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THE ALASKAN AGRICULTURIST

25¢

Published in the interests of Alaska's Modern Pioneers

Summer 1953

In This Issue:

Building a Log Home

KENI's Ruth Briggs

Making an Alaskan Lawn

Front Cover

.ront cover emphasizing sum- .ication time. The gals, Marge and Linda Gordan, the lake, Lake Nancy, Photographer Viola McMillen.

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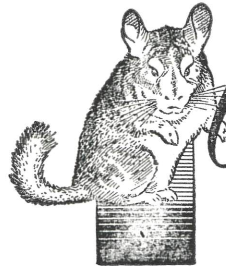

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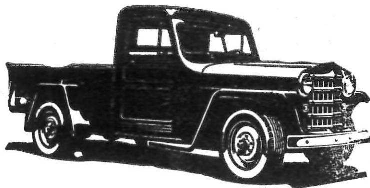

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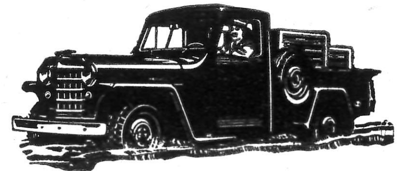

THE ALASKAN AGRICULTURIST

Published Quarterly in the interests of Alaska's Modern Pioneers

COVER: Vacation Time — Photo by Viola McMillen

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ED BALDWIN, Editor—1314 I Street, Anchorage.
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KENI's Remarkable Ruth Briggs

By Viola McMillen

Ruth Briggs says, "Find a successful woman, and you'll find one who loves her work." Ruth readily and happily admits she loves hers.

But what is Ruth's work? Is it wife, homemaker, mother, homesteader, business woman, civic or social leader? It is not only one, but all of these, and in each Ruth is an outstanding success.

How Ruth finds the time to be first vice-president of the Anchorage Woman's Club, to keep up her activities in the Community Chorus, Concert Association, Soroptimist Club, Anchor Homemakers Club, P-TA, Civil Defense and do genuine justice to her radio program and family is something her listeners would like to know. When asked, she says she has a system. Every member of her family does his or her share of the household chores.

Not only Ruth, but each of her children and her husband, too, belong to various clubs and activities, including church every Sunday. Their family motto is "Work together, play together, and pray together."

RUTH BRIGGS

Everyone who has listened to Bard Melton chide Ruth about the broad "a's" of her "half" and "can't" knows that she is a New Englander, from Somerville, Massachusetts. Her first step west was Iowa, to Graceland Junior College at Lamoni, where she met Dale Briggs. They were married, and their four children were born in Kansas where they had settled on the Brigg's family farm. But sometime along about 1944 the Alaska "bug" bit them, and Dale came to Alaska.

Ruth did not plan a career in radio, but when she embarked on an Army transport to join Dale, who had been inducted at Fort Richardson, Alaska, she made her second step westward, and, unknowingly, toward just that.

After Dale was out of the Army they moved to their homestead on Eagle River, and became neighbors of Frank Brink, program director for radio station KENI. Charlotte Wells, who had begun "Woman to Woman," was leaving, and Mr. Brink urged Ruth to audition for the program. Of course Ruth was successful, and she began her radio duties in September, 1949. Since then she has made over 1,300 broadcasts.

Each week-day morning at 10:30 some several thousand radios are tuned to KENI. Some several thousand housewives are listening to "Ruth Briggs." Few of her fans say they listen to "Woman to Woman," the official title of the program. That proves it is the woman who makes the program, but woman to woman is exactly what Ruth makes of it. With her warm-hearted friendliness and honest sincerity she creates a personal bond between herself and each listener. Her charming personality and exceptional understanding, of which she gives so freely, are born of an appreciation of good music, art, and poetry, a love of humanity, an awareness of current topics, and a generous sharing of her time and way of life.

The success of the program hinges on this personality and understanding together with Ruth's versatility, and on the fact that she herself is a homesteader. She speaks the language of her many homesteader fans, as well as that of her fans from other walks of life. It is this "speaking of the language," and her profound and sympathetic insight into life and living which have so endeared Ruth to all her fans.

The "Woman to Woman" recipe file includes well over one thousand recipies which represents more than $5,000 given in prizes.

Interviews have become an important daily event of the program. The information given to the public by interviews with such persons as Lt. Col. Sam Ward, of the Air National Guard, Dr. Charles Anderson, Chief of Mental Health of the Alaska Department of Health, and Mrs. Norman Lange, of Mountain View who recently, in the interests of Civil Defense, witnessed an atom explosion in Nevada, proclaims the real worth of this feature.

Appeals for assistance of any kind on "Woman to Woman" bring quick and ready responses. A lady who sent a Care package to Norway found herself with a letter of thanks —written in Norwegian.

She wrote to Ruth, and shortly after Ruth presented the problem to her radio audience someone kindly offered to translate the letter. In an emergency, the wife of a KENI staff member needed a blood transfusion. a plea was put on the air, and immediately five donors volunteered their services. Another successful appeal was for shoes for the children of Lazy Mountain Children's Home near Palmer. Ruth's listeners have supplied pair after pair of children's shoes to the home since that broadcast.

With its daily prize for the winning recipe "Woman to Woman" has been a hit from its beginning, but Ruth Briggs, with her friendly, tactful, and wise management has developed it also into a program of community service and opportune information. It is, perhaps, the most popular woman's radio program originating in Alaska, and Ruth Briggs the most popular radio personality. Several thousand housewives cannot be wrong.

Some 'Woman to Woman' Alaskan Recipes

By Viola McMillen

Here are a few of the many delicious recipes using Alaskan products which have been prize-winners on KENI's "Woman to Woman" program conducted by Ruth Briggs.

Dolly Varden Fish Cakes
from Larraine S. Moore

3 or 4 medium sized Dolly Varden trout
2 medium sized onions
½ green pepper
2 eggs
Salt and pepper to taste
Cracker crumbs

Skin and fillet fish, grind with onion and green pepper. Add unbeaten eggs, and mix well. Add cracker crumbs until of the consistency to mold into balls. Fry in hot fat until brown.

* * *

Alaska Relish
from Mrs. V. B. McDade

3 pints of vinegar (strong)
½ cupful salt
4 pounds onions
4 pounds carrots
2 pounds green peppers
5 pounds cabbage
2 cupfulls brown sugar
1½ cupfuls white sugar
1 teaspoonful celery seed
3 teaspoonfuls mustard seed
3 or 4 pounds firm green tomatoes

Grind vegetables, and add salt. Place in a bag to drain for one hour. Heat vegetables in vinegar, sugar and spices. Let come to a boil. Cook 10 minutes. Put in sterilized jars and seal while hot.

* * *

Cranberry Bread
from Fasma Rood

Sift together:
2 cupfuls flour
1 teaspoonful salt
1½ teaspoonfuls baking powder
½ teaspoonful soda
1 cupful sugar

To the juice and grated rind of 1 orange, add 2 tablespoonfuls shortening and enough boiling water to make ¾ cupful altogether. Add 1 beaten egg and mix with dry ingredients. Add 1 cupful chopped nuts and 1 cupful firm, cut-up cranberries (local wild berries may be used whole). Mix well and pour into a well-greased loaf pan. Bake at 325 degrees F. for 1 hour.

Moose: Sweet and Sour Spare Ribs
from Marjorie Lund

2½ pounds moose spare ribs cut into 1-inch lengths
2 cupfuls water
4 tablespoonfuls soy sauce
1 teaspoonful salt

Bring the above to boil. Then turn heat down and simmer about 1 hour, or until tender. Put ribs with juice in frying pan and add the following ingredients which have been mixed together first:

3 tablespoonfuls sugar
3 tablespoonfuls vinegar
2 tablespoonfuls cornstarch
½ cupful water

Continue frying and stirring 2 or 3 minutes until gravy becomes translucent. If you like, add 2 or 3 sweet peppers in small slices, ½ can pineapple, or some pickles to the gravy.

* * *

Alaska Dinner
from Shirley Ford

Line a baking dish with biscuit or pie dough. Put in a layer of cooked rice, a layer of canned salmon, and a layer of hard-boiled eggs. Repeat until the ingredients are used or until dish is full. Moisten with milk. Season with salt and pepper. Dot with butter or bacon grease. Put the top crust on and bake in a moderate oven until crust is done.

* * *

Ptarmigan
from Sgt. F. J. Fox
Brown 1 large onion and 2 small

Allow 2 ptarmigan per person.
cloves of garlic, chopped fine, in butter to which have been added 1 bay leaf, 4 drops of Tabasco, and 4 whole cloves. Stir constantly until the onion and garlic are brown. Add ½ teaspoonful salt, ⅛ teaspoonful black pepper, and a few grains of cayenne. Saute cleaned and dressed ptarmigan, turning to brown evenly. Add 1 pint white wine (preferrably Sauterne) and simmer 30 minutes. Remove ptarmigan. Add 1 pint heavy cream slowly, stirring constantly. Add ¼ teaspoonful rosemary and ¼ teaspoonful marjoram. Return ptarmigan and heat to boiling point. Serve at once.

I use a heavy, deep iron skillet with a tightly fitting Pyrex cover. Serve baked potatoes with sauce over them, and a tossed garden salad with a simple oil and vinegar dressing.

Sourdough Pancakes
from Gertrude Frohne

Mix and let stand in a large covered bowl in a warm (room temperature) place over night:

1 package quick-acting yeast dissolved in
¼ cupful lukewarm water
3 cupfuls milk (scalded and cooled unless canned or dried milk is used)
¼ cupful sugar
4 cupfuls sifted all-purpose flour

In the morning remove 1 cupful of mixture and store in a cold place for next batch. Then add to the rest:

¼ cupful melted fat
2 teaspoonfuls salt
2 eggs, beaten
½ teaspoonful baking soda dissolved in 1 tablespoonful water

The batter is quite thick. It is handled easier if dipped up with a quarter-cup measuring cup than with a spoon, but the baking is done just as with any other pancakes. When using the starter for the next batch skip the yeast and proceed as before. The starter will keep for several weeks.

* * *

Broiled Alaska King Crab
from Evelyn Haltiner

Split legs and large claws, leaving meat in the shell. Arrange pieces in large baking pan or broiler meat side up and dot generously with butter. Add salt and pepper. A few drops of Worcestershire sauce may be added. Also Tabasco sauce for those who like it hot. A light sprinkle of garlic salt is also good. Bake in the oven at 450 degrees F. for about 15 minutes.

* * *

Rose Hip Butter
from Mrs. Eugene Schaeffer

Fix rose hips as usual (remove bud ends, grind or cut up, cover with water and boil until soft). Put them through a sieve. The result will be a pulp-like catsup. Add 1½ cupfuls sugar to each 1 cupful of pulp. Boil until thick, add cinnamon and vanilla to taste. Put in sterilized jars and seal. Delicious when served with hot cakes.

BUILDING A LOG HOME

By R. M. Prizer

A short article like this cannot go into many details as to tools and operations necessary to build a good log house. But it should provide enough information and sketches to create a desire to build a place to live, which is inherent in all of us. References at the end of this article give plenty of details and illustrations.

Foundation may be of piers or blocks of native stone, or pieces of logs treated with creosote to delay decay. All moss and a layer of top soil should be removed from the area under the house, preferably to gravel or sand. We mention piers or posts for foundation in this article because we understand you expect to go into the woods, cut your trees, or purchase your logs and build with the materials available. A continuous concrete foundation would be better without a doubt.

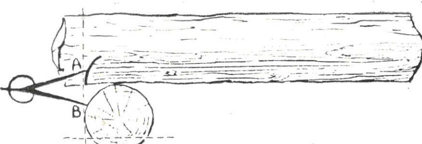
The first round of logs should naturally be the larger logs and hewed with a flat surface on the under side to rest on the peirs.

The several types of corners and also methods of closing the openings between the logs are important problems.

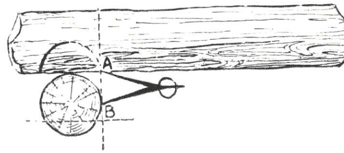
Only one type of corner will be discussed in this article, the saddle corner and the one most commonly used in good construction and illustrated below. The size of the building is pretty much determined by the length of the logs available.

1. Set scribe at half diameter of lower log.

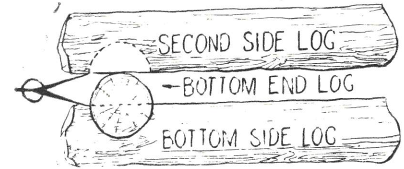
2. Begin to scribe on bottom of upper log.



3. Move scribe upward.



4. Top of curve.



5. Move to opposite side of under log and repeat the operation. Then do

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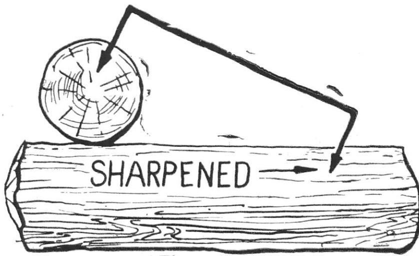
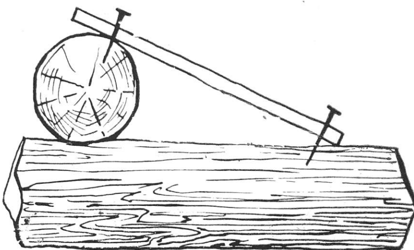
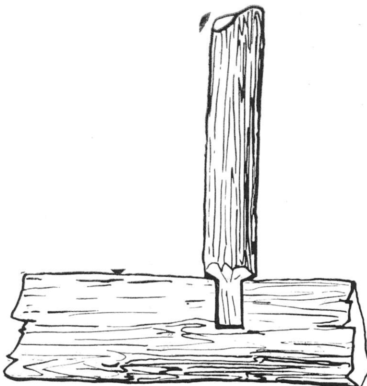
the same on the opposite side of upper log.

6. Take depth of space between two side logs, and repeat as before. If you wish the upper log to ride the lower log a little, to make a tight joint, the joints of the scribe should be set a little wider apart than the space actually requires.



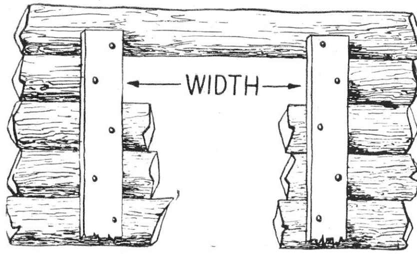


A good sharp double-bitted axe is needed to cut these notches. After the log is scribed at both ends, roll the log over and hold in place while cutting the notch with log dogs or short pieces of board nailed to the logs.



