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WINTER 1952-3



REINDEER FOR THE PEOPLE ☆ ☆ Page 5

CHRISTMAS IN THE FAR NORTH ☆ Page 9

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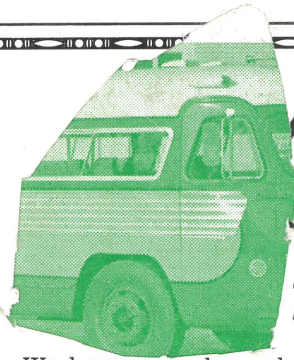
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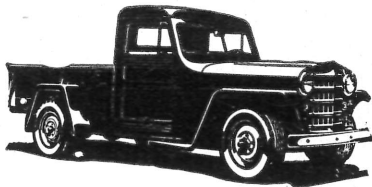
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THE ALASKAN AGRICULTURIST

*Published Quarterly in the interests of
Alaska's Modern Pioneers*

COVER: "Alaskan Reindeer," Painting by George Ahgupuk

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WINTER, 1952-3

ED BALDWIN, Editor—1314 I Street, Anchorage.
DICK BALDWIN, Associate Editor — Fairbanks.

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BACK AGAIN

Art Waldron, president of Alaska Seed Inc., recently announced the sale of their Seed Department to Ed and Dick Baldwin. The Baldwins organized the Alaska Seed Company in 1942 in Sitka, Alaska, moving to Anchorage in 1944. In 1947 the business was incorporated under the name of Alaska Seed, Inc. The seed business will continue to operate at the 1314 I Street location under the name of Alaska Seed Company.

Alaska Seed Inc. has just completed an addition to its building on the corner of 13th and I Street, occupied by John Parmenter's Save More Grocery and Meat Market. The new addition will make Save More Grocery one of the largest in Anchorage. The new addition is of concrete block construction.

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ALASKA REINDEER NOTES

By J. SIDNEY ROOD

Ladies pinched their figures to compete socially. Industry demanded fat for soaps and paint; ivory, for ornaments. So bowhead whales and walrus died.

Corsets needed stiffening with strips of the ebony-like baleen in whales' mouths. A 150 ton whale yielded \$8,000 worth at \$4.50-\$5.50 per pound. And as for oil: a tongue alone produced 12 barrels, and 70 barrels more were gained from the 10-22 inch thickness of blubber which encased the whale's 50 feet of body.

Harpoons of 278 whaling ships dotted Bering Sea with pools of blood in 1852 for a \$14,000,000 prize. In the sleepless summer hunts of later years, whales were chased through fields of ice past Barrow clear to Canada's Mackenzie River, while walrus tusks were harvested enroute, until, by 1890, the motley crews of only 49 ships would risk freezing death and profitless months in seeking surviving remnants of those species across our ravaged seas.

Whales and walrus, along with fish, seal, birds and wild reindeer, had been basic resources of our Eskimo people. They were a hunter-fisher folk who, despite a wonderful resourcefulness in extracting and employing whatever Nature offered from season-to-season, found life so precarious that their customs included killing the feeble aged and hopelessly sick members of their families.

Whale and walrus blubber had given them body heat; and it burned well in the little stone trays over which cooking was done. The dark meat, eaten frozen, dried or raw, was nutritious. Walrus hides were fine for summer tents, boot soles, covering for big skin boats (called oomiaks), thongs, and many other things. Even the transparent gut was used for their parka-type raincoats and the skylights of their winter sod houses. Decimation of whales and walrus made life even more miserable and insecure for our tuberculosis-ridden Eskimos than before American whalers began killing.

Whalers were traders, too, thus enlisting the Eskimos as resident laborers to fill their coffers when they returned to Bering Sea and the Arctic each summer. Besides flour, whiskey, kettles, tobacco and sundry other inventions, they traded firearms. Eskimos exchanged such things as baleen, ivory, furs, fresh meat, curios. Haggling developed the exchange rates, then basic rates probably got fixed by precedent.

I've never learned how many fox

pelts a gun was worth, but I knew a man who paid 25 cents per red fox pelt as late as 1900.

Power is necessary to destroy and to create, and firearms gave Eski-



J. Sidney Rood

mos more power. In past generations they had trapped and slaughtered great numbers of wild caribou with spears and arrows. Firearms increased the harvest for awhile. Caribou

shied away to unpeopled inland ranges. Perhaps better winter pastures, not encased with the damp coast's ice, rewarded them.

