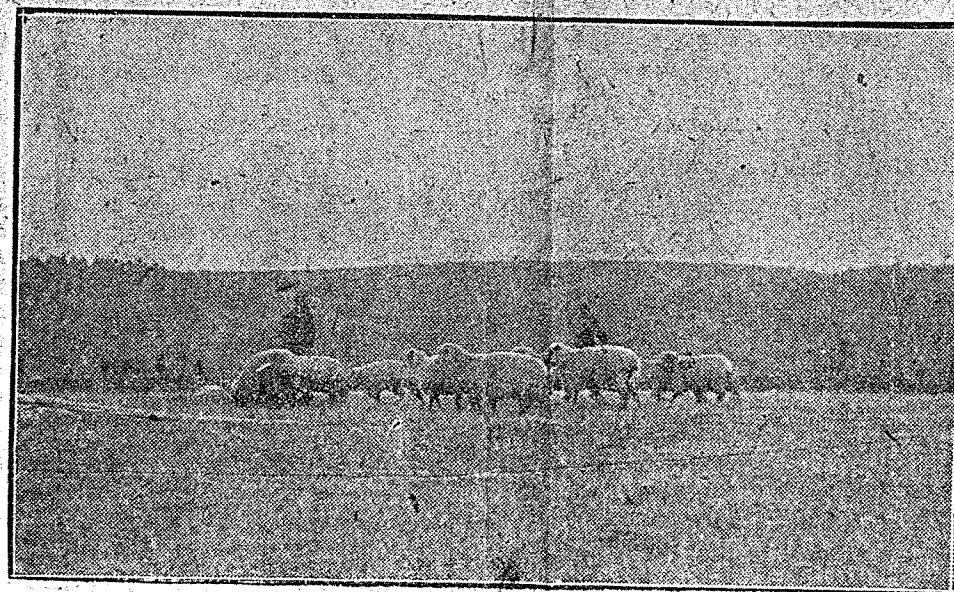
Stanley Downs standing with part of his flock of sheep.



Stanley Downs and his father with two of their prize cattle.

tage. My father is a farmer. He owns this farm and another also in Bethany which he has been developing for years. This farm has 138 acres and our pastures are constantly improving. From 1918 to 1922 we bought from \$200 to \$900 worth of feed a year. Up to August of this year we haven't had to buy any. I had the land, the feed, the barns and sheds to start with. A fellow who would have to buy all this equipment would find farming pretty hard sledding and he wouldn't see results as soon as I have."

Although Stanley Downs has been a hustler since he was a small boy going in for raising banties, rabbits, pigeons, chickens and other small animals which are the delight of the farm boy, it was not until 1918 when he joined the New Haven Sheep club that he went in seriously for stock farming, starting in in that year to raise sheep. He began with four ewes which he bought with money earned by berrying and carefully saved for several summers to be invested in some such project. In 1919 Stanley bought two pure bred Shropshire ewes and a Shropshire ram. From this start he has raised 12 pure bred lambs. At the beginning of the year, Stanley Downs had 34 sheep in his flock but he has sold them so rapidly that he now has only about 14. Since 1918 he has sold altogether about 150 some for wool, some for



Some of the sheep from which Stanley Downs has procured enough wool to go into the finished woollen goods business.

pets and some for meat.

"I let my father butcher the lambs," he said, "and he always waits until I go away from the farm before he does it. I couldn't kill one. I think too much of them. And of course I

never eat lamb or mutton."

Stanley says that he has quite a demand for lambs for children's pets and he would not be surprised if they should supplant puppies and kittens in children's affections. They are

gentle, playful, and never cross. One never needs to fear that they will scratch a small nose or bite a too affectionate hand. Moreover, they are most successful lawn mowers and the fond father who buys one not only has the pleasure of seeing the pretty picture of his little Mary with her lamb at play but he can sit on the porch after supper and watch the lamb do his work while his neighbors clatter the mower over their front lawns. According to Stanley, a number of people buy a pair of lambs for just this purpose or to add a picturesque touch to a large estate.

"I know what a satisfactory pet a lamb is because I had one myself when I was a kid," he said. "When I passed out of the pigeon and rabbit raising stage a neighbor gave me a lamb. She weighed four pounds and a half when I got her and I brought her up on a bottle. She grew so tame that she followed me around like a dog. When I went for the cows she trotted along after me and stood with her front feet on my knees while I milked. But when I began to get other sheep in she got so jealous that she'd try to drive them all away or scatter them when they went out to pasture. Old sheep owners told me that she'd do that if she got too tame."

As Stanley talked, his sheep, heavy with their rapidly greying wool, wandered over the

broad meadow which overlooks some of most beautiful Bethany country unconscious of several children scrambling up and down haystack or an officious collie which had pointed himself their guardian. Their coal wool represented much revenue to this youthful farmer who has his wool woven into cloth and blankets in Central Village where the New Haven County Sheep club has its headquarters. Stanley says that he gets an average of 12 pounds of wool a year from each sheep which is an excellent return, considering the little care sheep require. There has been no agitation among farm organizations lately to encourage Connecticut farmers to market raw wool for cloth and blankets because selling it this way, they receive more than market price. In the past two years as much as 90 cents or \$1 a pound has been given for wool marketed in this way. Stanley, however, sends his wool to be woven into cloth and has just received his bolts from this year's crop. He has 48 yards of 56 inch cloth in four or four attractive patterns which is being bought in suit lengths by men and women who recognize its warmth and wearing quality. The entire Downs family, father, mother, Stanley and his brother, who is also a farmer and a student at Storrs, has just been fitted out with suits grown on Stanley's sheep and thus the New England farm of early Colonial days is coming into its own again.