The floor joists may be of small logs or poles notched into the side logs, not more than two feet apart, and nailed as sketch indicates.

These small logs are hewed flat on top for the rough flooring. The openings for windows and doors may be left in the rough until walls are up to top of openings, then cut to width of opening.



Nail straight edges to both sides of logs at sides of openings as guide for saw in cutting opening to width.

Leave heighth of opening two to three inches more than height of frame for shrinkage in logs as building settles.

Poles, or rough lumber (2 x 6's) may be used as rafters with a low pitch for best appearance.

The next problem is closing the openings between the logs, and insulation. Oakum is the best material for calking between the logs and around windows and doors. A regular calking tool, or a piece of broken hickory. Axe handle shaped to a dull wedge makes an excellent calking tool.

Insulation should be of the rigid type as celotex or similar asphalt treated material ¾-inch to 1-inch thick and fitted snugly and fastened to under side of rough roof sheathing or decking between the rafters.

Now you are ready to install windows and doors and, if it's to be a real log house finish the interior surfaces of the rafters and logs leaving them exposed. Lay the finished floor of good tongue and grooved flooring preferably vertical grain hemlock.

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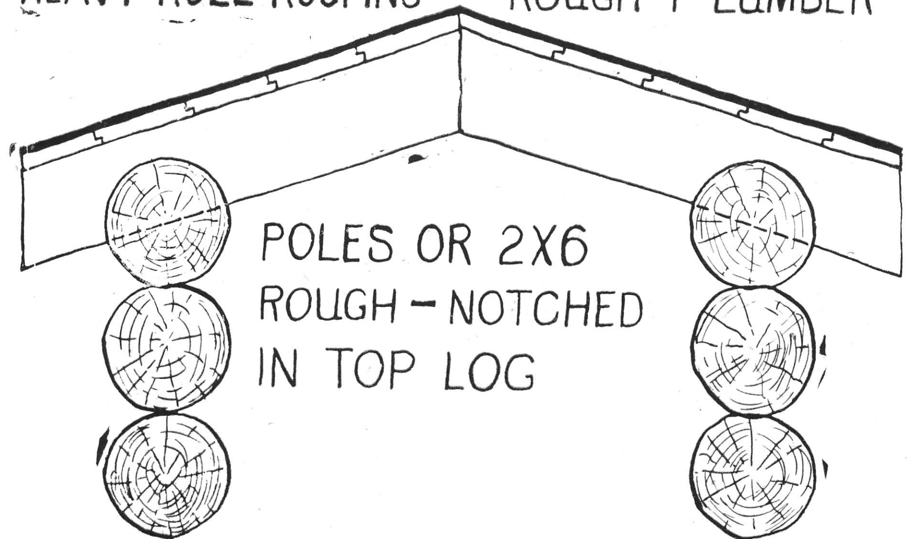

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BUILDING A LAWN

Nothing dresses up a place quite as much as a well-groomed lawn. And it isn't difficult to achieve, even here in Alaska where we are limited by the climate. And in the type and variety of grasses we can use. Bluegrass or chewing red fescue should be the basis for every lawn mixture. A mixture of grasses and clover is best for several reasons. Grasses of different variety, root at different depths. And by having several different grasses, the turf you might say "Under the ground will be thicker and better able to stand heavy traffic and the heaving of winter frosts." Also the lawn is less liable to sustain a total kill in unsavory winter. One variety may be killed, but all varieties are seldom killed, even in the worst winters.

When a lawn is put in properly, the worst that can happen is a partial reseeding where the grass is thinned out. Clover (White Dutch) is a good insurance in a northern lawn. Clover not only takes nitrates out of the air and puts it where the grass can get it, but its rooting habits are different than most grasses. Grasses, usually root shallow in Alaska. They get down one or two inches, then spread out along the surface.

Clover goes straight down. So when a lawn is planted, using several suitable grasses, a root mass two or three inches thick is established. The clover roots go down through the whole mass, tending to sew it together. Making it possible for the whole carpet to rise together with the frost. It is much less likely to winter-kill. In making a new lawn, it is very important that it is done right the first time. If it is it will never need to be rebuilt again. Many places, of course, have plenty of top soil. These only need to be graded and sloped properly, away from the house, for good drainage.

A lawn that is perfectly level is never satisfactory here in this climate. Level lawns are inclined to build up snow around the edges, causing ice banks to build up, making it impossible for the water from the thaws to run off. Then when the next freeze comes along, the lawn is liable to be severely damaged.

Most all damage to crops is done in the spring, because of the thawing and freezing that takes place every spring. And this damage usually occurs because of water freezing on top of the plants, choking them to death. That is the principal reason why a lawn should have a definite slope, and why no low places where water can stand be left in the lawn.

A lawn should slope one-half inch or more to a foot. Where it is necessary to fill in with new top soil to have a lawn, at least eight inches of soil over the ordinary rocky soil, is sufficient except where hedges or shrubbery is to be planted. In these places two feet of soil is not too much.

In making the plants for a lawn, where a complete landscape job is to be done later, a complete plan of the landscape job should be put on paper and filed away. If a hedge is to be planted in gravel and other individual plants where the soil must be filled in over gravel a ditch two feet wide and two feet deep, dug along with holes wherever shrubs are to be planted, two feet deep and three feet square. Also along walkways where annual flower beds are to be maintained a ditch two feet wide and eight inches deep.

If the shrubbery is to be planted after the lawn is planted, an accurate plat of the area should be made showing exact measurements, so the shrubs can be placed exactly in the middle of the place prepared for them. After the new soil is placed at least eight inches deep over the area, and the ditches all filled up with the best soil obtainable, it should be soaked down so it will settle and low places can be spotted, before planting.

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Often around the larger cities, good top soil can be purchased from the excavators. However, when you buy topsoil from them, it is best to be there as each load is dumped. It might save you the expense and trouble of shovelling unsuitable or rocky soil back on the truck. What the driver considers good soil for gardening may not suit you at all.

Most of our soil packs hard, unless it is mixed with peet. It's a good idea to mix local peet with the ground whenever it needs it. Whether it's a fill or natural soil. After the ground is plowed, harrowed and leveled, there is some work left to be done with hand tools. High spots in the lawn to be moved into low spots, and a general fining and firming of the soil.

After the gardener feels that the lawn is raked and is in as good a shape as possible, a heavy hand-roller will show up all the soft places. And the rake can be used again to fill them in. This should be done again and again until no uneveness shows up after the last rolling. In large areas of lawn, the natural contours of the ground can be used with good effect.

As long as there is no place where water can stand or where the hills and hollows are not so abrupt but that mowing can be easily done. After the last rolling, the fertilizer and seed can be applied. Fertilizing a lawn is entirely different from fertilizing a garden. In the case of the lawn, a slow growing, healthy grass is desired. So, smaller application of fertilizer is used. After the last rolling apply about two pounds of 10-20-10 to each 100 square feet.

Two pounds will not produce the lawn all summer, but it will give the grass a start. And by having a smaller amount of available fertilizer in the ground the root system will extend itself in order to reach all the fertilizer there is. Thereby establishing itself firmly from the start. Then after the first cutting a light application of nitrogen broadcast over the area, about one pound to a hundred square feet. A little heavier where the grass does not seem to be doing so well.

About three such applications during the summer will keep the lawn and the gardener in a happy frame of mind. After the fertilizer is applied, rake the ground thoroughly again and then plant the seed. This can be accomplished immediately after the fertilizer is applied, without any danger of burning the seed. Seed must be of the best, if a good lawn is desired. A good mixture including clover is favored by most people. In the States, most seed mixtures contain a cheap filler, for two good reasons:

1. The mix can be sold cheaper, and, 2, where the sun gets so hot, the good grass needs shade in its first two or three weeks of life, so a cheap, quick growing grass such as rye or red top is added to make a quick growth, shading the slower starting lawn grass. Here the filler damages the young lawn grass by shading.

Our spring sun isn't strong enough to burn anything. One pound of lawn seed will seed 200 square feet. The seed is usually broadcast by hand. This can be done accurately, if done right. Go over the ground four or five times, putting on just a little seed each time. And broadcast until you finally run out of seed. Before buying seed you should sarefully measure the area of your lawn and getting just the amount of seed you need to cover that area. Then, when you are out of seed, by going over it several times, you have just the right amount of seed planted.

When the seed is planted, rake the ground again and roll. Where water is available, sprinkle lightly until the ground is thoroughly soaked. Then for about ten days, or until the seed is all started, sprinkle daily. If the ground is allowed to dry out after the seed has sprouted, and before the roots are started, the seed will die, even if drying out only one day.

The first mowing is usually ready in about thirty days after planting. The grass should be about two inches high. The mower should be set to cut rather high, the first cutting. The grass always looks spotted until the second cutting. After the first cutting, if the grass looks yellow in spots, or dark purple compared with the rest of the lawn, these spots should be given a little extra nitrogen.

After ten days or so, these yellow spots should equal the better places in the lawn and should be ready for the kids to play on, for lawn tennis, or just for the neighbors to admire.

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So You Think You Will Have a Flower Garden

As a group of women will share food recipes—so members of the Anchorage Garden Club have written down notes that were found helpful in growing flowers in Anchorage, Alaska. These helpful little tricks of the garden trade are passed on in the friendly spirit of Alaskan-Neighborliness.

ANEMONE
By Mrs. F. C. Gerardy

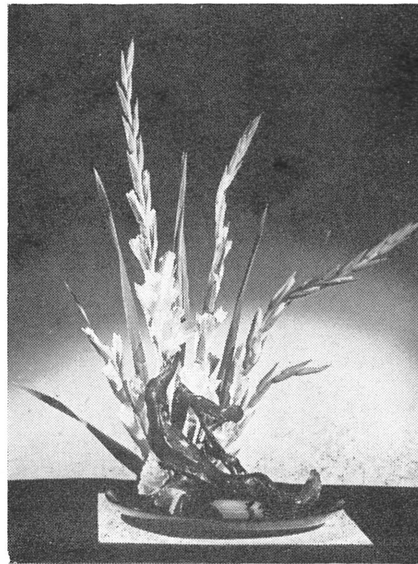
Anemones can, of course, be grown from seed—but that is a very slow and laborious task. I am sure you will agree with me that the cost of the bulb is so slight that it is much better to use the bulb.

For the best results soak the bulb in warm water overnight before putting in Vermuclite. They may, of course, be started in any of your favorite starting soils. I mention Vermuclite only because I have had the best results from that method of starting. The time of starting depends a great deal upon the season. I have started them from the first of April until the last of May. When started too early they are inclined to get rather spindly and the first leaves, which resemble curly parsley, may die, but the bulbs once started will then come up from the heart or the center. It has been my experience that Anemones will do qually as well in shady or sunny locations. I have never used any fertilizer, but I do keep them well watered. In my garden Anemones are one of the first flowers to bloom and the last to die. I have never had any winter cover, altho I understand that there is one type of Anemone that is wild and native to Alaska—the Pasque flower. "Alaska Wildflower Glimpses" by Maxine Morgan Williams states, "This early member of the buttercup family is a welcome sight in May in Interior Alaska. The first flowers can often be found around the time of the ice breakup."

Do not plant your Anemones outdoors until all danger of frost is past. Anemones are one of the most easily grown flowers and require less care than anything I have ever grown. Planted in beds mixed with Ranunculas they make a particularly attractive bed. Garden books recommend planting 3 inches deep and 5 inches apart. I personally recommend 1½ to 2 inches apart—just as close as your plot will allow.

COLUMBINE
Mrs. Edna Markley

When newcomers to Anchorage ask me for suggestions on what to plant I always mention Columbine. It is so easy to grow, will take hold in almost any type of soil, needs very little winter protection from the cold, and is so colorful for a long period during the summer. The only thing to remember is that they will not bloom the first year. The following year, however, should provide great varieties of colors. In some of the old homes of Anchorage there are Columbine plants that are over 15 years old. My neighbor had some blossoms last year that measured nearly 3 inches across. I planted my seeds in the spring of one year. They grew very well, but of course it was not until the following year there were flowers. It was also necessary the second year to do some thinning out as the plants grow from 2 to 4 and 5 feet tall. It also helps to stake them for protection from the wind.



—Photo by Gin Wells

Prize Winning Glads

DOUBLE PETUNIAS
By Ida Gryte

The "Lonely little petunia" thrives in Alaska much better than in "the Onion Patch." So let us consider petunias. First, petunias must be started in flats two months before "set-out" time or plants purchased from the greenhouses. The last few days in May or the first days of June seem to be the best time to set out the young plants. Even though I had no greenhouse, I planted tiny double petunia seeds in a flat in early February.

I placed the flat in a sunny window in a cool room. The room was protected from freezing but was very cool. The flat contained garden dirt with a thin layer of Vermiculite on the top where the seeds were planted. Within three weeks I could see them coming up. In another month they were tiny plants. Hyponex, a powdered commercial plant food, which can be bought at seed stores, florist shops or in some drug stores was used in watering. I checked the flat twice a week for dryness, and watered only when necessary.

I did not have any trouble in transplanting my petunias. Some of the petunias had buds on them but they seemed not to be slowed in any way in the transplanting. Although I did not harden my plants, many of my friends advise it. I planted the petunias on the south side of the house and they bloomed through the summer months.

TUBEROUS BEGONIA
By Mary Harwood

When planning my tuberous begonia garden, I purchase tubers of good healthy stock. Medium size to begin with is sufficient to produce lovely blooms the first year.

To start tubers I place them on a shallow tray of sand, keeping the sand moist until the second leaves start. Then I plant the tuber in soil. The soil mixture I use is equal part sand, leaf mold and peat moss. Do not plant the tubers too deep—leave the crown above the soil. Water as often as the soil seems dry. Once every two or three weeks add fertilizer with the water. After the plant starts blooming it will require more water. A very fine mist may be sprayed over the entire plant, if desired.

When plant stops blooming let the stock dry down slowly by less watering. When the stems have dried off then remove tuber from the soil. Clean off all the dirt and store in a cool, dry place, but do not let freeze. The rest period can be two or three months. With care a tuber will last many years and produce more and even larger blooms each year.

DELPHINIUM IN ALASKA
By Mrs. George Sharrock

Delphinium will grow and blossom very well in Alaska.

Seeds may be started inside or better still sow the seeds outside as the plants do not bloom the first year anyway. An alkaline soil is necessary and a fine sprinkling of lime should be scattered over the soil once or twice during the growing season. They don't need much attention but should be planted where they will benefit from full sunlight, preferrably against a fence or building for support as here in Alaska they can reach the height of from four to five feet. You may want to fertilize but it is not necessary

as these flowers practically take care of themselves.