It is significant that a class of nearby Siberian Eskimos who owned reindeer had long found ready market for their reindeer skins and sinews among accessible Alaska Eskimos prior to 1890. Kotzebue was the liveliest international market when those Siberians arrived in oomiaks in late June. There is no evidence they traded any of the liquor they had gotten from American whalers, labelled "Florida Water," "Bay Rum," "Pain Killer" or "Jamaica Rum."

Big cream-colored patches of "rein-

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deer moss" (Cladonia) had grown in Alaska's Eskimo country, too. So it is probable that wild caribou had not even trampled it much since at least 1865. The species needs to gobble a mixture of those lichens from early fall until June to keep in condition, but the plants are killed in summer, too, when those animals trample them in search of juicy grasses, mushrooms and other "greens." And it takes them at least 25 years to regrow to ankle height on coast pastures north of Bristol Bay.

Even if white men do not secretly relish their claim to being the "root of all evil"

for weaker Eskimos and other non-White groups, a few of them like to accuse the rest of it. It is debatable whether American whalers caused Es-

THE STEADYER'S WIFE by Law

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Christ- iggested ng and ater for ly had everybody

three years we have spent here. I remember two years ago during duck season some fellows from Seward brought a big boat out and went hunting up Moose River. Around noon they came in and carelessly left their boat at the bank without anchoring it, while they drove down to Naptowne for lunch. They hadn't been gone long when the slow current of Moose River washed their boat adrift. When I saw what had happened I put my baby in the crib and ran down the hill to the river. We had a small canvas canoe

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a Presbyterian missionary in Eskimos should feed and clothe themselves by raising domesticated reindeer from breeders which he thought the Government should import from Siberia. Thus Alaska's wasting plants could be converted into meat, warm pelts for winter clothing and bedding, sinews for sewing, leather for many uses, horns for implements, rich milk and sundry other animal products. This would be better than pauperizing Eskimos with annual doles of imported merchandise.

Sheldon Jackson envisioned reindeer, trained to harness, replacing dogs as draft animals. On basis of his belief that sled reindeer could "easily" travel 100 miles per day, he wrote of U. S. mail deliveries by reindeer-drawn sleds over most of Alaska in future.

If, as he surmized, Alaska could support 9,000,000 reindeer, a great industry would develop in which enterprising White Americans would participate.

He reasoned that some Siberians who tended reindeer were Eskimos; that our Bering Sea Natives were Eskimos, too; that an Eskimo is an Eskimo; and that, therefore, our Eskimos would tend reindeer profitably if our Government would teach them HOW.

Yet, those Siberian deer-owning families may, like modern Lapps, have inherited a reindeer herding culture dating from forebears who, 1,000 years ago, first began their nomadic following and taming of wild reindeer (caribou). The difficulty of getting Alaskan Eskimos to LIKE reindeer herding better than their habitual and exciting life of hunting and fishing out of fixed villages was much greater, I think, than Dr. Jackson realized.

His energetic and powerful propaganda favoring reindeer importations began to excite the Nation. But when, in 1891, Congressman Henry Teller, for whom Teller Village was named, tried to get \$15,000 as a first appropriation to purchase Siberian reindeer that summer, the House conference committee said no. It was argued

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that Siberian Eskimos would live reindeer, due to their superstitions; that reindeer would die ship anyhow; and that, even if they reached Alaska, dogs or Eskimo would kill them. Dr. Jackson couldn't do otherwise then.

But our 1891 Government had a fatiguing elasticity that officer J. Orna was authorized to appeal to newspapers for private donations. Warm-hearted Americans gave strips whereupon the skipper of the whaling wherry Department's steam cutter, was instructed to help Dr. Orna buy and transport reindeer to break-up of the sea ice in June. Czar's Russian Government was inclined to cooperate, too, by requesting Siberian agents to assist.

Fortunately, veteran Arctic skipper, Capt. Healy, and the "Bear" were old friends of the Siberian Eskimos. For that vessel, as well as American whaling ships, had been boarded every season while at anchor in Siberia by chattering Eskimos with skins to trade for flour, powder, thread and other rich White mens' goods. Occasionally one would surprise Captain Healy with a simple English word, learned aboard some whaling craft, while awaiting or relaxing from a feast of hardtack on the "Bear's" deck.

But Eskimo deliberation seemed as interminable as the patience of a hunter waiting for a seal to show itself. The talk by sign language, broken by long periods of silence, dragged along for days. Then a trip inland after somebody's one or two deer had to be made. Sudden storms isolated the deer men from the ship. The "Bear" had cruised 1200 miles of Siberian coast before a total of 16 hog-tied reindeer had been hoisted from lifeboats into the "Bear's" hold, there to be tethered and fed oatmeal water and lichens.

