

**MARTIN WRIGHT AND  
ROBERT LYNN DRAPER  
WERE 1960 STATE REPRESENTATIVES**

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Putnam County Soil Conservation District

Annual Report for 2009

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“Way Back When”

*The following was published in the Putnam County Soil Conservation District’s 1960 annual report.*

One hundred and four of the nation’s outstanding farmers and ranchers have just returned to their homes after collecting their reward for being named national soil conservation champions for their respective states.



The men are winners of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company’s 13<sup>th</sup> annual Soil Conservation Awards Program covering the 1959-60 fiscal year. The grand award for each was a vacation trip by air to the Wigwam, a guest resort on Goodyear Farms, Litchfield Park, Arizona.

Each winner was named at the state level by a board of impartial judges selected from among leading agriculturalists in 51 competing units covering every continental state and Puerto Rico.

(Pictured: Martin Wright Supervisor from Putnam County Soil Conservation District and Robert Lynn Draper, Outstanding Farmers for Tennessee, in 1960 at Goodyear ranch in Arizona picking oranges).

The soil awards program is designed to increase good soil conservation practices. Grand prizes are awarded to soil conservation districts that are considered outstanding for the year in regular soil conservation work.

The winning district in each competing area sends the member of its governing body who has worked the hardest and accomplished most. This supervisor is accompanied on the vacation outing by the district’s top cooperation farmer or rancher.

While enjoying Arizona’s sunshine and desert air, the 104 winners inspected the state’s conservation activities and irrigation farming on Goodyear’s 14,000-acre model farm near Phoenix. Entertainment for the guest included swimming, desert tours, golfing, a visit to Phoenix and use of recreational facilities of the resort.

Goodyear’s soil conservation awards program has provided grand award vacation trips for more than 1,000 of the nation’s leading conservationists since it began in 1947.

On December 23, 1960 Mr. Robert Draper presented the SCD board with pictures he had taken while at the Goodyear Ranch in Phoenix, Arizona, with his explanation following each picture.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

By Kathy Tilton – SCD Office Manager

After finding this bit of history in my archives I was impressed to dig a little deeper and find out just what was going on in Putnam County that got the Soil Conservation District and Robert Lynn Draper recognized by the state of Tennessee. As it turns out there was a lot going on that influenced the way that landowners in Putnam County treated their lands to our present time and into the future.

Putnam County's SCD board of supervisors had laid out a program of work that included setting goals in basic farm conservation plans, old plans to be revised, strip cropping, farm ponds, tree planting, contour farming, and pasture seeding. They also wanted to promote roadbank stabilization and Soil Stewardship week, plan conservation education and address watersheds and last but not least hire a secretary for the district.



(Pictured: Robert and Christine (Boatman) Draper).

They were successful in all parts of their program except the hiring of a permanent secretary at that time due to shortages in the county's budget. That goal was finally achieved in 1962 with the hiring of Henrietta Clouse (now Williams). The District's efforts were recognized and in the 1959-1960 fiscal year the Goodyear Soil Conservation Award was presented to "The Putnam Soil

Conservation District in Recognition of Exceptional Service" to become the state winner for 1960. **Martin Wright**, a Putnam County Supervisor on the board was chosen to attend the meeting and accept the award on behalf of the District.

As farmers across Putnam County also rose to the challenge, one in particular found himself being honored for his conservation efforts. **Robert Lynn Draper**, was building his herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle and maintaining a 510 acre farm on Dodson Branch Road north of Cookeville. He was spending much of his time planting and maintaining good pasture management and had won the local SCD pasture award in Putnam County.

Draper was always open to learning more about how to make his operation more productive, so he asked the Soil Conservation Service, (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service) to survey his land and



point out ideas that would reduce soil erosion, protect the water supply and yield better ground cover. The conservationists sat down with him and drew up a long range plan. This plan included the installation of many conservation practices such as conservation cropping systems, rotational grazing, grassed waterway construction, tree planting and timber stand improvement to name a few.

(Pictured: Robert and Christine Draper along side the first Ford – 861 diesel

tractor in Putnam County which they purchased in 1958. It still runs today and was driven out of the barn for this picture).

The results on his farm were a series of ponds which served several purposes. Some slowed down running water and prevented gullies from eroding while others served his cattle with drinking water. A stream which ran the length of the farm was blocked with debris which often forced the steam out of its banks,

causing serious stream bank erosion and damage to adjoining fields where it eroded away good earth. The blockages were cleared out so that the stream ran in a clear channel and was much less able to jump its banks.

As Robert took the time and patience in carrying out this long range plan he began to reap the rewards in all areas of his production as well as in restoring the natural resources on his land. The benefits of his best management practices did not go unnoticed and in 1959 along with the Pasture Award he also received the Master Conservation Award at the annual Putnam County SCD banquet. The Goodyear Awards Program also recognized his conservation efforts and in 1960 he was named Goodyear's Tennessee Farmer of the Year, earning him a trip to Arizona for the award's presentation.