I hope you will plant these flowers in your garden next year and enjoy their beautiful shades of blue, white and pink. I'm going to!

SUMMER CHRYSANTHEMUM

By Mrs. Rex Hartman

Summer chrysanthemums are among the most satisfactory annual flowers grown in Alaska. They are hardy, showy and grand for cutting. There are several named varieties—some yellow, white, yellow and white, and others in darker hues sometimes called painted daisies.

In Alaska they grow from 18 inches to 4 feet high. They should be started in flats and set out when 6 to 10 inches tall. They need to be planted at least 3 feet apart for they will continue to grow and bloom until heavy frost. (In fact I have picked them in the snow.) They must be staked for the weight of the plant will topple with the first heavy rain or wind storm. Use a stake not smaller than 1" x 1" and 2 feet high.

The first buds may be pinched off or may be left to bloom. In the latter case the bloom should be cut before going to seed in order to give strength to the side branches.

I like to have a few plants in my vegetable garden as they make a nice showing long after the vegetables are harvested.

NEMOPHELIA (Baby Blue Eyes)

By Nona Verano

This dainty little blue flower makes such a nice border. It is so easy to grow and after many other garden flowers are tarnished with frost there will still be perky little blue-eyed flowers under the acanthus-like leaves.

The seed can be sown in the ground at the time the garden vegetables are being planted (May 30th week-end). The usual garden soil cultivation, fertilizing and weeding are necessary. This flower works in attractively in summer bouquets.

RUSSIAN OR FLAME LILY

By Mrs. Noren Anderson

For gay colorful splotches of color against the house or bright clumps in the garden the Russian Lily is an old faithful. It can withstand the severest winter without covering or protection, it can take digging and dividing, and neglect. I recommend it as the flower for a busy person to have. Even after the rich coppery-red lilies have faded, the deep green plant foliage remains to grace the earth until frost.

HONEYSUCKLE, JAPANESE OR ALASKAN

By Mrs. R. B. Prescott

In many of the old Anchorage gardens there is a very beautiful flowering shrub. It has grown to tree size in many cases, and in other cases has been planted and trimmed down to a hedge. This is the Japanese honeysuckle or some folks call it the Alaskan honeysuckle. There are lovely honeysuckle-like bloosoms in the spring. Some trees have pink blooms, while others have rich red. One year

(Continued on Page 32)

A Good Thought

Glenn F. Baker, who was killed in a freak accident a few weeks ago out at Fort Richardson, penciled out this thought shortly before his untimely death. Chaplain Norris T. Morton of the Air Force found the note and had quite a number printed on cards. Read Glenn Baker's "A Good Thought" again. You will like it better each time you do.—Editor.

Count your garden by the flowers;
Never by the leaves that fall.
Count your days by sunny hours;
Not remembering clouds at all.
Count your nights by the stars, not shadows;
Count your life with smiles, not tears.
All this brings about one teaching:
Judge your age by friends, not years.

—Glenn F. Baker

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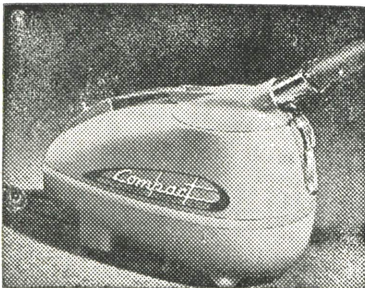

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ALASKA REINDEER NOTES

By J. SIDNEY ROOD

(This is the third in a series of articles on Alaska reindeer by J. Sidney Rood, former general reindeer supervisor in Alaska.)

"You can't eat money." Neither could Siberia's Eskimo reindeer owners. They wanted trade goods in payment for the reindeer that Uncle Sam solicited for transplantation to Alaska's neighboring tundralands. They had gotten trade goods until 1902, when the Russian government's new edict, "Pay them money or get no reindeer," prevented it.

Their puzzlement concerning how many rubles a reindeer was worth cut American purchases to 30 that year. Then, although our Coast Guard had transported only 1,280 head to Seward Peninsula since 1892, when Alaska's reindeer industry got started, Uncle Sam stopped importations forever.

Yet Alaska had 12,828 reindeer by 1906. As many as 115 fawns per 100 adult females had survived spring fawnings. Herd increases averaged about 23 per cent each year.

This "crop" profited men little, although they got small rewards from the hides and other animal products resulting from natural mortality. They were still saving "seed stock," not harvesting. The Government and Missions, more awesome among primitive Eskimos then, demanded it. "The more reindeer, the better," was their motto. They paid Eskimo and Lapp herders enough groceries, cloth and seal hides that killing reindeer for food and clothing was not imperative.

Wolves were not there to profit, either, although a straggler was sighted every few years somewhere between Bristol Bay and Barrow. Wolf predation, which began swelling into a devasting epidemic three decades later, was confined to Eskimo and Laplander folk tales by which the people entertained each other. Years would pass before it would become a motif in the Eskimo art of ivory making.

As the reindeer increased, so did the number of those who owned them or were working as herders to obtain title. By the fall of 1906, they included 168 Natives. Laplander and Mission operators totalled 18 more. The Government owned some reindeer in most of the 15 herds.

However, the hardy Natives and Lapps did the herding work for all. Of the two races, our Government deemed the Natives most important. They were the most numerous, appealed to Congress as indigenous Americans; and they were scattered upon coastal ranges where tundra plants would feed vast herds in future if Natives would, by becoming reindeer farmers, tend them carefully.

It is interesting that American reindeer literature does not evidence fear that Laplanders might neglect their reindeer. Despite the professed anxiety of writers that reindeer be conserved, some have expressed a contrary fear that Lapps would and did acquire too many. They have actually argued that if Laplanders raised none, then Eskimos, per se, would have more reindeer easier.

However obscured by evangelistic claims that Eskimos would be fine animal husbandrymen "if given a chance" by the bad White men and our Government, fear that they would neglect their reindeer has been a leitmotif in government behavior and in most private theses which have attacked non-Native reindeer owners and the Government's reindeer administration.

The Reindeer Regulations (1907) expressed that fear; Natives must herd their reindeer or the Government would take them. Later, the Government's organization of Eskimo reindeer cooperatives to replace private herds expressed it, as the Government acted with hope cooperatives might save the mixed and untended Eskimo stock. The Government's purchase of non-Native reindeer in 1940 expressed it: for that purchase was made with hope that Eskimos, if other races were eliminated from the field, would be inspired into caring for their reindeer, otherwise doomed. Finally, present Government policy expresses that fear. For Natives of Alaska cannot obtain clear title to live reindeer from the Government, but get only a "restricted title" which reserves to the Government a right to confiscate reindeer which they have earned from the Government, together with the increase thereon, in event they neglect the animals.

The reasonableness of this fear appears sustained by reindeer history, to say nothing of problems involving the transition of primitive peoples from

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hunting economics to agricultural pursuits elsewhere. The fear itself makes the present Federal Reindeer Law ironical, however; for that race-discriminatory law restricts private reindeer ownership to those same Natives of Alaska concerning whose farming abilities our Government remains doubtful.

The Reindeer Regulations of 1907 became impossible to administer. A Native, after earning reindeer, needed helpers whom he could not afford to feed and clothe. He could not butcher reindeer to do it if his herd was to increase. If he died, his widow and children needed his reindeer for subsistence, although total neglect of the reindeer often became inevitable.

Furthermore, many clear and unrestricted titles had been conveyed prior to 1907. The new regulations were not retroactive. To determine whether the neglected offspring of reindeer were subject to Government seizure became impossible. The teachers, missionaries and other supervisors who administered reindeer work were not lawyers; and the regulations avoided a host of practical field problems anyhow. The Government tested them in court but once, and lost; so it has been left to others, notably propagandists, to judge what they should have meant if they didn't, and who should have obeyed them—even if they were not enforcible, so as to have achieved the judges' notions that Natives would have husbanded reindeer better somehow if reindeer ownership had always excluded Laplanders and other White men.

As time passed, many Native men, women and children got live reindeer by inheritance, purchase or gift. Others got them in payment for odd jobs like cooking, repairing corrals, or helping to round-up once per year. Few of them wanted to tend reindeer or attempted it, but they left what deer were surplus to immediate needs alive in order to keep the meat fresh for another day and to increase, perhaps, as they wandered, mixed and rutted.

This class of non-farmer owners was gradually joined by those herders who grew disgusted. The work was hard, lonely; and it grew harder as tended herds on the unfenced ranges were joined by wild stock claimed by others. It was illegal to kill another's stray reindeer and there was no practical way to collect for their care. Thus the non-herder class of reindeer owners became a majority. The Government could do nothing about it.

So Government thinking accomodated itself. It seemed kind to encourage a distribution of reindeer to all Natives, for all Natives needed meat and skins. No one could question that. It may have been as unsound as it would be to distribute our American cattle to all White Americans, men, women and children, because they all need beef and wear leather shoes; but Congress was impressed by the increasing number of Eskimo owners; and the more there were, the more Eskimos were pleased.

Distribution lessened local market demand for reindeer, which further discouraged reindeer farming. Had ownership been restricted to herdsmen, they could have made money by selling products to the great mass of non-owners. But when nearly every native family acquired reindeer of its own, market demand tended to be reduced to sales to Whites; and competition to supply this demand cut meat prices to 6 cents to 10 cents per pound.

Reindeer herding was changing gradually to reindeer hunting.

Meanwhile, a number of enterprising White businessmen, observant of the rapid increase in Alaskan reindeer, concluded that money could be made by growing and marketing them. In 1914, a White-owned firm commenced buying reindeer breeding stock from Laplanders and church missions. Many others followed by procuring live reindeer from Eskimos. Of course, had officials had any questions regarding the legal propriety of those purchases, the time for testing them was when they occurred.

By 1918 herding had stopped or become very careless on most ranges. The Laplanders, too, were getting "snowed-under" with strays, large herds and the problem of hiring reliable help. Although 116,000 reindeer were reported, animals in over 50 per cent of the herds were not counted. To make matters worse, the people were struck by a disastrous influenza epidemic in 1918, which depleted the ranks of the remaining herders. Untended reindeer of mixed ownership roamed Native ranges.

Therefore, in 1918, Mr. Lopp, Chief of the Alaska Division of the Government Bureau of Education, urged the Native reindeer owners of each village to enter their reindeer into a village reindeer Company. The single mark of a company would replace the great confusion of private marks on the village range. Each private reindeer owner would receive one share of the reindeer company's stock for each animal, tagged with his private earmark, which he let the company re-mark to company ownership. Mr. Lopp thought there would be a few shareholders in each company who would herd the reindeer.

Nearly all Natives were willing to give up their individual ownerships. It would be easier to find a company's deer to kill than to locate one of their own. Village life, with its store, church, school, and companionship would be pleasanter than herding reindeer.

Under company control, herd management became everybody's business and nobody's business. Practically all Native residents of villages owned company stock, or earned it as their wages for various short-time jobs. They demanded the company's reindeer meat, skins, and other products. Most of them did not perceive any need for constant herding. They would rather hunt wild reindeer, as

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their forefathers had hunted caribou, than herd reindeer themselves. They would rather hunt wild reindeer than to pay any money, needed for herders' wages, into the company treasury.

A few companies hired some herders for awhile. But they were merely wage earners. Most of them "did not care much if they lost reindeer now and then." They were not working strictly for themselves. Their wages were low. They were too few to control the great numbers of reindeer.

The title "reindeer herder" came to be applied to men who never herded reinder, but who merely helped round up wild reindeer for butchering or counting once or twice per year. The most significant thing about this was that, as time passed, no one perceived anything incongruous in it.

But Nature increased reindeer apace, as is usual with a new species. Everyone was optimistic. By 1930, reindeer had increased to an estimated 600,000.

Reindeer owners, Native and White, made effort to acquire as many reindeer as possible. They vied with each other to mark all possible fawns and mavericks to themselves. They made no effort to limit the number of their reindeer to the amount they could herd, or to the number required to produce a sufficient crop each year.

Owners made no effort, either, to limit the number of reindeer to the amount the plant life of the ranges would support in perpetuity. The Biological Survey issued various general, sometimes contradictory opinions, the same not based upon intensive studies of the different ranges, concerning the number of acres of pasture which were needed for grazing reindeer upon a sustained yield basis; but reindeer owners were not managing their animals in such a manner that plant life could be conserved.

As reindeer were not in custody of men, herds could be not be rotated to keep the animals in health, or to conserve plant life.

Owners made no effort to determine and harvest annual herd "crops." The reindeer were so scattered that their number could not be estimated anyhow. As one Reindeer Supervisor, C. L. Andrews, wrote in 1926: "I have had seven men out for a week for the Nome herd, and not a deer in sight."

The right proportion of bulls could not be castrated because round-ups were never complete.

Markets could not be guaranteed specific amounts of meat and skins or be assured of getting products on required dates. Round-up crews frequently returned to villages to inform meat dealers, housewives, or waiting boat operators that the reindeer could not be located because of fog, or had broken away while being driven because of adverse winds, heavy rains, swollen streams, flies, mushrooms, etc.

There was nearly always a shortage of steers for market; stockholders, having hunted the untended reindeer with rifles on the open ranges throughout the winter months, had eliminated steers from the herds. Usually the only alternative was to kill heavy proportions of cows for market. The result was probably beneficial, as it slowed further increase of the excessive reindeer.

As an outgrowth of no herding and no real herd management, the problem of building up the quality of reindeer by castrating, killing the runts, the irregular breeders, the poor feeders and other undesirable types was not, and could not be, given real attention.

There was inverse selection undoubtedly. Stockholders, each one in pursuit of the largest, fattest reindeer he could secure under authority of his butchering permit, killed the best animals they could find. There is no evidence that this had harmful biological results, however.

Had individual stockmen owned the reindeer, receipts from sales would have rewarded them in proportion as they managed their herds efficiently, while the non-successful would have died economic deaths. But receipts from company sales were exhausted in paying salaries of company directors, wages of annual round-up and corral crews, for feeding nearly the whole population of villages at corral handlings, for gilt-edged shares of stock, and for other items which had little

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or no connection with the job of raising and producing reindeer efficiently.

Company business was mostly village business. It was talks, meetings, elections with Government officers, argument among stockholders. The reindeer knew nothing of these things. The reindeer needed herders. They needed men to get to work with them, on the pasture lands, to see that they got food and protection.