Stanley says that he is about finished with sheep now and is considering selling off the remainder of his herd and going in for Jersey cows when he graduates. He already has a registered Jersey bull which was given to him at a recent Springfield fair and a registered Jersey cow which he bought himself with sheep money. He has already raised one and plans to go in more extensively for Jersey breeding. His stock also includes Jersey steers which have been exhibited at several of the large fairs.

Stanley has won a great many ribbons and money prizes for his sheep and also for steers at Springfield, Charter Oak, East Hartford, Guilford and other large fairs, and these successes have helped in meeting his educational expenses.

This boy who is proving that it is possible to reclaim Connecticut farms has achieved success without hard work. As a small boy he earned money berrying and various other ways to buy his first sheep. When he entered Storrs in 1921 he worked various farms to pay his way before he got to the point where he could earn money with his flock. He plans, on graduating, to return to his father's Bethany farm and begin to develop a Jersey herd. His brother will probably take on another farm and go in for chicken raising.

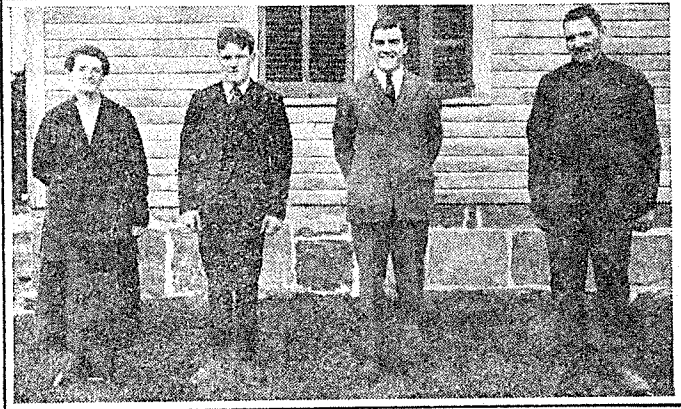


Stanley Downs, young Bethany Shepherd and his assistant shepherd who takes active direction over the flock.

Photographs by U. S. Department of Agriculture

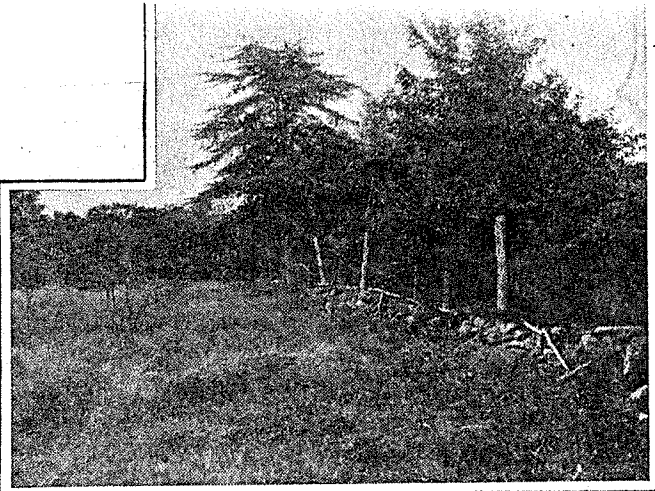
Captions by George M. Rommel

STANLEY H. DOWNS of Bethany, Connecticut, joined the New Haven County Sheep Club in 1918. His father is a farmer and teamster, and Stanley has always been a hustler. The illustration shows what he has done on the farm since he joined the sheep club. The fields where he keeps his sheep were all like the thicket on the right side and in the background of the picture. Stanley cut the brush, burned it, and turned in the sheep. Now see the pasture he has. The pastures on the farm are constantly improving and more feed is being produced every year. From 1918 to 1922 the Downs farm bought from \$200 to \$900 worth of feed each year; up to August, 1923, no feed had been bought.



BY HAVING their wool manufactured into blankets and cloth, Connecticut sheep farmers receive more than the market price for raw wool. There have been some instances during the past two years where as much as 90 cents to \$1 per pound has been realized from wool marketed in this way. Stanley Downs is one of those who have had their wool manufactured into cloth. Here we see the Downs family, all wearing suits made from cloth which was woven out of wool from Stanley's sheep. Stanley stands next to his mother. It's his father's first tailor-made suit, and the old man is as proud as Punch.

LOUISA SCHLAGEL, North Guilford, Connecticut, and one of her lambs. Louisa works in a mill during the mornings and looks after her sheep in the afternoon. She went into the sheep club in 1918 with one lamb, and now owns a flock of fifteen. The little farm where she lives will support thirty sheep, but Louisa says that she does not intend to stop until she has a flock of one hundred head. She is the best junior sheep judge in Connecticut, and has won every sheep-judging contest that she has been in. We will bet on Louisa to realize her ambition.



STANLEY started his flock in 1918 with five ewes. Now he has thirty-four. In 1919 he bought two purebred Shropshire ewes and a Shropshire ram. He has raised twelve purebred lambs from this start as a breeder. He entered the Connecticut Agricultural College in 1921. He has made enough money from his sheep to pay his way through one year of college. He and his sheep were part of the demonstration at Camp Vail during the Eastern States Exposition in September. What do you think of his ability to select a good ram? Stanley plans to carry his flock at its present number. He will also develop a Jersey herd to produce Grade A milk.



WHAT sheep have done to poison ivy on Joe Benning's farm in New Haven County, Connecticut. Opposite sides of the same fence. Before the sheep started in, the side of the fence shown in the picture at the right looked just like that shown in the picture at the left. Joe is an old sheepman who saw what the boys and girls were doing in the sheep club; he was too old to join the club, but he went back into sheep with twelve ewes. Now he has eighty. He is transforming a brushy waste into good pasture ground by hard work and his sheep.

