A Poem From the Past

Al Klingebiel\(^1\) recently came across a poem that was written by one of his “trainees” (conservation aid from Wisconsin) while he attended the La Crosse Training School. Klingebiel felt that many soil scientists would enjoy and appreciate the poem.

Klingebiel, former SCS Director for Soil Survey Interpretations was the head of a training school for all new SCS professional employees in the North Central region (eight states) from 1941 to 1946. All returning World War II vets were also sent to the school. The school lasted 6 weeks and covered topics from orientation, engineering, biology and wildlife, economics, forestry, and soil survey, to actually planning a farm. Everyone was required to describe a soil and to make a soil map. Half the time was spent in lectures and half in the field. Instructors were the head technical men from the Regional Office who spent several days each training period at the training center. The following poem probably represents the feeling of many of the trainees. The poem was written June 14, 1944.

A Little Song Entitled, “Fayette, Here I Come”

Al Lattimer\(^2\)

\[\text{Sand and silt and clay and loam,}
\text{In fact, everything in sight,}
\text{I map 'em in the daytime,}
\text{And dream of 'em at night.}
\]

\[\text{I trudge my tired, hopeless way}
\text{With an Abney and an auger,}
\text{I pause to read a roadside sign}
\text{That says, “Old Style Lager.”}
\]

\[\text{Up and down the hills I tramp}
\text{In search of silt and loam,}
\text{My back is lame from boring holes,}
\text{And I'm no good at home.}
\]

\[\text{I may not know the type of soil,}
\text{And many times I've cussed,}
\text{So I draw the lines where I think they go,}
\text{And then in God I trust.}
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