If the formality of company business absorbed the attention of the Native people, and diverted it from herd and range management, it necessarily absorbed the attention of Reindeer Service employees. Teachers and Reindeer Unit Managers kept company books and minutes, drafted rules for consideration of Native stockholders and directors, kept the financial ledgers and time books, figured the distribution of unmarked reindeer, acted as agents of the companies in issuing butchering licenses, secured markets for products, arranged shipments, and struggled in many other ways to make these companies succeed. They necessarily took the initiative among an apathetic Native people. Yet they had no authority other than advisory.

Among the White owners, the Laplanders, too, drifted into neglecting their herds. By 1925, most of them ceased performing any herding; by 1930, none herded reindeer constantly. Everyone's struggle for limitless numbers of wild reindeer had resulted in such huge numbers that herding would have been futile.

Most Missions sold their reindeer to White business men. Others entered their reindeer into Native reindeer companies.

Some White owners attempted to make money by shipping reindeer products to the United States. A few made a gesture at herding with hired help. One of them, the Lomen Reindeer Corporation, installed efficient butchering equipment, set up general stores which, also, served as herd commissaries. It developed lighterage equipment, and even operated ships to convey products to the States.

This concern undertook management of some herds wherein Native reindeer were mixed. It applied for grazing rights to ranges adjacent to good shipping points. It shipped and sold a large quantity of reindeer meat and skins. It taught many Natives and Government officials important things about processing equipment and accounting procedures.

During the course of its aggressive efforts it became involved in much, persistent conflict with some Reindeer Service officials and with Native reindeer owners, particularly those owners whose animals became mixed with its own. Some Whites, including Don Quixote types, who had commercial or personal trouble with the concern, fanned the destructive conflict. The conflict suggested that the Native people were anxious to herd and manage their reindeer efficiently but were prevented by this White operator from doing so. Later, when the Government had extinguished White ownership, it was perceived that this was an illusion.

This White concern lost money, even though it was able to buy a large number of reindeer at prices as low as $2 per head on the hoof, payable in merchandise. It was expensive to hold meat in storage during the late winter and spring months in order to effect an early summer shipment. Lighterage and freight costs were excessive. The people of the United States had no habit of eating reindeer meat, and poor prices were obtained for it. In order to dispose of a volume of reindeer meat, the concern sold meat for dog meat. Cost of supervision, supplies, repairs, and other items needed on ranges were high. No White owner made money from reindeer operations.

An office of General Reindeer Supervisor was established at Nome in 1928. Mr. B. B. Mozee, an experienced Alaskan superintendent of the Bureau of Education, became the first General Reindeer Supervisor. Teachers at Reindeer Stations were directly responsible to their superintendents of schools or to either of two reindeer supervisors; these officers, in turn, were directly responsible to the General Reindeer Supervisor.

In 1929, the Reindeer Service was transferred from the Bureau of Education to the Governor of Alaska. But the reindeer knew nothing about that.

By 1932, Mr. Mozee had been able to establish several reindeer Unit Managers' positions. The new appointees from the States, fine young men who were physically suited for the hardship of winter travel, were all trained in animal husbandry. But to apply animal husbandry principles in a wild reindeer hunting economy with which people were satisfied was impossible. A complete revolution was needed.

Suddenly a great enemy of the reindeer appeared. About 1934, evidence of alarming wolf damage to the reindeer on several costal ranges, including Barrow and Iliamna, was first noted. The extent of this damage remained osbcure because men were not with the scattered reindeer. Some people reported seeing wolf tracks. Some hunters saw wolves occasionally. Some travelers found many torn reindeer. When reindeer were rounded-up and the corral count showed a smaller total than previously, owners concluded that they had not covered ranges thoroughly. People puzzled over the low fawn percentages at corral countings. And the deer were thinner on ranges after wolves arrived.

The wolves had drifted into all those reindeer ranges which were adjacent to areas where caribou migrated. They found the short-legged reindeer easy prey. The reindeer did not wander as much as did the caribou; so a female wolf had a food supply while raising her pups. The caribou dis-

(Continued on Page 26)

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Comments on Homesteading in Alaska

By LOWELL M. PUCKETT
Regional Administrator
Bureau of Land Management

If you talk to a homesteader who has come up to Alaska during the past dozen years and has patent to his land, what do you hear about? Nine times out of ten, he will tell you how rugged life was, particularly if he was a non-veteran who had to clear and cultivate the land. You will hear about the mud, the swamps, the high cost of everything, government red tape and the mosquitoes. His wife will tell you how hard it was just to try to live normally—and how far from normal such living usually was.

Are these folks stretching things a bit just to indicate how sturdy they are? Well, we in the Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, who keep tab on them to a certain extent, know they are not. It takes plenty of fortitude to earn that cherished piece of paper, the patent, that says in effect "It's all yours."

This is not written to discourage those interested in homesteading, but the Bureau of Land Management is interested in helping settle Alaska with people who know what the score is.

Many people living Outside read about the big cabbages and strawberries and write to our office and to the Chambers of Commerce eager to come up to homestead. The final paragraph of our form letter usually sent in reply, reads:

> Advice: It's advisable to come up and look things over before loading your family, furniture and livestock on a boat or truck and heading North. It is advisable to have at least a year's funds if you plan to homestead, as the land won't support you at the outset. Some fortunately located individuals have been able to homestead and hold jobs in towns, but don't count on it.

This same advice is given by the Farmers Home Administration in its standard form letter. But too many let their dreams overcome their best judgment, come ill-prepared to cope with things as they are, and go back home disappointed in Alaska, giving the Territory an undeserved bad name.

Some wonder if it takes the tough farm couple of the Middle Western and North Central United States to make a go of homesteading. Alaskans know this is not necessarily true. In fact, a farmer from Outside has definite ideas about how things should be done and sometimes is frustrated when things don't work out as he expected, while a city-born hardworking couple often learn all they know about the country ways in Alaska and are happy with the results.

Letters come into our offices confidently asking questions about possibilities for various ventures. Some sound fantastic but who can be certain? Recently a man wrote proposing to raise saddle horses on the Kenai Peninsula. To many Alaskans whose children see airplanes every day but never or seldom see a horse, this would seem to be an unsound venture. I expressed my doubts but suggested the man come up and size up Alaska for himself before he pulled up stakes at home.

There's an Alaskan, whose name I can't recall at the moment, perhaps a subscriber to The Alaska Agriculturist, who has high hopes that his rabbits will find a big market. He has developed a special breed and is raising them on an island far out to the westward.

An enterprising chap came up with an interesting idea not long ago. Why not homestead along the coast bordering a salt water cove? There he would plant salmon eggs and as these fish eventually return to the spot where they were hatched, he would have only to wait and haul them in as they came back "home."

A farm woman from Minnesota became concerned about Alaskan chickens. She wrote, asking if the chickens didn't work themselves to death scratching and rustling throughout the long daylight hours of summer.

There are many things that could be put into an article about homesteading. (The Editor said to stick pretty close to that subject). A discussion of regulations could occupy much space but that's rather dry stuff. So you are going to learn what certain homesteaders have done with their land.

In March of this year, Fred Weiler, Chief of the Division of Land Planning of BLM in Alaska, sent Don Griffith, Land Economist, to the Kenai Peninsula to find out how a certain group of patented homesteads were being used. This data is given merely for information and is not intended to indicate any trend for all of Alaska, and little attempt is made in this article to analyze factors influencing use or non-use of the land.

On the Kenai Peninsula there is an area of some 155,000 acres that generally has been withdrawn from homesteading since 1948, although a few

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groups of homesteads have been entered since that time. Within the area which we call the Kenai-Kasilof withdrawal, are 86 homesteads, totaling 11,130 acres, which are privately owned. Prior to 1949 there were 20 patents issued, so the remainder, or 77 per cent, have been in private ownership less than four years.

Most Alaskans know that veterans with more than 19 months service and an honorable discharge, don't have to cultivate their land and may obtain 160 acres of land merely by living on it seven months during the first year and building a habitable house. Of the 86 individuals who had patent to their land, 52 were veterans and of these, 39 took full advantage of the benefits extended to them and cultivated none of the land.

As of March 1, 1953, one-half of the original homesteaders still resided upon the land they patented and 61 of the original 86 patentees still owned all of their homesteads covering 8,000 acres. Thirteen of the group had disposed of portions of their original holdings, while 12 had sold out entirely.

Griffith reports that twenty-eight of the original 86 homesteads were lying idle and unoccupied.

It was interesting to note that although the survey showed that only eight of the patented homesteads are being operated as full-time farms and 13 as part-time farms, a total of 30 of the present owners of the land expressed their intention to devote the land to agriculture.

Twelve of the homesteads were being used as business sites, six had been subdivided, and 16 were being used just for residence purposes by the owners, to enumerate a partial breakdown of the figures.

As indicated previously, this article does not go into a long explanation on what might be the reasons for farming being at a low ebb in the Kenai-Kasilof area, but certainly a few of the handicaps are high costs of clearing, labor, transportation of everything and difficulties in financing, particularly before patent is issued. Wages in other industries, such as various phases of defense construction in Alaska, have been attractive. Without doubt, many land owners who have been working for wages for a few seasons, intend to use their savings to develop their land, eventually. Ready and close markets for produce that might be raised have been lacking. These are a few influencing factors.

Of course, there is nothing that requires a homesteader to farm the land after he gets title to it. He uses it or doesn't use it, as he sees fit.

It is a little early to get much of an idea of what is being done with the 64 unpatented homesteads entered after February 1, 1952, all of which were first taken up by veterans of World War II. On March 1, 1953, about 34 of these homesteads were occupied. Eight of them had been relinquished and filed upon by persons other than the original entryman.

The picture was not clear as to the remaining 30 homesteads, all of whom have a total of five years to comply with the regulations as to residence and cultivation.

The opportunities for the development and use of these newer homesteads are considerably better than for the older. Being grouped, they will offer the advantages of community living, better roads, schools and cooperative efforts. They were placed on lands that were considered by the Soil Conservation Service and BLM as being predominantly agricultural in character and were not hit and miss selections by individuals. Markets should improve as settlements and villages grow larger and as many of the hundreds of Small Tracts set up by BLM are occupied by permanent residents.

Perhaps no article on homesteading should leave out comments on regulations completely, so here are a few basic ones. A total of 160 acres may be homesteaded by a citizen or one who has his first citizenship papers, if he is 21 years old or the head of a family. A non-veteran must cultivate one-sixteenth of the total area in the second entry year and have one-eighth in cultivation by the end of the third year. Residence must be established within six months after the homestead entry is allowed and must be maintained at least seven months per year for three years. I have already told you briefly about veterans requirements.

Here are two other things that you should know:

Homesteading can not be done by mail. Examaination of the land is required.

There are no prepared lists of available lands, as they are widespread and change continually. Much is unsurveyed and can not be easily described.

How much does it cost to homestead? That is the real $64 question. If the equipment is available, most information indicates that clearing the land costs at least $100 per acre and frequently twice that much. Some homesteaders figure that a man can make out on $2,500 as starting capital; others say he should figure on $5,000. One thing you may not know is that the soil requires fertilizer right from the start.

Even though the emphasis in this article has not been entirely on homesteads, the reader should not conclude that it is through homesteading, only, that the outlying districts of Alaska will be developed. That definitely is not true. Homesteading is intended for agricultural development. Our Small Tract program has resulted in several thousands of homesites and cabin sites in many Alaskan communities being leased to people who want places to build homes. After one year, if the provisions of the leases have been followed, the lessees are eligible to get patent. Business sites also are taken up under this Act. But I must warn you that the demand for tracts is terrific. In April over 3,500 applications were received for 16 tracts available in the Anchorage Land Office.

Another useful public land law permits us to sell up to 160 acres for commercial, industrial or housing sites at public auction. A certificate of purchase is issued soon after the auction and patent follows after completion of a definite plan of development which must be finished within three years.

There are other public land laws but space does not permit describing them here.

One more thing — although we are not yet operating at the speed of sound—tremendous improvment has been made by the Bureau of Land Management in its procedures. Ten years ago about 25 patents were issued in one year. Last year a total of 1,600 patents and deeds transferred title in various tracts and townsite lots to Alaskans. This, despite the increasing flood of paper work that engulfs the land offices and the personal lengthy inquiries at the land office counters that cause the girls that help you to droop with mental and physical exhaustion at the end of each day.

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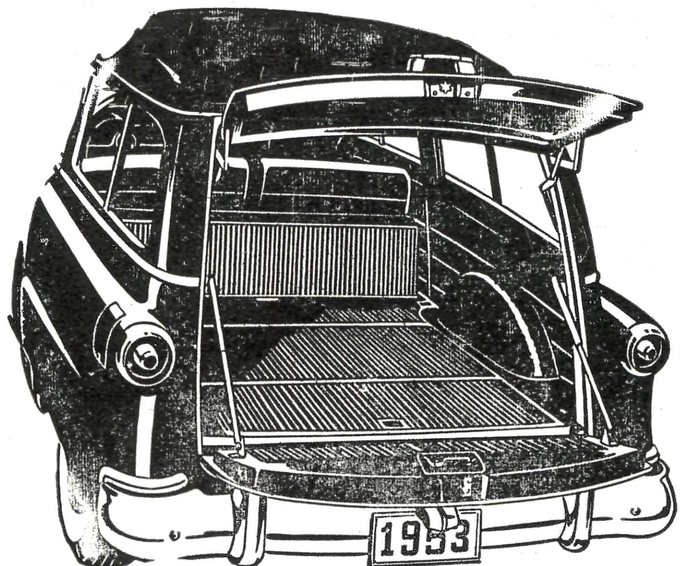

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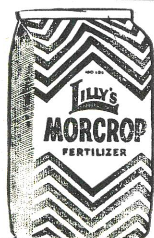

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What's New for the Garden

By Lee Fryer

If each gardener tried one new method or material each year, our improvement in gardening would be amazing—especially if we exchanged ideas and experiences with each other. To start the ball rolling, I will suggest several of the new materials which seem to have special interest for the gardener this year.

Cyanamid

This material is being used by many home gardeners this year. It is a combination weed-killer and fertilizer. With 21% nitrogen and 70% lime, it breaks down into an excellent plant-food. But when first applied, it kills weed seeds and all types of young weeds. It can be spread in a band over newly planted rows of beans, peas and corn, to kill all weed seeds and newly sprouted weeds, while the garden crop pushes through to a clean surface. Then the cyanamid fertilizes the crop. At the rate of 5 pounds per 100 square feet, cyanamid can be worked into the top 1-inch of soil to be planted to lawn grass. After thorough moistening, it will kill weeds and weed seeds. This action is completed in two weeks, when the grass seed can be safely sown. The nitrogen and lime then fertilize the new, clean lawn. Cynamid is a good composting material. It has many valuable uses for the gardener who studies its effect on plants and soils.