**Robert Lynn Draper** had learned the value and rewards of being a good steward of the land and in 1962 became a member of the SCD board. He spent 31 years on the board and attended conservation meetings throughout the state so he could bring back what he learned to help local landowners while still maintaining his own farm.

Today the Putnam County Soil Conservation District still partners with the NRCS to assist local landowners in learning best management practices to help in protecting our natural resources.

**Robert and his wife Christine** still live on the family farm and have been successful in maintaining the good earth. His life's example is written on the landscape of his farm for generations to enjoy and benefit from. Robert and Christine's family include a **daughter Lynn Draper Dudley and her two children, Erin Patteson and Weston Dudley and also a daughter Mary Anne Draper Rush and her daughter Brittany Helton**, who are very proud of their father and grandfather.

His work on behalf of soil and water conservation has helped make Putnam County the beautiful, productive place that it is. He sets an example for others to follow, and while his presence at District meetings is missed, his legacy has continued.

Thank you Robert Lynn Draper for your contribution to conservation in Putnam County and to Tennessee. Your commitment to the wise use of natural resources has left a permanent impact on the land and a special place in our hearts for a man who has served Putnam County with true dedication.

\*Read more about Putnam County, TN at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>

**Source:** Draper Families in America by Mrs. Ethel Nichols Anderson, pg. 313.

**Howard Young Draper**, born 8 September 1886, near Smyrna, Putnam Co., TN; (Farmer and Lumberman; Route 3, Cookeville, TN); married 25 December 1910, Cookeville, TN, **Adelia Lynn**, born 14 October 1889, Blackburn's Fork, Jackson Co., TN; (Daughter of **Thomas and Elretta Terry Lynn**). Howard Young Draper, s/o **Oliver Newton Draper & Mary Ollie Cummins**.

Children:

1. **Willie Howard Draper**, born 1 September 1916, near Smyrna, Putnam Co., TN; (Instructor of Business, Central High School, Cookeville, TN. Resides at 829 North Jefferson Ave., Cookeville, TN); married 1 September 1938; **David Charles Huddleston** "Dave," born 15 July 1911, Algood, TN; (Teacher of Vocational Agriculture, Central High School, Cookeville, Former Superintendent of Putnam Country Schools, Cookeville, TN. Son of Charles Marion and Cora Dowell Huddleston).

Child: **Anne Howard Huddleston**, born 25 February 1948, Cookeville, TN.

2. **Robert Lynn Draper**, born 21 June 1918, near Smyrna, Putnam Co., TN; (Farmer; Route 3, Cookeville, TN); married 31 August 1952, Cookeville, TN; **Hallie Christine Boatman**, born 13 July 1927, Mayland, TN.

Children:

**Adelia Lynn Draper**, born 29 August 1955, Cookeville, TN.

**Mary Anne Draper**, born 27 May 1958, Cookeville, TN.

**Willie Howard (Draper) Huddleston Obt.**



**COOKEVILLE** -- Funeral services for **Willie Howard Draper Huddleston**, 85, of Cookeville, will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 23, at Collegese Church of Christ. Burial will be in Smyrna Cemetery.

The family will receive friends from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, March 22, at Hooper & Huddleston Funeral Home; and from noon until 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 23, at the church.

Mrs. Huddleston died on Wednesday, March 20, 2002, at Cookeville Regional Medical Center.

**She was born on Sept. 1, 1916, in Putnam County to the late Howard Young and Adelia Lynn Draper.** Mrs. Huddleston was a retired teacher with 35 years at all levels, including Cookeville High School and Tennessee Tech. She was a charter member of Collegese Church of Christ.

Mrs. Huddleston was active in Cookeville Book Lovers Club, Delta Kappa Gamma, **Old Walton Road DAR**, and a charter member of the Upper Cumberland Genealogical Society.

She received her bachelor and masters degrees from TTU. **She was a descendant of the pioneer families, Lynns and Drapers of Putnam and Jackson Counties. Mrs. Huddleston was one of the compilers of the book "Draper Families In America."**

Her family includes a daughter and son-in-law, Anne and Retired U.S. Army Colonel Steven F. Rausch of Cookeville; a **brother, Robert Lynn Draper** of Cookeville; two grandsons, Andrew Draper Rausch of Fulton County, Ga., and Matthew David Rausch of Knoxville.

In addition to her parents, she was **preceded in death by her husband, David Charles Huddleston**, who died on June 3, 1985.

Pallbearers will be Andrew and Matthew Rausch, David Cummins, Charles Pardue, H.S. Barnes and Michael O'Mara.

Honorary pallbearers will be Tommy Lynn, Ross Compton, Dr. Carl Hollman and Oliver Anderson.

Bro. Kelly Campbell will officiate at the services.

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\*See Thomas Draper, Related Families at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>