The reindeer rested and braced themselves to the ship's roll like seasoned sailors. Some were aboard three weeks before they were loosed on the big green pastures of Unalaska and Amaknak Islands, where it was hoped they would survive better than on the equally herderless mainland.

Whether reindeer could live among Alaska's Eskimos and dogs still bothered skeptics, however. But Dr. Jackson had money left with which to answer those questions next year, even if Congress refused to contribute. After all, the 16 deer had cost only about \$3.50 worth of trade goods apiece.

A landing of 171 reindeer on Alaska's mainland beach 8 miles north-westwardly from Teller was achieved in the summer of 1892. Four Siberian Eskimos had been hired to herd them, as better help was not closer than Lapland. Construction of a reindeer station was begun, over which a Con-

REINDEER

pelt a gun was worth, but I knew a man who paid 25 cents per red fox pelt as late as 1900.

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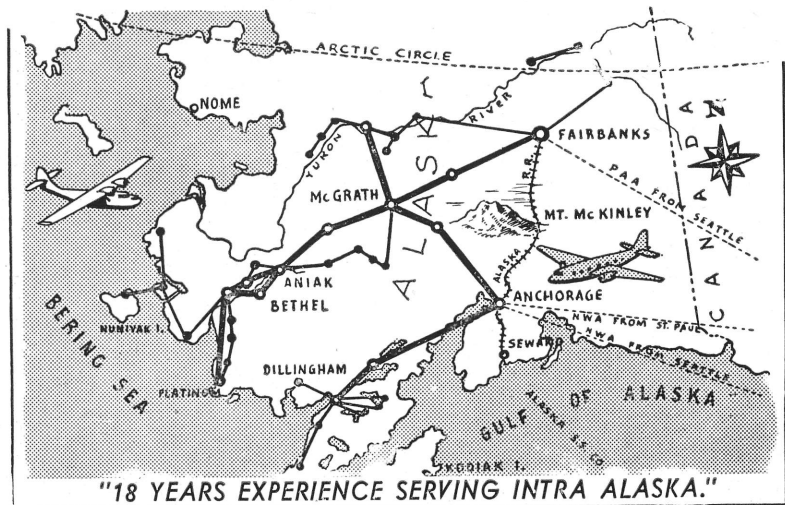
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It is nearby reindeer among to 1890. internat berians June. T ed any

ain envy of their race, earn ock from which promised might flower and, to retain they helped tend the reindeer storms and insects on the andra. Others were afraid to or the "no" of the Govern- as feared much then. Siberian herders clashed with missionary Lopp as homesick- all of them deeper. He found -tempered, jealous, cruel. One for their anger at a tired sled rein- damped it nearly to death by on its head. (continued in the Spring issue)



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THE HOMESTEADER'S WIFE *by* Laura Pedersen

It's a little difficult to get into the Christmas spirit this year. Guess I'm getting old. I think it would be a big help if I had the opportunity to roam through a few big department stores or dime stores at this time of year. (Whatever happened to the dime store where nothing cost over 10 cents?)

While I'm on the subject of Christmas, I think the lady that suggested buying a can of plum pudding and setting it in a pan of hot water for Christmas dinner dessert surely had the right idea. Then when everybody says, "I simply can't eat another bite!" you don't feel as bad as if you had worked hard to make a gorgeous big dessert. They'll do it every time.

* * * *

The new homesteaders in this area are busy building and getting ready for winter. Some are building log houses; others frame houses. One homesteader just put a cabin on his truck and brought it down from Anchorage. Of course these new homesteaders haven't got anything on us since we are still planning our house. Walt has the basement and cesspool dug, and I have hopes of moving into the basement next spring. We'll live in the basement until our finances permit us to build the house we have planned. At least I'll have room for more than two people at one time.

If a person could only find a way to homestead and make a living at the same time you'd really have it made! It's what we're striving for if our strength and stamina hold out.

* * * *

We had a very late freeze-up this fall. Quite different from the other

three years we have spent here. I remember two years ago during duck season some fellows from Seward brought a big boat out and went hunting up Moose River. Around noon they came in and carelessly left their boat at the bank without anchoring it, while they drove down to Naptowne for lunch. They hadn't been gone long when the slow current of Moose River washed their boat adrift. When I saw what had happened I put my baby in the crib and ran down the hill to the river. We had a small canvas canoe that one of our friends had used earlier in the day. I shoved it in the water and rowed out through the path he had broken through the ice that morning. I reached the open water just in time to meet the other boat as it came drifting down. I rowed alongside of it and tried to grab it, without success. Looking for the anchor in it I discovered there was none.