Liquid Fertilizers

These are being used in one form or another by a majority of leading gardeners. Some use the liquid fish fertilizer concentrates, such as Marina, Ortho-Gro, or Alaska Fish. Others use the soluble dry materials, such as Flo Morcrop, Folium, Instant Vigoro, Rapid-gro, or Take-Hold. These materials are dissolved in water, and the liquid solution is sprinkled on the plants or soil. When plants are sprayed with suitable liquid fertilizers, they assimilate the plant foods thru their leaves. This supplements root feeding, and causes superior growth. Flower gardeners grow larger and more impressive blooms. All types of gardeners use these materials at transplanting, and for booster feeding. It is fun to try this method.

Malathon

A new general purpose insecticide has this name. It is noteworthy, because malathon is a form of parathion, which proved to be an efficient material for insect control. The parathion, however, has been dangerous to livestock and people, as well as to the insect villains. Malathon is safe to use, and may prove to be just the thing for the home gardener to spray on aphids, beetles, hoppers, and other pests. Watch it. It's new.

Fertilizing the Lawn

We find that the usual fault is to starve the lawn grass. It needs heavy feeding. Newest research shows that for best results the lawn should receive 1¼ pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 feet per month during the growing season. A balanced fertilizer containing phosphate and potash, as well as nitrogen, is best. To get the 1¼ pounds of nitrogen, using standard lawn fertilizers containing 5% nitrogen, apply 25 pounds per 1,000 square feet every month in the growing season. Water this in well. With such feeding and good grass varieties, anyone can have a lovely lawn.

Aldrin

A new material to control flea beetle injury to potatoes, and to control nematodes, wire-worms, weevils, and other destructive creatures in the soil is aldrin. It's advantage is fairly low cost per acre. Only five pounds to the acre is used. As a rule, it is purchased in a form blended with a filler, so spreading at the low rate is possible.

These, and other new materials will help. And the old virtues are still in force: Use good seed; use organic matter to keep up the basic fertility of the soil; fertilize every crop; keep out the weeds; kill the bugs; look at your garden every day. The eye of the gardener helps the plants to grow.

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Breeding, Feeding and Management

By Dr. E. A. Schmoker

This article is not written for the dairyman with a long string of high producing cows selling his milk at 50 cents a squirt. Neither is it written for the ambitious man who ventures into a hog raising program and dreams of ton litters. No, rather I would like to have a chat with the "little fellow" who has a job but would like to raise a few pets either to eat, to milk, or just to play with.

Small Scale Farming

There is something satisfying and stimulating about having a little livestock about the house or in the back yard. We know too well of the exuberant welcome we get coming home tired from work when Rover gets a sniff of our arrival. The kids would be racing home from school in no time flat if they knew that there was a snow-white mama rabbit with nine little baby rabbits waiting to be tended to.

Bright-eyed, fluffy, chirping little chicks would be no less fascinating, especially after they have reached the frying pan age or are starting to lay enough fresh eggs each day to keep the family well supplied with this valuable food supplement.

Mary Had a Little Lamb —

Just because Mary had a little lamb there is no reason why Annabelle or Johnny shouldn't have one too. These little balls of yarn in the raw make very fascinating pets and can with a little supplementary feeding, rough it on stumpy, infertile land or serve as a self-propelling lawn mower.

How to Go About It?

Well, if you have a trustworthy dog or an unpredictable husband what would you do? Of course, you would build a "dog house" big enough for either one of them. When it comes to scientific feeding, which in reality is nothing but economical feeding or getting the most out of feed, you might need some help. The same is true in selecting your breeding stock.

The Three Corner Stones

These are breeding, feeding and management. Of course if we have a job in a lumber mill or a construction project we cannot profitably devote the best years of our life in developing a show specimen of a long-eared rabbit or a spraddle-legged goat giving four quarts of milk per day. No, we have to be practical and leave much of that to the experienced breeder.

The same holds true with feeding and to some extent with management.

Just as the radio hiccups out "commercials" telling you what vitamins to take and what facial cream to use to absorb just the right amount of sex hormones through your skin, so does the feed manufacturer advise you as to the proper feeding and management of your "live stock." Behind these recommendations is much scientific and expensive research and having been, for a number of years, a member of a research department of a leading feed manufacturer, the Albers Milling Company, I can attest to the correctness of this statement.

An Example

When I first joined the Albers Research station "Friskies" was still a dream. We at that time started from s-c-r-a-t-c-h only to find out that scratch was not good for dogs—better for chickens.

Then when we had a palatable food, the bowels got loose. When the bowels were firm the skin began to itch. When there was no itch, no loose bowels and good palatability we had to worry about the "completeness" of the ration by feeding generation upon generation of dogs to discover any possible hidden deficiencies which might take months or a year to show up.

Other Helpful Hints

Along with feeding recommendations intended for economical growth and development of properly bred stock, management suggestions are also gladly given. For instance you would like to know how to build a rabbit hutch. In this case, correct dimensions, construction, installation of the feeding equipment and all other essential details can be had for the asking. If brooding a few chicks is your ambition, just ask us about small, inexpensive miniature brooders, how to install and run them for best results.

Suppose your uncle in Matanuska Valley gave you a little calf to raise. We can show you how to raise it without a drop of milk or available pasture. The same applies to a little lamb or a kid (baby goat).

Let's get the family together and over a glass of beer and a spread of Limburger cheese discuss the feasibility of raising a little live stock on the side. If your car has been repossessed and you have an empty garage and don't know what to do with it, you may well consider the installing of a few home-made batteries for laying hens, a few hutches for rabbits or a small brooder room to raise fryers for the table. On the other hand a small enclosure with a few tin cans and Albers goat pellets will raise your milk provider. A product known as Calf Manna—or manna from heaven for calves, will also do equally as well to feed any form of young livestock and produce such wonderful results that you will, as a "farmer" be the envy of your neighbors. What it will do to ease off your family budget will be something to crow about. So why not go to it and give it a try?

Editor's Note—In future issues Dr. Schmoker will discuss more in detail any form of live stock raising readers might be interested in.

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Importing Plants From Foreign Coutries

Some of you may recall plants you especially liked in the old country and may wish to try to grow them in Alaska. Others of you may feet that some foreign countries have climates more comparable to Alaska than the States and plants from those countries might do well here. If you wish to import plants or plant products from foreign countries you should know that such importation is controlled by the Division of Plant Quarantines of the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, U. S. Department of Agriculture. The quarantines and regulations enforced by the Division are made for one purpose, to prevent the entry and spread of plant diseases and insects which are present in foreign countries but are not yet established in the United States or are present only in limited areas. Should these diseases or insects be imported on their host plants they might eventually make the growing of plants and food crops either impossible or much more expensive to farmers, nurserymen and home gardeners. These quarantines and inspection or treatment requirements will sometimes inconvenience you in importing plants but they are to your advatage and for your protection.

Plant material for importation falls generally into three classes — prohibited material, material requiring individual permits, and material not requiring individual permits for entry.

Plants and plant products (fruits, unmanufactured fibers, straw, chaff, and other parts of plants) falling in the prohibted class are those which are known to be hosts of dangerous crop insects or diseases which are not readily eliminated by inspection or treatment at the time of arrival in the United States.

Plant material falling in the class requiring permits consists of plants not known to be infested or infected with dangerous pests or those infested or infected with pests which can be readily found through inspection and eliminated by treatment. Some of the diseases, especially virus diseases, cannot always be found by the present methods of inspection. Plants which may be infected in the country of origin with diseases of this type must, if allowed to enter under permit, be grown under postentry quarantine. Plants imported under postentry quarantine must be grown in a designated location aggregated from other plants and kept available for inspection over a period of at least two growing seasons before final release by this Bureau.

Plants and plant products which do not require individual permits for importation are those which do not involve serious pest risk. Among these are seeds of herbaceous flower, vegetable and field crops, processed fruits, fruits and vegetables which have been grown in Canada and plants or plant products which are brought in for food, analytical, medicinal, or manufacturing purposes. Okra seed, sweetpea seed, and vetch seed, and seeds of woody plants require a permit. Some seeds, such as corn and wheat, are prohibited from specified countries. Fruits and vegetables from countries other than Canada are prohibited or require permits.

Since the list of prohibited and restricted plants is very lengthy and since prohibitions and restrictions depend on the plant and the country in which the plants were grown, no attempt is made in this article to explain fully the quarantines and regulations enforced by the Division. If you are considering the importation of seeds, plants or plant products you should contact a representative of the Division by letter or in person stating the kind and amount of material you wish to import and the country from which you wish to import it. You should also state where you intend to grow plants for propagation, what means of transportation you intend to use (mail, express, freight, or baggage), the port at which you intend to enter the material, and your name and address. You may contact representatives at: Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Import and Permit Section, 209 River Street, Hoboken, New Jersey; or, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Room 136, Federal Bldg., P. O. Box 312, Anchorage, Alaska.

You are probably most interested in importing plants from Canada. A few plants are prohibited entry from Canada, plants subject to postentry quarantine must be imported through our inspection station in Seattle, and all permissible material (except that listed as not requiring permits) must be imported under permit.

Plant material (except postentry) from Canada which requires a permit may be entered as baggage, freight or express at any port where a United States Customs official is stationed if the material is accompanied by a permit from the U. S. Department of Agriculture and a certificate of origin and pest freedom signed by an authorized Canadian plant inspector. To obtain the permit, contact the Division as indicated above. Although the wisest course is to get a permit before you import plants, you may, if you are traveling in Canada and see plants you wish to import, purchase the plants, get a certificate from a Canadian inspector, and declare the plants at the Customs port where you enter Alaska or the United States. Here you will be required to make application for a permit to import the plants. The Customs inspector will take your application and the Canadian certificate for forwarding to the Division of Plant Quarantines. He will release the plants to you and your permit will be sent to you later. If you fail to get the Canadian certificate (and in many towns and areas no authorized inspector is available) the Customs official has no alternative other than to confiscate the plants. Should you be flying to Anchorage from Canada, you could bring the plants in and declare them to the Customs inspector at the time your baggage is examined. The plants would be examined by plant quarantine inspectors in Anchorage. Should the plants be prohibited they would be refused entry.

This Bureau has no regulations or quarantines governing movement of plants into Alaska from the States, but cooperative action is taken wherever possible to see that shipments conform to any regulations issued by the Territory of Alaska.

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THE HOMESTEADER'S WIFE *by Laura Pedersen*

After the nice mild winter we have had with the minimum temperature being a minus 33 — not even cold enough to freeze the Kenai River here, I really shouldn't have anything to gripe about. I guess I wouldn't if I had not made the mistake of starting a grocery store in an uninsulated building. This worked fine until the fall frosts. Then I had to find a place to keep all my canned goods and other freezable products. After my root cellar was stuffed to the gills I had to bring the overflow into my already crowded house. Once again every nook and corner was filled with canned goods. I never will forget the expression one of my neighbors gave me when he asked if I had some canned clams and I dove under the bed and came up with a can. "Oh dear," he said, "I thought I had frightened you!"

I hope to have my basement finished so I won't have that to contend with next winter.

* * *

We are very lucky to have such a fine group of people settling here at Naptowne since the Land Office opened some land last year. Our population has tripled in the past year and more people are coming in all the time.

We have formed a Community Club and Rifle Club, and we are building our own school this year since we now have more than enough children for the Territory to furnish a teacher. We are even fortunate enough to have a teacher homesteading one-half mile from the proposed school.

* * *

I have a recipe which I'm sure will be of interest to a great many people. It's for Polish sausage, and it comes from John and Nancy Podraza who will soon be our neighbors down here. They are putting in a garage right across the road from us. John is Polish and I believe he got this recipe from his mother. Besides being a good mechanic John is a good cook.

Laura Pedersen

Kielbasa (Polish Sausage)

10 lbs. pork
10 level teaspoons salt
1 level teaspoon pepper
1 clove garlic
½ teaspoon mustard seed
¼ teaspoon celery seed
½ teaspoon saltpeter
½ cup warm water
3 ozs. casing

Cut pork into small cubes. Add salt, pepper, mustard seed, celery seed and chopped garlic. Dissolve salt peter in warm water and pour over meat and spices. Mix well and let stand about 2 hours. Grind coarse in meat grinder, and fill hog casing. Tie sausage at desired lengths, form into loops and allow 10 hours drying time, hung up. Store in cool place. This sausage may be smoked, using same procedure as for smoked salmon. Hog casing should be rinsed inside and out with cold water before stuffing.

I'm sure going to try this recipe next fall.

* * *

After all the bad luck I had with my goose raising escapade last fall we had definitely decided the one and only goose we had left would be our Christmas dinner. So a few days before Christmas I went to the goose pen and got the dear, old goose and carried her over to the wood block. Walt picked up the axe reluctantly and stood there pondering over it. After a short while he looked at me and said: "Are you sure you want to kill her?" I said, "No," which I sincerely meant. Then he said, "Aw heck, I think I'd rather have chicken for Christmas dinner."

After a few words in goose latin, Minnie the goose waddled back to her pen. Consequently we purchased a gander and the goose is now setting on her quota of 15 eggs. I don't think we could kill one if our homestead was overrun with them.

* * *

I would like to thank Mrs. Robert Sneed of Deer Park, Texas, for the nice letter and package of peppers. I can certainly verify the fact that there is some hot stuff in Texas. Those peppers were the hottest I've ever contacted.

* * *

One of our new neighbors, Jack and Gladys Weaver, fell heir to a newly born calf late last fall. Not having a barn to keep it in they penned off their porch. Here he fared fairly well until Jack was able to get a barn built. It was fortunate for all the new homesteaders that we had such a mild winter. We felt a little silly about it all after warning everbody about the severe winters we ordinarily have.

* * *

Another of my neighbors, Mrs. Winn Reynolds, has given me a very unusual chocolate cake recipe:

Sourdough Chocolate Cake

Sift the following ingredients into an ungreased cake pan.

1½ cups cake flour
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon soda
4 teaspoons cocoa
Pinch of salt

Arrange four holes in the dry ingredients and fill with following:

4 tablespoons melted lard or oil
1 teaspoon vinegar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup cold water

Mix together and bake in same pan about 350 degrees.

* * *

Most children hang all their hopes and beliefs on Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny or some other fictitious character. My little 3-year-old can't see it that way. She thinks the mail man, Walt Christensen, is the most wonderful guy in the world. She knows that he brings her toys and new clothes.

* * *

I have given up hopes of having a garden this year. Walt put a cabin right in the middle of where our potatoes were last year and our basement fouled up the spot where I had the vegetables. I guess the only thing left to do is to clear off a spot over on the north forty. That should be good for a few years.

