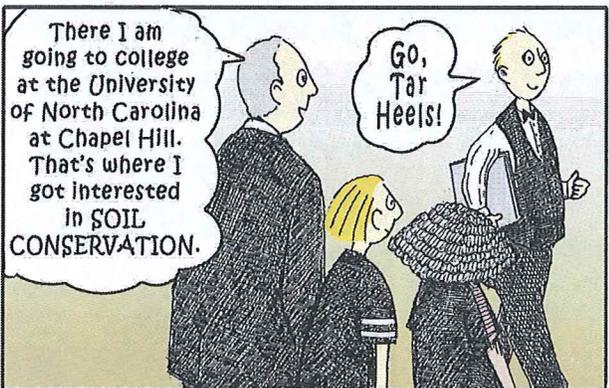


Soil contains most of the important nutrients that plants need to grow. Plants are what feeds both people and animals. That's how the nutrients in soil get to be the nutrients in us!



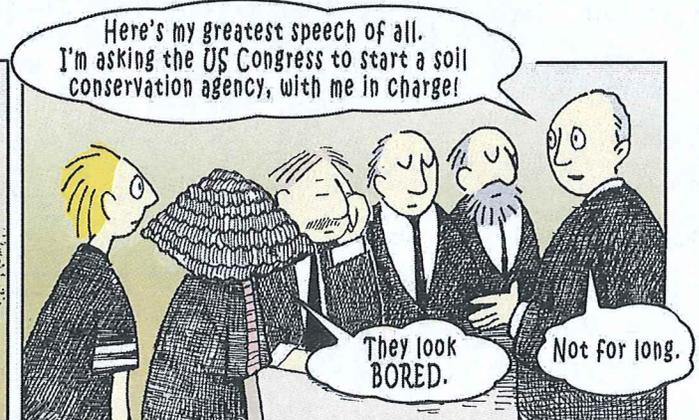
• Soil conservation is about using the soil without using it up.



• Erosion happens when wind and water slowly wear away the soil.



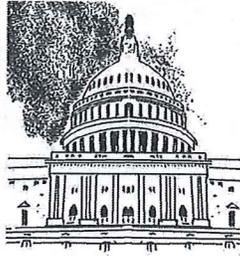
• A dust storm is windy air filled with dry, tiny bits of soil.



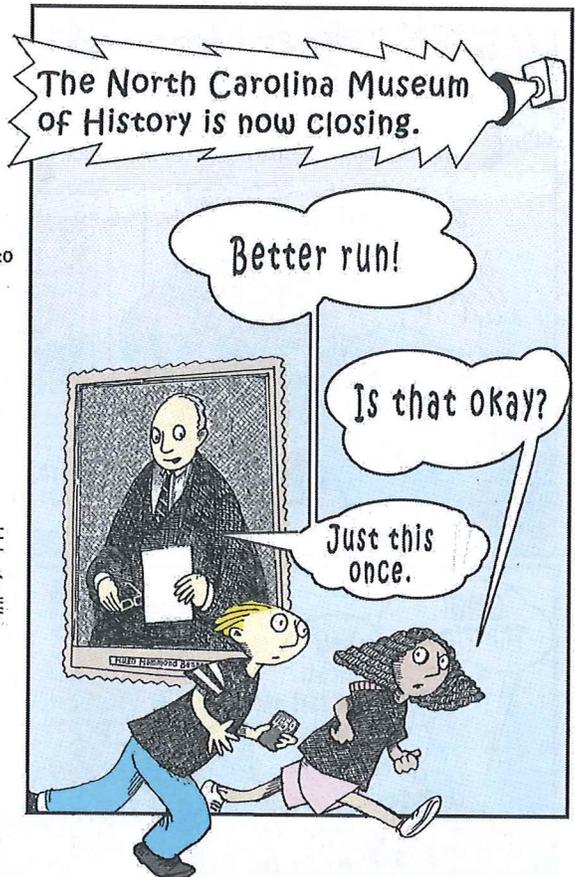
© Tar Heel Junior Historian, Fall 2015.



Bennett knew the storm was coming that day, and he timed his speech to end just as it arrived in Washington, DC.



The Soil Conservation Service would help farmers all across the country learn about taking better care of the soil that feeds us all.



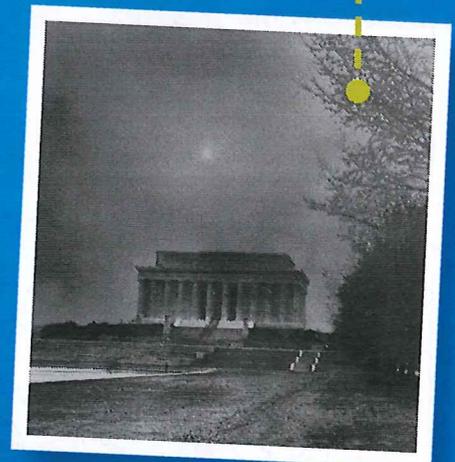
Hugh Hammond Bennett (1881–1960).
Museum collection, image courtesy of the
North Carolina Museum of History.

Hugh Hammond Bennett: The Father of Soil Conservation

Hugh Hammond Bennett grew up on a cotton farm near Wadesboro, in Anson County. He founded the Soil Conservation Service and served as director from 1936 until 1951. Known as “the Chief” and “Big Hugh,” Bennett had an outgoing personality and a dramatic speaking style. And that helped him get his ideas across—

whether talking to farmers or members of Congress. This great Tar Heel native changed how Americans thought about soil conservation, and he helped thousands of farmers learn new methods of protecting our soil.

Upon his retirement in 1951, *The Raleigh News & Observer* predicted that “Hugh Bennett of Wadesboro will be recognized as the most important North Carolinian of this generation.”



Researchers believe this photo of the Lincoln Memorial, engulfed in a dust cloud blown in from the Midwest, was taken on March 21, 1935—the same day that Bennett performed his famous feather-duster show-and-tell for Congress. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.