By this time I had drifted close to the Kenai River, which is a very swift and large river. I couldn't row against the Kenai current so I let go of the big boat and headed for shore. It was then I noticed that my feet were in water. I looked around and discovered that our friend had torn a big hole in the bow when breaking ice that morning. The water was rushing in faster and faster. I headed for the nearest shore and started breaking the shore ice with an oar. By the time I made it to shore the boat was half full of ice-water and I was soaked to the knees.

Later, the men came back and I told them where their boat had gone and

they went after it in another boat. I guess they found it alright.

* * * *

I've discovered a way to keep your morale up. Pick a successful person considerably older than yourself and then say, "When I'm as old as he is, I'll have it made too." I imagine this will work until the time when it becomes difficult to find someone older than yourself.

* * * *

Candy is something that is a must during Yuletide holidays, especially the home-made kind. Here's a recipe I obtained from one of my new neighbors, Mrs. Nema Rountree.

Chocolate Covered Cherries

- 1 jar small size, Maraschino cherries
- 1/4 lb. margarine
- 1/2 small can evaporated milk
- 2 lbs. powdered sugar

Mix the milk and sugar alternately with the margarine, roll in balls the size desired. (About the size of a walnut.) Poke hole in ball and push a cherry in, then roll back into shape. Grease your hands with margarine to prevent the candy from sticking. After inserting the cherries, set the candy in a cool place until firm and easy to handle.

Melt five squares unsweetened chocolate and 1/2 square parafine wax in a double boiler. Let cool until you can dip the candy balls in on a toothpick and the chocolate will stick to the candy.

If you have as good luck with them as Nema has, you will have some really good candy.

Why take a Chance?

Depend on Alaska Seed Company for your garden seed and supplies in 1953. New stocks will arrive approximately February. Only those seeds and supplies proven right for Alaska are carried. Why take a chance on hit or miss ordering? Order from these pages next issue. A complete seed list will be shown.

ALASKA SEED COMPANY

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Anchorage, Alaska

Our Front Cover

Our front cover was drawn by George Ahgupuk, Alaska's own Eskimo Artist. Forty-two year old George and his wife Kara were both born on the Bering Sea in the little Eskimo village of Shishmaref. The Ahgupuks have four children ranging from

seven to fourteen years. Stella in the photo is seven years old. All of the children were born at Shishmaref, the Ahgupuks having come to Anchorage about eighteen months ago. George spent a long time in the hospital a few years ago and there discovered he had a talent for drawing. While lying bed with nothing to do one day he tried tracing a picture of a walrus on a piece of tissue paper with his thumbnail. It looked so good he called a nurse who promptly gave him pencil and paper, and in the long



George Ahgupuk and daughter, Stella

months that followed George taught himself to draw. His drawings are 100% authentic, having spent his entire life hunting, fishing and of course living the life of an Eskimo on the bleak coast of the Bering Sea. We have a hunch that George Ahgupuk will go a long way with his talented drawing. If you would like a drawing like the one on the cover of this magazine, drawn especially for you, you name the Arctic subject. It will be drawn on reindeer skin, tanned by George himself. Write to George Ahgupuk, care of the Alaskan Agriculturist, 1314 I Street, Anchorage, and we will see to it that he gets the letter.

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CHRISTMAS IN THE FAR NORTH

By **MRS. NANCY PARKER**

Christmas in Alaska begins when the mail order catalogues arrive. In most parts of the Territory, the middle of October brings both the first snows and the square, heavy mail sacks with their colorful contents. While the frost gathers on the windows and the winter sun makes a shallow arc on the southern horizon, the boys and girls of Alaska pour over the pages of beautiful toys, making their hopeful lists for Santa Claus. For old women in oil lighted, driftwood huts, for children at remote mission outposts, for working girls in modern city apartments, the mail order catalogue is the wish book full of "someday" daydreams.

In the villages where there are few or no stores, most of the Christmas shopping must be done from the catalogues. Ordering begins early. Gifts for friends in the states, if they are to arrive by Christmas, must leave Alaska by the middle of November. An equal amount of time must be allowed for the gift to come from the States, to be inspected and wrapped. Last minute shopping in Alaska frequently means a rush order sent to the mail order house via airmail the middle of October.