Hope I make it for the next edition.

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Jim Wilson

Commissioner of Agriculture

Jim Wilson, (James W.) on formal occasions, has spent most of his time working in agriculture in one capacity or another, since he graduated from the Utah Agricultural College, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Orgonomy and Soils in 1938. For five years he was with the Soil Conservation Service as a farm planner. He left the Conservation service to accept a position as manager of the Farmers Co-op of White Salmon, Washington, after taking a post graduate course in Business Management. He left this job after three years to come to Alaska to become general manager of the Matanuska Valley Farmers Co-operative Association. Wilson says that there has been great improvement in marketing methods in Alaska during the time that his immediate predecessors were in office.

First, Dean Gasser, who was Alaska's first commissioner, and Clyde Sherman, who resigned on April 23, 1953. Mr. Wilson feels that he and his department must continue to find better ways of grading and marketing the products of Alaska's farms. He believes wider consumers acceptance will follow any improvements made by the farmer on what he sells on the market.

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Sawdust, plus nitrogen fertilizer, is an excellent mulch for starting new lawns, for use in farm woodlots or berry patches, and for general use in improving the structure of heavy clay soils, according to G. O. Baker, soils technologist at the University of Idaho.

Certainly, the waste piles of sawdust around the dozens of small sawmills deserve a better fate than burning; they should be returned to the soil.

Contrary to the common opinion, the resins and oils in wood sawdust do not appear to be harmful to the soil, Baker explains. The difficulties that sometimes have come from the use of sawdust can be traced to a nitrogen deficiency, not to the toxicity of any substances in the sawdust. Breakdown of the sawdust temporarily ties up the available nitrogen in the soil.

For that reason, sawdust applied as a mulch or worked into the soil to improve its structure should be accompanied by a liberal shot of notrigen fertilizer. Research has worked out this schedule: Eight-tenths of a pound of ammonium sulphate, or five-tenths of a pound of ammonium nitrate, to each bushel of sawdust.

Tree species makes no difference in the value of sawdust as a mulch, according to Baker. They all work about the same. Also, fresh sawdust works as well as that which has dried out. Very old sawdust which has been in the pile so long it has partially decayed and turned black, is best but that is difficult to find.

For good results in mulching with sawdust, layers up to four inches sometimes are worked into the top four inches or so of soil. A two-inch application of sawdust should be accompanied by the addition of 300 pounds of nitrogen fertilizer per acre, Baker estimates. A four-inch sawdust application would call for possibly 500 pounds.

Roger Woods

We or the Agriculturist were pleased to hear that Roger Woods was the lucky Alaskan to be chosen to represent his homeland in the International Farm Youth Exchange program. He will spend six months south of the border. A long way south, too, clear down in Equador. He will spend three months studying agriculture in the Andes Mountains. There, conditions are much the same as they are in Alaska.

Although Equador is a tropical country, many glaciers flow down out of the high mountains. There, in the high Andes Mountains some of our most important crops originated, to spread the world over, including corn and potatoes. The Indians on the high plateaus still raise, and live on the prehistoric ancestors of our modern crop.

Mr. Woods will also spend three months along Equador's coast land. He will study marketing methods used there. This may be useful in Alaska. Roger is majoring in business management in college, and hopes some day to assist in the marketing of the products of Alaska's farms to the people of Alaska.

The next time someone offers to bet you dollars to doughnuts, take him up if he's offering you odds.

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Exterior Decorating with Plants

By Fred J. Bailey

Exterior decorating to a lot of people means a coat of paint on the outside of their house. To other people it means much more than that. A nice lawn, a few trees and shrubs, a hedge and even some artistic rock work. After travelling in 44 of the 48 United States, 6,000 miles in Mexico and 3,000 miles in Canada, I am now enjoying a new adventure in horticulture in Alaska. When I hear numerous people say things won't grow here in Alaska, I laugh a little to myself and think of many other places that were bare of trees, shrubs and flowers but as a result of an interested horticulturist plants began to appear.

One place, I recall in particular, is a small city in Northern Wyoming. It is very windy and dry and cold in the winter with a short growing season to top it off. From an artistic standpoint it was in bad need of something. It was brought out by a well-known landscape architect that by planting trees, shrubs and flowers, the city would be a much prettier place to live in and at the same time be very beneficial in controlling the wind, dust and temperature. Controlling of the dust made the city a more healthful place in which to live.

Today, the wonderful results can be seen, for the whole city soon followed in its effort to "exterior decorate" their homes and street ways. People can now walk down the streets unaware of the wind that is blowing just a short distance away. Plants, may I add, do not afford a complete protection but the results are noticeable.

Can we in Alaska have exterior decorating in forms of trees and shrubs? Yes, we can have our homes planted with a variety of plants. The first materials usually tried for this effect, are the native plants. These plants will survive the climate, but a knowledge of transplanting such plants is essential. This knowledge may be acquired over a period of years but experienced landscape men will be of help. The second type of plant that will be most likely to survive here is that which has grown in climates similar to Alaska, from Canada and the Northern United States.

Climate, however, is not the only factor in the growth of hardy plants. Soil is an important factor which determines much of the hardiness of plants. Plants as well as humans have their required amounts of food, water and sunshine. In most cases we can furnish these requirements so that the plants will grow. Commercial fertilizer manfacturers have made big strides in making fertilizers which will fit the needs of the plants. Also modern cultivating equipment make the soil easier to work and helps the growth of the plants.

Yes, we can have "exterior decorating" here in Alaska. It is just another phase in the growth of a pioneer country—which is now just beginning.

The fellow who doesn't like to hear anything bad said about a n y o n e, should spend his time listening to people who spend their time talking about themselves.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

To say that water is a limiting factor in the economy of Alaska, would bring down the wrath of everyone forced to slop around in the spring breakup or build roads, fences or trails, or otherwise be plagued by our endless swamps. Nevertheless it is true. Even now many of our city's biggest problems is water, both quantity and quality. These will become more acute as the city grows.

Even Ketchikan where the average rainfall is 150 inches a year, runs out of water when it stops raining for a few days. Fairbanks, Homer and many smaller places practically have no usable water. Only within the past year have Anchorage and Palmer solved their water problem. Most of the arable land in Alaska is situated in an area of short rainfall.

The only thing that makes agriculture possible is the fact that most of the precipitation is in the fall in the form of snow, and the rain that does fall is in August and September. That and the fact that most of the moisture is locked up in the form of ice and frost most of the year.

As more and more land is cultivated less and less of the available moisture can be held in the soil and irrigation will become a necessity in many places. Farmers who have tried irrigation on a serious scale have found it very profitable. As hydro-electric power becomes available and cheap, more and more farms will be irrigated.

Irrigation will probably be on an individual basis rather than big irrigation districts, as in the States, due to the rolling nature of our valley. And the fact that there are many warm water lakes and streams. Many of the lakes will soon be pumped dry under heavy use.

Alaska has a vast hydro-electric potential, if its dams can be placed on our suitable streams to stop the summer floods, and dole them out as needed in the form of electric power.

So the rest of Alaska's vast resources can be developed for the use of all America. Water is the key to our future and like all natural resources should be used and not wasted.

Well, we are finally forced to agree thart women are angels. Always harpen and up in the air about something.

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ALASKAN REINDEER NOTES

(Continued from Page 15)

persed when attacked by wolves, which made a large-scale slaughter difficult; but reindeer had learned to band, to "mill", so that a family of wolves could slaughter large numbers easily. By 1941 the restless wolves, ever seeking more reindeer to kill, had spread to all mainland ranges.

Unlike reindeer owners, wolves gave reindeer constant attention. They were on the job both day and night. They killed thousands outright. They starved thousands to death by chasing the reindeer constantly during the late winter and spring. They slaughtered more animals for sport than for food. They caused fawns to be stillborn by chasing the mothers constantly during pregnancy. They killed baby fawns. They caused death to baby fawns by forcing their mothers to abandon them.

The herds decreased as a snowball melts under the sun. Great herds were rapidly destroyed. Some ranges, left desolate when the caribou had vanished, again became desolate. Fawn percentages dropped to as little as 5 per cent. Destruction occurred on ranges possessing the best forage, as well as the poorest.

Many reindeer owners were alarmed. Reindeer officials were alarmed. But this was a new problem. People pondered how to kill the wolves.

One teacher wanted fine rifles with telescopic sights. A Unit Manager urged wolf drives, something in the nature of rabbit drives, where villagers would march across the country driving wolves before them. Some wanted to scatter sharp whalebones, coiled inside frozen blubber, which would spring to pierce the intestines of the wolf which had devoured them.

Some people advocated snares for use on great open, treeless ranges, where wolves followed no trails in their search for scattered reindeer on crusted snow. Some recommended heavy traps, the same to be dug out from under the drifted snow occasionally; the trapper, it was said, could melt snow to freeze down his traps, as there were no trees to anchor them. Many plans for killing wolves were offered.

Obviously, the way for reindeer owners to have protected their reindeer against wolves was to have herded their reindeer. But the possibility of organizing constant herding did not occur to people. The reindeer had increased to a peak of about 640,000 by 1934.

But the most important thing was that mismanagement had developed its own psychology. All reindeer owners had gotten out of the habit of herding. They had gotten into the habit of company organization and procedures; it was a path of least resistance to continue them. Reindeer owners lacked a will to raise reindeer, as they had stressed reindeer harvesting for so long. Many reindeer owners were not worried by the new destruction being caused by wolves. It was comfortable to believe that wolves would decide to leave reindeer ranges. Reindeer owners in some areas were afraid of wolves.

Nevertheless, in 1936, despite these conditions which made organization of constant herding appear impossible, I issued a statement that constant herding was necessary. Since that date, I stressed it ceaselessly in thousands of letters, news articles, and in meetings with reindeer owners. It became the primary objective of reindeer supervisors.

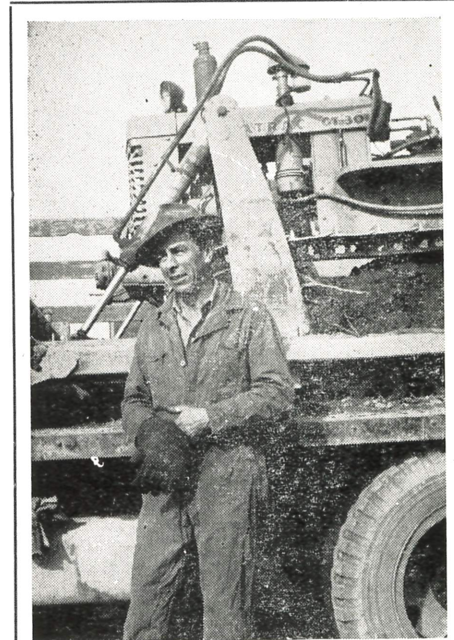
As concerns wolf control alone, I have steadfastly maintained that a two-pronged effort is needed: (1) reindeer herding, which I have called an indirect attack on the wolves; and (2) wolf killing. In connection with wolf killing I have urged, persistently, that the Government should attack wolves with light aircraft during the spring, and that Territorial wolf bounties should be maintained. Also, I think the Federal Government should match the Territory's bounty.

In 1935, the Reindeer Service urged that the Predator Section of the Biological Survey assist in eradicating wolves. In the summer of 1936, it sent an experienced predator hunter to Kotzebue to instruct the people of that region in modern wolf trapping methods. But it had become apparent by the summer of 1937 that traditional methods of ground hunting (on the great snow-blown, treeless tundra lands, where wolves do not make and follow trails because the hard snow-crusts everywhere will carry their weight) were not worth the expense.

Despite the presence of large numbers of wolves, only two had been captured by traps in the whole region between the Kivalina and Buckland Rivers in 1937 although Natives shot large numbers. The wolf trapping project was discontinued the following year.

Meanwhile, airplane wolf hunting was being pioneered on reindeer ranges by Archie Ferguson and Morris King. By 1945, fifteen such private pilots had killed 172 wolves on the Bering Sea Coast in their spare time.

Between 1932 and 1936, a storm of conflict between Natives and a White reindeer firm absorbed much of the attention of reindeer owners and other people on Seward Peninsula. The reindeer service was caught in the middle of it. Confidence of reindeer owners in the Reindeer Service and



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in each other had somehow to be rebuilt.

In 1937, Congress passed the so-called Reindeer Act. In the main, it set forth the Government's intent to extinguish non-Native ownership of reindeer in Alaska by purchase, also to manage those reindeer for the benefit of Natives. It specified that none other than Natives and the Government could, in future, enter the reindeer business in Alaska by acquiring Alaskan reindeer breeding stock. It authorized the Secretary of the Interior to promulgate regulations to control grazing, butchering, and some other reindeer activities. But no money was appropriated for the project.

Effective July 1, 1937, the Reindeer Service was transferred to the Office of Indian Affairs. The reindeer knew it not. What they needed was owners who would care for them.

In 1939, Congress appropriated funds to extinguish all non-Native ownership in Alaska. But no money was appropriated to take care of purchased reindeer.

Up to this time, while we in the Reindeer Service had observed the many weaknesses of reindeer associations, no one had proclaimed that these weaknesses were fatal. We continued efforts to improve them. We supplied materials and corrals needed on many ranges. Looking toward the day when constant herding would be resumed, we introduced a new type of plywood herders' cabin on skids. We supplied travel equipment to all teachers, and gave them a general travel authority to visit herds which were held in custody. We equipped every herd with emasculators, introduced a quantity of canning equipment for conserving fawn meat. In order to provide increased income for reindeer companies, we found markets in the States for reindeer products at higher prices than had been procured during many past years and engineered shipment of thousands of carcasses and hides on the North Star and commercial vessels. But reindeer herders still did not emerge from among the great mass of company stockholders.

In the spring of 1940, at a time when reindeer appeared doomed to early extinction, we set up constant herding on the Barrow, Wainwright, Point Lay, Point Hope, Kivalina, Noatak, Selawik, Buckland, Shaktoolik, Unalakleet, and St. Michael ranges. In doing that we stretched our limited funds as far as they would go to accomplish four things:

(1) To save breeding stock from utter destruction in order to rebuild reindeer herds under good management in future;

(2) To start herding in order to develop a habit of herding and, also, to demonstrate the results of herding on wolf-infested ranges:

(3) To tame the reindeer;

(4) To sift out reindeer owners who prized reindeer most highly by seeing what response we would obtain from our offer to help them.

The terms we offered reindeer companies were these: we would pay a chief herder $45 per month. We would also pay $20 per month to each of three common herders provided their companies would match those wages. We published a full outline of duties for each man. The hope was that each company would take custody of at least part of its reindeer and save them.