In the cities there are further complications. Since the local merchants must compete with the mail order houses, they must display their wares so that the gift shoppers will know what they can buy in their own town. Christmas ornaments frequently make their appearance on the shelves about the time the football season in the States is getting well under way. All through Halloween and Thanksgiving, store counters glitter with tinsel and

artificial snow. By the time Christmas arrives, it is likely to be slightly anti-climactic.

But Christmas Spirit has a way of spreading in spite of commercial handicaps. Around the first of December, children's behavior suddenly takes a turn for the better, housewives hunt up their favorite cookie recipes, and wreathes and trees begin to appear in homes and offices.

Because of the great size of Alaska and the extremes of climate represented, Christmas trees are as individual as the communities they decorate. In the far north where there are no trees and where the highest bushes are the scrubby waist high willows along the river banks, the decorated Christmas trees are a new part of the festivities. The early missionaries and teachers, a little homesick for familiar customs and eager to share their traditions with their native friends, were amazingly ingenious in concocting artificial trees. Broomsticks with green wrapped twigs glued to the handle, willow branches tied together, and wire covered with green paper have all been used. Decorated with paper garlands and strings of cranberries, they were beautiful to the unsophisticated eyes of the parka clad tundra children.

Recently real fir trees have been

flown to treeless Nome and from these distributed to the villages.

In the heavily forested central and southern Alaska, trees are to be had for the cutting. Around the large towns, special areas are designated for the use of those who want to cut their own trees without trespassing on the property of the homesteaders.

One of the happy memories many Alaskan children will have is the trip to the woods to select the tree. In air so crisp and cold that the trees snap and crackle, they lace on their boots and snowshoes. Along the paths the snow has been beaten into a thick crust by the furry feet of the forest animals. Snowshoe rabbits, as white as their background, flip across the paths and fade into invisibility when they stop beside a snow covered log to sniff the air. Ptarmigan in their winter feathers take flight with a noisy beating of wings. Rumpled snow and tracks among the willow thickets betray the presence of moose. The spruce trees are black against the daz-

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KENAI, ALASKA

The Growing Community

zling whiteness, every branch clearly outlined.

When the perfect tree has been selected, the woods ring with the whang of the ax and the excited cries of the children. The blows loosen avalanches of snow that cascade off the branches, sliding down the necks and filling the boot tops of the unwary.

For those who prefer to get their trees in a less strenuous manner, firs are flown in from the States and are sold in the stores.

Community activities in the cities of Alaska are much the same as in the States. Sunday Schools put on plays depicting the beloved story of the First Christmas. Carolers sing on the street corners, Santa sets up a branch North Pole in the store windows, and bells chime from the church steeples.

Anchorage, one year, put on an unscheduled Christmas pageant. Like many Alaskan towns about that time, Anchorage was short of power. Lights were liable to go out without warning. Merchants kept candles on hand for emergencies, so that business could be carried on as usual. It had been a murky day. Just about dusk it began to snow. Great soft flakes drifted gently from the sky, piling in mounds along the streets and on the window ledges. Suddenly the lights blinked out. As if a signal, candles appeared in all the windows along the main street. From a nearby church came the strains of a choir practicing Christmas carols. It was as if we had stepped into a Victorian Christmas card.

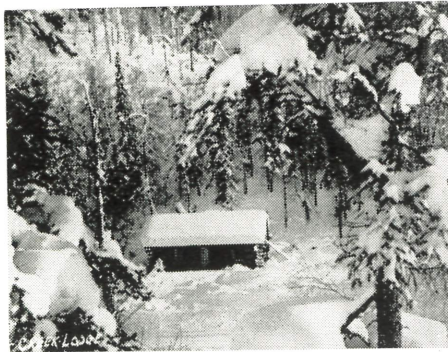
Most communities have traditional programs. For several years the Anchorage Little Theatre presented "A Christmas Carol." This was an adaptation of Dickens' famous story. The arrangement, made by Frank Brink, who is now with the armed forces, was planned to include as many of the talented young people as possible in the cast. Both the actors and the audience had a wonderful time.

In the villages where there is a Russian Orthodox Church the singing of carols has become a colorful ceremony. After the Christmas Eve mass, the carolers form a procession, led by a standard bearer carrying a large shining star. Like the wise men of old went seeking the Child, they pass through the village singing their carols and knocking on doors. Wherever they stop, they are invited to share the traditional Christmas Eve meal.

In many of the native villages Christmas night is the occasion for retelling in dance and song the age old stories of famous hunts and brave deeds.