As regards Government-owned reindeer, 6,659 were combed from Seward Peninsula to establish the Escholtz herd east of Kotzebue Sound under selected Eskimo herders. This is the Government's present "seed herd," out of which reindeer breeders have since been loaned to several Eskimos, with mixed success, in the Kotzebue Sound region. Herding was also established in the Government's Hooper Bay, Egavik and Shaktoolik herds, but the quality of work was poor and surviving reindeer are now held under hired Eskimo herders near St. Michael.

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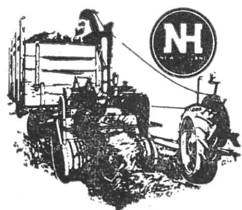

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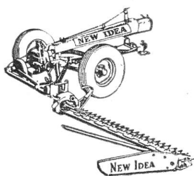

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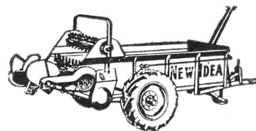

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Charles Burdick, representing the Secretary of the Interior, began purchasing all non-Native reindeer. An experienced career officer with a liking for people and of highest integrity, he was particularly suited for his difficult task.

Over 500,000 wild and scattered reindeer were claimed by 52 Lapps and other Whites on ranges between Umnak Island and Kotzebue Sound, including Nunivak Island. The Government, of course, had the burden of disproving those claims. The Reindeer Service, working in close cooperation with Mr. Burdick, organized reindeer roundups to establish actuals counts and did exhausive statistical research covering years of records to establish trends of ownership. I accompanied Mr. Burdick during 12,000 miles of aerial reconnaisance of ranges while the snow still remained to reveal animals and their trails.

Mr. Burdick succeeded in extinguishing all claims on the basis of 82,538 head at an average cost of $3.98 apiece. There is no question but that all non-Native owners were treated fairly. As matters developed, they were lucky to sell. Wolf predation, added to the decreasing human "take" as the reindeer became fewer, soon destroyed mainland reindeer where herding could not be established.

Meanwhile, reindeer on wolfless Univak Island needed drastic reduction to prevent the fragile, slow-growing "reindeer moss," which is essential for winter grazing, from being depleted. True, there were only 17,000 reindeer; and using the Biological Survey's figure of 45 acres per head for sustained yield, the Island would support 23,190. Most mainland ranges, however, which totalled about 158 acres per reindeer even at the peak of population, showed serious reductions of "reindeer moss."

Commencing in 1940, therefore, we began reducing Nunivak reindeer to leave not exceeding 10,000. In three years, 7,050 fawn skins were harvested, which was two-thirds of the crop. A large skin-drying shed and modern cold storage were erected. Large scale annual shipments of meat and skins were begun and have continued. The herd approximated 5,000 head prior to this present fawning season.

World War II created conditions which appeared to handicap the Government's new herding program severely. Physically fit young men were inducted, which tied the remaining men to the job of caring for their families in the villages. If they could leave to take jobs, defense work under cost-plus contractors paid several times what the Government could offer herders. Quicker profits were available from ivory carving than from herding, as prices of curios boomed. Furthermore, news of the war was a diverting excitement; and the radios were in villages, not out in the reindeer pasture. As one Eskimo put it: "I am too busy to herd."

Yet I question whether the war actually had any greater effect than to make the Natives less interested in herding reindeer than they had been for over 20 years.

In the years of 1941 to 1943 the Fish and Wild Life Service furnished an expert wolf hunter to consider the wolf situation in the Norton Bay and Kotzebue Sound regions, where wolves were plentiful and were slaughtering thousands of reindeer. He killed only five wolves, however, all of which were shot. Eskimos were shooting about 200 per year.

By 1944 it had became apparent to me that reindeer associations would not undertake efficient herd and pasture management. Their defects were fatal. Therefore, despite Indian Commissioner Collier's liking for Indian cooperatives, I issued an outline of information to all stations within the reindeer country which set forth why, and how, they should convey their reindeer to private herdsmen. This suggested sale of reindeer at a nominal price or loaning stock to private herdsmen. The present Andrew Skin and Charley Smith herds result from that plan.

The Government, not neglecting education, has given information to the Native people concerning all phases of the reindeer industry. This includes blueprints of corrals and other structures; a chart for cutting carcasses; information regarding castrating, driving, corralling, making harnesses, breaking sled deer, percentage marking of stock, types of reindeer for selection, the proper proportion of bulls to females, weights and measures of meat and hides, handling stock in dusty corrals, techniques of butchering; processing of meat by drying, smoking, and canning; storing and shipping hides; etc.

This, added to lessons gained from their own experience and from Laplanders, some of whom still live on Alaska's reindeer ranges, has given Natives every opportunity to learn the "how" of reindeer management. But a lot of us know how to do things we don't choose to do.

This past winter's official census of reindeer remaining on Alaska's mainland shows only 10,994 head in the nine separate herds. Title to 8,396 of these remained in the United States, although about half of them have been loaned to six Eskimos. In addition, an estimated 16,344 wild reindeer were on Univak, St. Lawrence, Kodiak, Umnak, Atka and Pribilof Islands, of which the Government owns three-fourths.

The question remains: should and can the reindeer industry in Alaska be rebuilt? I think it should and can be rebuilt.

I think perhaps 200,000 square miles of northern Alaska is potential reindeer pasture that is most useful for that purpose. Allowing 200 acres per

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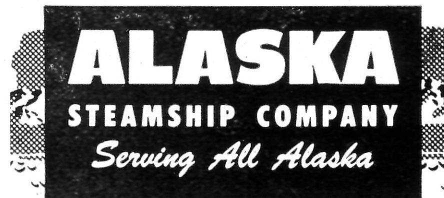


animal, an excessive figure, the pasture would support 640,000 reindeer.

Allowing pasture for 320,000 wild reindeer (caribou), an equal number of domesticated reindeer could be grazed. These, if properly managed, should produce 64,000 head per annum for human consumption. Based on Nome's former per capita consumption of 1.3 carcasses per annum, the annual crop would suffice for 49,000 people.

We need meat and hides. We need local industries. Reindeer herds dotting our tundra would facilitate prospecting, exploration, military field maneuvers. They would be exciting to tourists. It would reduce human pressure on wildlife if people could purchase reindeer products in isolated places. Small businesses, such as tanneries and fur garment factories, would be stimulated.

On Alaska's mainland there remain eight times as many domesticated reindeer as our Government imported for establishment of an industry from which humans have harvested at least 500,000 animals. By broadening the base of the reindeer program to include all of northern Alaska, and to include qualified herdsmen irrespective of race, 320,000 domesticated reindeer can be achieved in 25 years, just as they were so increased from 10,000 in the 20 years subsequent to 1905. Today we have airplanes, radios, experience and other valuable assets to help.

A resource is either worth developing or not. If it is not, the Government should not bother with it. If it is worth developing at all, the Government should utilize the finest skills procurable among all races to get that development accomplished.

Reindeer Lapps of Europe possess experience and traits favoring good reindeer husbandry. They are true nomads; a good reindeer herder must be such. They understand northern tundra, its loneliness, cold, dangers, resources. They are content to "live tough" in camps; and their wives are content. They are thrifty, shrewd planners. They know what reindeer need; and their training impels devotion to fulfilling that need. They could come to our tundra, feel "at home" and resume their "old country" reindeer herding with no fuss.

Federal legislation should be enacted whereby Laplander reindeer men of Norway and Sweden, together with their wives and children, shall be admitted as non-quota immigrants for residence within Alaska in such numbers as may be requested by the agency responsible for reindeer development. Not long hence, this may be a Department of Resources of the State of Alaska.

As fast as the number of reindeer breeding animals available for loan permits, but with regard to the economic success of established herder-owners, the Government should import more Lapps until they, together with selected Americans of any race, operate enough reindeer that the per annum crop therefrom supplies the public's wants within limitation of the forage resources.

Whoever develops reindeer will benefit Natives—and everyone else. Bellies and the sensitivity of skins too cold know no race. Reindeer themselves are without racial prejudices; they merely want help from men.

It is not only unfair to non-Natives to make development of a valuable resource entirely dependent upon members of a Native race. It is, also, unfair to put burden of raising reindeer wholly upon Natives. No one wants to be forced to raise cattle in order to get leather shoes. It would not be sound to permit none except, say, Polish-Americans, to raise cattle.

To the degree that a racial psychic isolation has been fortified in Natives of Alaska by various forces, competition of Lapps and others would lessen that isolation.

To prevent speculators from grabbing herds, the law might call for a certification of experienced reindeer growers and issuance of grazing permits to them alone. They could then sell breeders to other certificated growers; or all their stock to a butcher, speculator or otherwise. But incompetent get-rich-quick folks could not clutter up ranges with mismanaged herds. The resource would get much protection thereby.

To protect its breeding stock against loss, the Government should not loan stock to any person unless he could prove at least three years steady reindeer herding. He should, also, be required to submit a sound plan for management.

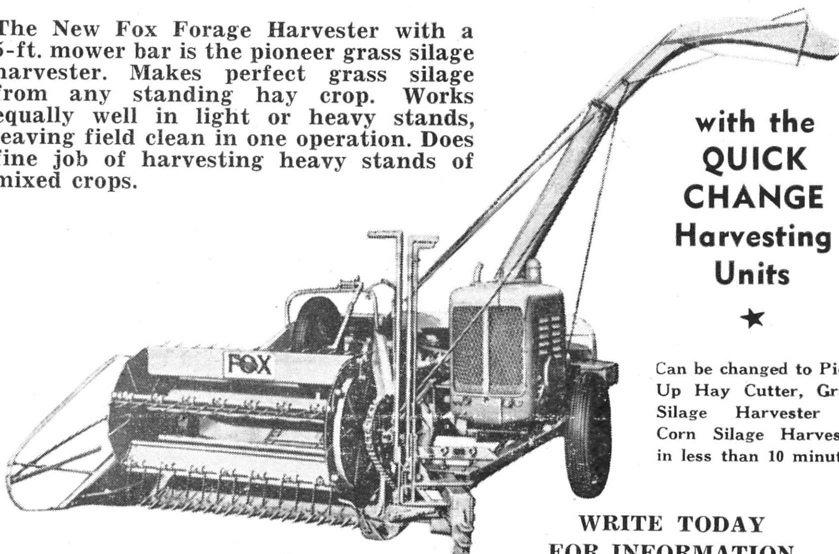
This would bar no race. Certain Natives and Lapps could qualify immediately. Others, at the start, would have to serve apprenticeships under them. A very desirable weeding-out program would operate thus. It would dismay mere promoters. Reindeer owners should be herder-owners who work with other members of the herding crew in the field.

Loans of breeders could be for five-year periods, as at present. The herder would repay equivalent animals then, keep the increase as his own. This plan, used for many years in Alaska, is one I helped revive here.

At the same time, reindeer operators should be eligible for loans from farm loan funds.

The present Reindeer Law (50 Stat. 900) should be killed. Its race-discriminatory features are un-American and stupid. Not long ago we heard a president of the United States express one of our basic freedoms by saying: " . . . no unfair prejudice or artificial distinction should bar any American from . . . a job that he is capable of performing." The Reindeer Law violates that principle to the public hurt.

Meanwhile the Government should map the lichen areas and analyze potential markets, as rapidly as possible, and "get going" with a new program.



TRANSPLANTING TREES

The transplanting of native shrubs and trees from the wild to the yard and setting out of domestic shrubs and trees as hedges and to form wind breaks, and as individual plants is a relatively easy job if certain basic principles are kept in mind as the work progresses. Too often the trees and shrubs taken from the woods promptly die for no good reason that the gardener can see.

Shrubbery purchased from a nursery usually is and should be dormant when when set out in the spring. These young trees have been grown by experts, who know just how to prepare each variety to give it the best possible chance to not only survive but to grow into a healthy thing of beauty in your yard. Some trees are transplanted as much as four times in the two years before you get them from the nursery. This gives the roots a chance to grow and at the same time holds back the top growth. So that when the gardener gets them he has strong trees with a heavy and compact root system that are ready to grow and make a permanent part of the landscape. That is seldom true of the wild trees. Although it can be, if the gardener is willing to spend two or three years in preparing the trees of his choice, by pruning the top to his satisfaction, or pruning the top to force growth until it does reach his satisfaction.

By cutting back the root system to shorten the long lateral roots and force a more compact root near the tree. It is not difficult and is necessary on larger trees. That is trees from 20 feet high and up. In transplanting a wild tree the root system should be left equal in width to the spread of the branches. If it is a bushy tree that is. If a tree, say eight feet high, has a spread of six feet, the roots also can be cut off in a six-foot circle, and if the rest of the operation of moving the tree to its new home is carried out correctly, the tree will live nine times out of ten.

If a tree is tall and has tight growing branches the spread of the roots must be greater than the spread of the branches. If the roots and top can be trimmed early in the spring the year before transplanting, the moving of this plant is easy and its success is sure. On especially large trees, that is, trees up to 30 feet high, the roots should be trimmed two years before moving, so a complete healing of the cut roots can take place. In moving trees, care must be taken to keep all the dirt on the roots possible. This keeps the little hair roots from drying out. If a tree is to be out of the ground as little as fifteen minutes, gunny sacks and water should be on hand to soak the roots, so they cannot dry out for even a minute.

Out in the brush the frost stays in the ground quite late. And it is seldom possible to take up a tree before the middle of June. By that time the leaves will be well started. That's O.K. They can be transplanted until the leaves are ¾ grown. Evergreens any time up to the middle of the summer. After the frost is out of the ground, down one foot, the tree can be moved. Trees in Alaska do not develop a cap root and so root very shallow. Take an ax and cut a circle around the tree, the distance out from the trunk decided on, chopping down five or six inches. This will cut all of the roots and the tree is ready to take up and set in the truck or trailer. After the roots are cut, the large tree, one that takes two or three men to handle can be tipped this way and that until the roots are loose, then picked up and set in the truck. As soon as the tree is taken out of the ground and set in the truck, sacks or moss should be piled on all bare roots and wet down thoroughly. That is the most important single item in the transplanting of native trees. The tree should then be taken to a previously prepared spot and planted as quickly as possible. In the preparation of a place to plant, if in a lawn, a hole should be dug one foot bigger in diameter than the root spread and sixteen to eighteen inches deep. The dirt should be mixed about one-third with peet, or better still leaf mold from the area from where the tree was taken. This will make the tree feel more at home in its new surroundings.

Since the tree in a natural state roots very shallow, it must be transplanted shallow, four or five inches of dirt over the roots is plenty. The dirt must be well packed around the roots, under as well as above. Air pockets under the roots, is always fatal. Four or five pounds of bone meal is a great help added to the dirt under the trees, with a small amount of commercial fertilizer placed around the top of the roots. Maybe just a handful of commercial fertilizer. A dam or ridge of dirt should be placed around the tree, over the very tips of the roots to a height of six to eight inches.

This will do two things, help hold the tree upright and help hold the water in around the roots. The tree must be kept wet for several weeks. It sometimes takes several hundred gallons of water to wet the ground thoroughly around the tree the first time. Then a few gallons a day will keep it wet. Large trees should be guyed with wire three ways, in case of wind.

Some people spray the trees' foliage three or four times a day with cold water to slow down the rate of evaporation. Wrapping the trunk with sacks and keeping them wet, also helps. But if a good job is done, these aids are not necessary. Some of the leaves fall off in a few weeks. Nature's way of balancing the root system with the top. Pruning back the tree is a good idea if the tree needs pruning. Transplanting of nursery stock from a nursery is about the same except that the roots grow deeper and care should be given to see that the roots are spread out as much as possible in the dirt. Caragana hedges, about the only plant that makes a good hedge here, can be set from eighteen inches to two feet apart in a prepared trench. Caragana is a slow growing plant unless fertilized heavily. Then they can be a very fast growing plant. Ordinarily it takes three years to grow a presentable Caragana hedge. When a dog tight hedge is wanted, it's a good idea to stretch a fine woven galvanized poultry wire, three or four feet high, depending on how high the hedge is supposed to be. After the hedge is three years old, the fence cannot be seen, and it will turn back anything that walks.

Caragana can be used to make an overhead arch simply letting the bushes over the gateway grow and training them overhead. Small spruce trees, natives, makes a nice hedge for a few years. The big trouble with them is that they soon outgrow their purpose and must be cut down, or become an eye-sore instead of an asset.

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TRUE ALASKAN

By Lula B. Pointer

As I turn back the pages of memory, there is one person that always comes to mind. I would like to tell you about her; how she keeps alive the Alaskan spirit and even passes it on to those who come in contact with her.

Some people love Alaska because they attain greater heights, politically or socially, here than in the States. Others because of greater opportunities in working conditions and higher wages. But I honestly believe that this cannot be said of Mrs. Margaret Keenan Harrais, who loves Alaska for its own sake.

The facts, that I am going to set down here, have been gleaned from Mrs. Harrais herself, while sitting in her living room, which also serves as a U. S. Commissioner's office in Valdez, Alaska. She has an oil stove that burns so brightly through mica doors, almost turning out fireplace warmth and cheer; with a little brass tea kettle atop singing away; Mrs. Harrais sitting opposite in a big rocking chair. You can really pass away a lot of dreary, rainy afternoons and not realize they were dreary, if Mrs. Harrais is not too busy to tell of her experience in pioneering and Dog-sled Days here in Alaska.

She has led a very colorful life here in Alaska. She tells me that she came North in 1914 as superintendent of schools in Skagway. Later, she started on the grand tour of the Yukon, got as far as Fairbanks, where they offered her the superintendency of the Fairbanks schools, and dropped anchor there, where she met Martin Harrais.

Two years later they were married in San Diego, California, but even sunny California held no lure for them as a permanent home. Mr. Harrais was a mining engineer, and his life work was in Alaska by choice, rather than appointment, as he was a lover of Alaska, too. Mrs. Harrais tells me with a merry chuckle, "Keeping up with a mining engineer was about like keeping up with a jack rabbit. Given a box of matches and a frying pan, I could be housekeeping anywhere in thirty minutes." Due to the fact that she was Mr. Harrais' companion on his mining expeditions, she followed him through mountain passes and glacial streams, where no white woman had ever gone before or since.

They moved to Valdez in the early '30s, where Mr. Harrais took the office of U. S. Commissioner and followed his beloved mining on Mineral Creek, while Mrs. Harrais acted as Special Commissioner during his absence. For a few years they devoted their time to quiet living and doing the things they liked best to do. Mrs. Harrais liked gardening, so they set about reclaiming an almost impossible tract. In 1936 Mr. Harrais passed away. Mrs. Harrais then took the Commissioner's office into her living room, where she has carried on ever since very capably.

A deep, ugly gully ran diagonally through the proposed garden tract, and a glacier stream flood that denuded it of most of the soil, leaving only glacial moraine gravel. Through several years of laboring she has attained a very lovely garden. She has had some of the soil trucked one hundred thirty miles (130 miles). She grows the finest and most gorgeous gladioli that I have ever seen anywhere. She also has raspberries and strawberries. I have seen a snapshot in which six strawberries, laid shoulder to shoulder in front of a foot ruler, extended a little beyond the ruler at both ends. One berry — only one — measured 7 inches in circumference. She has several varieties of flowers, the old stand-bys, such as pansies, forget-me-nots and English daisies, as well as new varieties she gets to try out. Through the summer months her yard is a riot of color lasting till fall. It never fails to attract many visitors that are passing through on the boats or taking the bus or plane. These tourists are amazed to find pansies that measure from 3½ to 4¼ inches in diameter, and eagerly photograph them in color to take back to the States.

At this time of year, with the snow still several feet deep, and more falling, with the promise of a good blizzard in sight, Mrs. Harrais has faith. She knows that spring will come, so she goes serenely about planting in her window boxes and transplanting into individual cans, so that she may have enough for herself and friends, or any child that may show an interest in gardening.

Mrs. Harrais has headed several clubs of civic nature in Valdez, and organized the Garden Club of a few years ago, which held so many interesting flower shows. These exhibits actually inspired garden-minded folk to strive to grow beautiful things, by demonstrating that it can be done, even in Valdez where the rain is such a deterrent.

She has also been very active, and still is, in the cause for Statehood for Alaska. The things she does are purely unselfish, and with no thought or desire for greatness. She just thinks, acts and does. She expresses it, "Just plodding along, doing the things that must be done."

Her home looks like a small curio shop with Alaskan relics she has collected in her travels, or some appreciative friends have sent her.

She played a great part in the founding of the Valdez Community Hospital; in fact, was the originator of the movement. I have seen her on rainy days wheeling a wheelbarrow full of potted plants to the hospital grounds, digging with a shovel and planting them in their individual soil she had prepared for each.

In closing I wish to say that I have not tried to write the story of Mrs. Harrais' life by any means — nor even a chapter of it. I have merely wished to pay tribute to a True Alaskan.

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So You Think You Will Have a Flower Garden

(Continued from Page 11)

in March, a friend gave me some branches I put in water in the cool, dark basement. They soon rooted and in the spring I set them out. Out of 9 branches 2 of them bloomed that first year. The next year all wintered thru and gave forth nice blossoms. For a person who is trying to establish shrubs and perennial flowers I recommend the Japanese honeysuckle.

GLADIOLAS
By Mrs. Wm. Besser

After the first heavy frost and before the ground is frozen I dig my gladiola bulbs, then place them on the garage floor to thoroughly dry. Turning them facilitates in complete drying. After careful drying I shake all the dirt off the bulb.

I use a gunny sack for storing my bulbs. In the sack I shake DDT powder, then put the bulbs in. The sack is then hung on the coldest wall of the garage which is semi-warm.

The last week in March or the first of April I take the bulbs out and peel the dry protective skin off. I then put the bulbs in a paper sack which contains DDT powder and shake well. The extra powder I leave on as I plant the bulbs in milk cartons, which have been cut down to 3 inches in height and 3 or 4 holes have been punched in the bottom for drainage. The soil used is a combination of garden dirt (I had brought in in the fall) and peat, a 2/3 1/3 ratio. Place about 2″ of soil in the bottom of the carton, and barely cover bulb with soil. The first watering is of Hyponex solution. This rich watering is done only once a month. Water every other day and care should be taken to keep soil on the dry side.

As the weather warms the soil and it is getting near the time for transplanting I harden the bulbs gradually. First day I set the bulbs in the garage and open the doors so the sun shines on them but they are protected from the wind. Gradually I let them stay outdoors longer. Later bulbs are planted in a well-drained area so the water will not rot the roots. I dig a fertilizer trench 3 inches on either side of row of gladiolas, put in a commercial fertilizer and cover, then dampen thoroughly. This is repeated when the bulbs start to bloom.

It is important to keep the dirt around the glads loose. When blooms are cut it is also important to let the three lower leaves remain on the stock. This helps in the maturing of the bulb for the following year. I start spraying my bulbs with DD solution when they are three or four inches high and continue with monthly sprayings.

PEONIES
By Mrs. Earl Simmons

I ordered my peonies during the summer and planted them when they arrived in the fall. A bed was dug approximately two feet square and one foot deep per root cluster. In this was put a shovel full of pulverized well-dried cow manure, then loose good top soil mixed in. I think it important not to plant the plants too deep. One inch from the ground level is plenty.

After the ground is frozen in the fall the plants were covered with about one foot of wild grass or straw.

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In the spring remove the straw as it thaws, pitch fork at a time. Loosen and enrich the soil. The first year I pinch off all the buds so the strength will go to the roots. If during the second year there are no blooms, the ground has probably settled and the peonie eyes are too deep. When the peonies are in bloom I usually shake water from the blossoms after a heavy rain.

It is because of our rainy season that I think it not important to purchase the expensive full-petaled peonies. My peonies are now ten years old and I am still getting 30 to 40 blooms per plant each summer.

ROSES IN ALASKA

By Jerry Mealey

For four or five years I hesitated to try growing my favorite flower, roses, here, mainly because I had seen no one else undertake it. Then the seed catalogues came showing sub-zero roses — and I also bought some locally.

I prepared my rose beds as I would have back in the States. I did, however, use bonemeal for the first time here. The flowers more than paid for any time and money spent.

After I was certain winter had started in earnest I cut them back to about 12 inches, then pulled the dirt around them—also covered the whole mound with peat moss. As soon as it started thawing I began to take this off. The peat moss was frozen solid but by taking a little off each day this did not permit freezing and thawing that usually kills plants. Then I pruned the stems back to about five inches and covered the cuts with wax. Roses blossom on new wood and long stems come from near the ground.

The plants that were bought locally I transferred to barrels before the hardest freeze and these I put in the root cellar where the temperature is never below 35 degrees. I kept these watered but not too much. I cut these back to about 12 inches and then about April 1 I took these out and have had them in the greenhouse for a couple of weeks. I set these barrels out each day to toughen them. These I'll plant about the 15th or 20th of May. Then comes the first of the fertilizing —about 10 inches from the plant I put 10-20-10 plus a handful of bonemeal to each plant. As soon as the buds appear I feed with liquid fertilizer (cow manure or moose manure).

SNAPDRAGONS

By Aline Strutz

The snapdragon is really a perennial plant, but is too tender to stand our cold winters in this part of Alaska, so is always treated as an annual here. There are several types of plants of different heights, including a dwarf which makes a good edging or rock garden plant. The tetras are very popular, but the old types are still much liked by many.

The seed is very fine, and should be handled with care. A good medium for sowing is composed of one part each of sand, peat or leaf mold, and good garden soil, put through a rather fine

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screen, with no fertilizer added. I usually sprinkle a layer of sphagnum moss or sand over the soil after it is put into the container and firmed down. Water the soil by setting the container (I use one-pound coffee cans or tuna fish cans) in a pan of water until the soil is thoroughly damp, then let drain.

Disinfect the seeds by adding a small pinch of Spergon, Arasan, Semesan, or similar chemical to the seed packet and shaking until the seeds are coated. Shake evenly over the surface of the soil and just press the seeds in—do not cover with soil. Cover the container with a piece of glass or newspapers and keep in a temperature of 55 to 70 degrees until the seeds germinate, which should be in 8 to 14 days.

This year I planted my snaps March 8, in the house. They were well up on March 20 and on April 5 I transplanted into flats. They should be transplanted as soon as they can be handled, as small seedlings transplant much better than when larger. Space about two inches apart in flats containing about the same soil mixture as before. Water immediately and keep cooler than for germination and give plenty of sunlight and air.

My greenhouse, which has no heat except what comes through a small door opening off the basement stairway—gets quite cold at night—in fact, ice formed on the pan of water one night when a ventilator was accidentally left open—but the snaps suffered no ill effects. When well started a fertilizer solution, using one ounce of sulphate of ammonia or nitrate of soda to two gallons of water, can be given every two weeks or so. Pinch out the tops when four or five pairs of leaves have formed to make bushy, compact plants. Snaps succeed in almost any kind of soil, but prefer a moderately dry spot with plenty of sun.

(To Be Concluded in Summer Issue)

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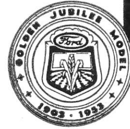

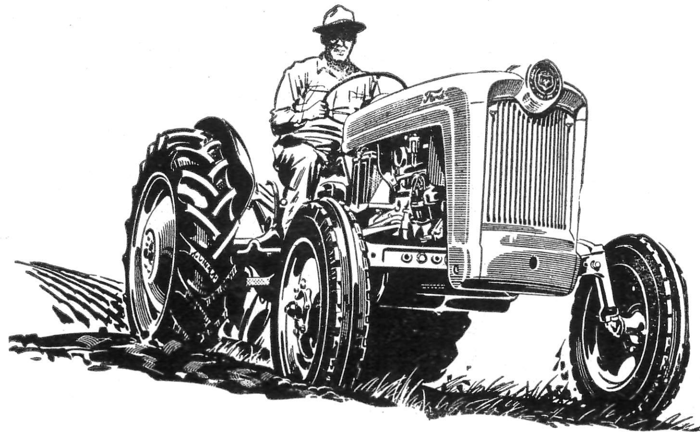

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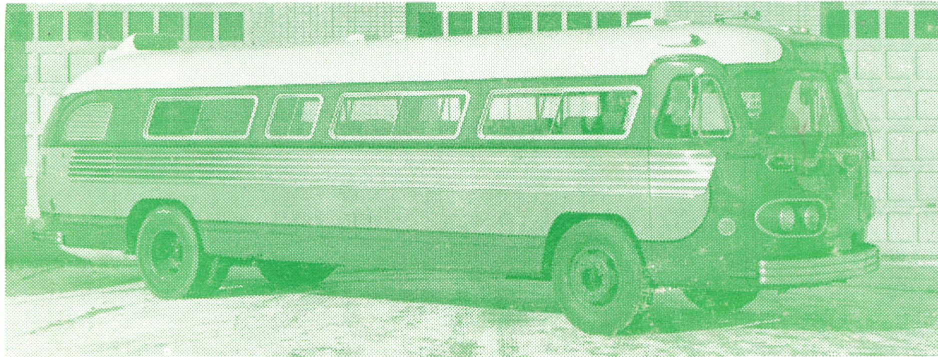

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