The shortage of women in Alaska brought about the Hope village community dinner. Founded about the turn of the century as a mining cen-

Winter Scene



This photo of Spring Creek Lodge on the Palmer Highway was taken several years ago just before this popular eating place was opened for business. Looks cold doesn't it?

ter, the men outnumbered the women about twenty to one. Taking pity on their lonely bachelor estate one Christmas, the women offered to get the dinner if the men would provide the meat. The resulting celebration was so successful that it has become a tradition for everyone in the vicinity to gather at the Community hall on Christmas Day — turkeys by courtesy of the bachelors.

Christmas dinners in Alaska vary all the way from the traditional turkey and fruitcake to rump roast of moose with wild cranberry sauce. Many homes make it an occasion for serving as many different Alaskan grown foods as possible. One housewife listed in her menu Caribou roast, moose mincemeat, wild cranberry jelly and wild blueberry pie. The vegetables she served had been raised in her garden the past summer and either frozen or stored in her root cellar. She had a choice of peas, spin-

ach, beets, turnips, carrots, potatoes and celery. She could also have served frozen salmon steak and minced clam cocktails, had she wished. A few Alaskan Christmas dinners will feature bear meat, sheep or bison steaks.

There are few hours of daylight on Christmas, since the sun has just made its shortest trip of the year, but for those few hours the country side is full of children trying out new sleds and skis. Dog teams, gay with bells, flash across the snow. Occasionally a sleigh, drawn by one of the few horses in Alaska, jingles down the road. Dusk comes early and as the lights of the Christmas trees shine from the windows of the homes of the cities of Alaska and the candles and lanterns shine throughout the villages, the echo of Saint Nicholas' parting wish, "Merry Christmas to all and to all a Good Night," drifts softly across the Alaskan snow.

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Gruening Speaks on Agriculture

By Governor Ernest Gruening

Fall is upon us with its gold and crimson foliage. This year's growing season is coming to an end. So it seems appropriate to discuss the most basic and universal of all economic occupations — agriculture.

Agriculture is also one of the oldest of man's pursuits. Its beginnings are shrouded in prehistoric times. Its coming brought the greatest transition in the story of the human race — certainly the greatest until the advent of the machine age. It transformed man's way of life from the chase for game in primeval forests into the seeding of ground to produce a crop. Through long eons the primitive hunter was transformed into a planter. In time he learned to domesticate to his

use some of the wild animals his forbears had hunted. He ceased to be a nomad and became a settler. As such, he required more permanent shelter. He acquired neighbors. These neighbors perforce began to cooperate and to exchange their skills. Communities were born. Thus the transition from hunter to planter gradually wrought through the ages the dawn of what later was to be called civilization. And the Great Society of today still rests, despite all its complexities and refinements, on the continuing attainment of man's three basic needs — food, clothing and shelter. The first of these is food. But the soil which produces it also contributes mightily to the procurement of all three.

In Alaska the prehistoric epic had to be relived. The Alaska aborigine was a fisherman and a hunter. With the coming of civilization, agriculture was likewise inevitable. But it never showed much promise in Alaska until recently.

To be sure the Russians planted small gardens. Our gold miners, at the turn of the century, did likewise. The gold rush likewise attracted the attention of the United States Department of Agriculture to Alaska and the first agricultural experiment station was established at Sitka in 1898. Other stations followed at Kodiak, Kenai,

Copper Center, Rampart, Fairbanks and Matanuska. But the appropriations for them were negligible and all the stations were gradually eliminated by 1932 except the ones at Fairbanks and Matanuska, which were kept going on a very slender basis.

The fact is that very little confidence in the potentialities of Alaska agriculture had been established through the years. But actually they had never been given a fair test. For one thing Alaskans were more interested in the glamorous hunt for gold and in the prospect of quick profit from our fisheries silver herds. And in Washington many people in authority still thought of Alaska as a land of snow and ice. The myth of "Seward's folly" still persisted.

Although the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines had been established near Fairbanks in 1922 as a land-grant college, almost wholly through the vision and enterprise of Dr. Charles Ernest Bunnell, Congress thereafter failed consistently to recognize its legal obligations to this institution. Appropriations for agricultural research and extension work for land-grant colleges authorized by various Acts of Congress were not made for the one institution of higher learning in the Territory which in 1935 was to become the University of Alaska. Our voteless delegates pleaded year after year for what was only Alaska's rightful due. Their pleas fell on deaf congressional ears. It was merely another of the numerous varieties of discrimination which Alaska as a territory suffered.

Certain unforeseen events have greatly changed this situation.

There was first of all the Matanuska Colonization Project, one of the imaginative and constructive experiments which characterized the Roosevelt Administration.

"Let's take some hundreds of people from the blighted farm areas in the states, the dust bowl areas, and give them a chance to start life anew in Alaska," said President Roosevelt, "and let's see what can be done up there for agriculture."

The project's execution, initiated too rapidly for adequate preparation, was faulty in some respects. But it publicized Alaska as a potential area for settlement after a long period of un-interest on the part of Americans in the states and of dwindling population in Alaska. It likewise called attention to Alaska's agricultural potentialities. It established initially 200 farm homes, with barns and subsequently with cleared acreage, and

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brought into being a network of roads in the Valley essential to the marketing of farm products. In short it created for the first time a farming area in Alaska in a climatically favorable region.

The next steps in Alaska's agricultural advance were incidental to the all-round growth of Alaska and to conditions arising out of international events. The national administrations' new interest in Alaska, already demonstrated in the Matanuska Valley, was directed at establishing a permanent and increasing citizenry in the Territory, in place of the more or less transient population that had inevitably resulted in Alaska through the long years of neglect.

Another factor which some of us in Alaska missed no opportunity to point out to federal authorities was the great agricultural activities in corresponding latitudes in Soviet Siberia. When Vice-President Wallace returned from his trip to Russia by way of Siberia in 1944 he reported at Fairbanks that the Soviets had established agricultural experiment stations every hundred miles of latitude and longitude, that they were in consequence developing new strains of grain and other crops and pushing the limits of agriculture further and further north. These Soviet agricultural developments were being integrated with industrial and military development. Washington's interest in Alaskan agriculture, long dormant, belatedly began to be aroused.

Meanwhile the Territory took an important step forward in establishing, by the act of the 1945 Legislature, its own Department of Agriculture. Dr. George W. Gasser, who had devoted the major part of his adult life to agriculture in the Tanana Valley and had just retired as Dean of Agriculture at the University of Alaska, was appointed Commissioner.

The next year, in 1946, a special task force of agricultural experts was authorized by Congress to find out what could be done to promote agriculture in Alaska.

They came, saw and reported the obvious — that research, sustained research, and the establishment and continued maintenance of the appropriate experiment stations, adequately staffed and equipped, were prerequisite.

Clearly, agriculture in Alaska, with its relatively shorter seasons, its unstudied climatic variations, its unknown soils, its unapprehended parasites, needed its own book of knowledge. Farmers in the states had for years had the benefit of nearby federal and state experiment and testing stations. But the knowledge acquired for their areas was seldom applicable to Alaska.

Congress acted. That, coupled with

the Territory's own efforts, was the beginning of a new day for agriculture in Alaska. Agricultural research on a reasonably adequate scale has been adopted. Don L. Irwin, for many years in charge of the Matanuska Experiment Station, was put in charge of the whole research program. Cooperation between University, federal and territorial agencies is in effect.

What then is being attempted for Alaskan agriculture? What are the objectives? The research may be summed up as seeking answers to the following questions:

"What steps need to be taken to develop agricultural species that will be prolific, hardy, resistant to local climatic conditions, best suited to our various soils?"; "What needs to be done to find the right strains, to improve existing strains, to increase soil productivity, to reduce parasite and disease destruction, and to put the resultant product in touch with the best market?"

Now these results cannot be accomplished overnight. Starting virtually from scratch, it is a long process. New strains developed by cross-breeding have to be tested through the seasons. The seasons cannot be hurried. The findings of one year must be cumulated on those of the preceding year. Insecticides, fertilizers, methods of cultivation, all have to go through this same process for each different species and in each different soil area.

However, the work has been organized and systematized. It is divided in-

to eight research departments each headed by a scientist highly trained in his field. These fields are agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, agronomy, animal husbandry, entomology, horticulture, plant pathology and soils science.

Some achievements may already be recorded after four short years. A new and better variety of potato which exceeds previously grown commercial varieties in yield has been released to the Alaska certified seed growers association. Two superior varieties of cereals — golden Rain Oats and Edda barley — have been introduced after extensive trials. In the most important field of dairying forage crops have been improved after careful testing of many varieties. Artificial insemination has been introduced and successfully conducted. Experiments in raising calves for herd replacements have made possible the increasing of herds locally instead of the more costly procedure of importing mature cows

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from the states. Cross-breeding has been introduced. Red Dane cattle have been introduced into the Matanuska Valley and have been cross-bred successfully with holsteins and guernseys. In consequence of these and other measures the annual milk production has been increased in four years by eleven hundred pounds per cow. When the experimental work was started it was 7200 pounds. Last year it averaged 8300 pounds. Some farmers have done very much better. One in the Valley raised his average production from 8610 pounds per cow in 1949 to 10,156 pounds in 1951.

Overall agricultural production is

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steadily increasing. Milk and egg production have doubled. Last year the value of Alaska's products was as follows:

Dairy products \$996,768 — just under a million dollars.

Vegetable products \$528,624. This has risen to the all-time high of over half a million dollars.

Poultry products \$358,953.

Livestock products — including both beef and pork — \$176,886.

The total value of these products in the year 1951 was \$2,061,233.

Divided into regions, the Matanuska Valley produced \$1,274,803. The Tanana Valley \$495,630. Agriculture on the Kenai Peninsula is just beginning. It was virtually impossible to sell its products until a road connection with potential markets existed. Now that the Sterling Highway has been completed the farmers of Homer, Ninilchik, Kasilof and Kenai will have a direct truck route to Anchorage and Seward. Therefore the small value of agricultural products of last year, \$66,000, is due for a substantial increase. Greatly increased homesteading in the Kenai Peninsula makes this outlook promising.

Finally Southeastern Alaska produced \$349,200 worth of products. \$161,000 were dairy products, \$25,000 poultry products and \$125,000 pelts from fur farming. Let us not forget that we have a valuable fur farming experiment station in Petersburg conducted by Jim Leakley.

The Alaska Department of Agriculture, with headquarters at Fairbanks, is developing markets for all farm

products grown in the Territory. Commissioner Clyde G. Sherman, who succeeded Dr. Gasser two years ago, is working closely with the farmers, and endeavors to assist them in solving their problems. Close liaison is maintained with the military whose consumption of Alaska-grown produce constitutes a major market.

Commissioner Sherman is vigorously conducting a livestock health program assisted by two veterinarians, Dr. Earl Graves, stationed in the Matanuska Valley, and Dr. Fred Honsinger, stationed in Southeastern Alaska. Immunization of cattle against Bang's disease is being carried on. Meat inspection and slaughter house regulations have been enacted. Alaska has the potentialities for a beef as well as a dairy industry.

Agriculture in Alaska has progressed encouragingly in recent years. Although relatively in its infancy, it gives the prospect of becoming increasingly important as an industry, and one whose future value should not be minimized.

Agriculture in Alaska still faces many problems. First, we must assure the continuing of the research and other programs now under way. In 1953 the Federal government appropriated \$372,000 and the Territory \$113,550 for their work. These funds should at the very least be maintained at those levels.

Land clearing costs must be reduced. Approximately a thousand acres of land are being cleared annually for farming but an average cost of at least \$200 an acre poses a financial problem for the farmer.

Farm financing is a problem. The Farm Home Administration, whose Alaska representative is I. M. C. Anderson in Anchorage, may make two types of loans to farmers who cannot be financed by private banking institutions. They are farm ownership loans with a top limit of \$12,000 repayable with 4% interest over 40 years and lesser cattle loans repayable over seven years at 5% interest. Only eight farm ownership loans, but 148 cattle loans, have been made. Legislation is needed that will enable the homesteader to place a lien against his improvements and his claim for a homestead. At present the homesteader must have title before his land can be used as security for borrowing for the many costs needed to get into production.

More farm to market roads are needed.

Given a continuation and better yet, an intensification, of present efforts, and adoption of remedial measures, farming in Alaska will continue to grow, will support more and more families and add an indispensable factor to the diversification which Alaska's economy needs.

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NEW METHOD OF LAND CLEARING

By Dick Hendrickson

Freshman, Palmer High School

I used to think clearing land belonged to the bulldozer. This is inefficient in some ways because a dozer would scrape most of the topsoil away. The topsoil is very much needed for successful farming.

The other day at Clair Patton's farm in the Matanuska Valley, I learned different. I saw the new and modernized way of clearing land. This was made possible only because of the Ford Tractor and equipment.

It is the new land-clearing winch which leaves the earth ready for plowing. This method of clearing removes trees, stumps and roots much more thoroughly than the old way. The winch is tractor mounted. Its size and weight are below any comparable piece of equipment yet designed to do the job.

Stumps regardless of size, can be removed from the land. When these stumps were removed from the ground, there were no roots left in the subsoil.

The front end of the tractor was hitched to the base of a tree by a 5/8 inch cable.

Working like this the tractor and winch could remove stumps from one acre of ground before it was necessary to move the tractor to the second location.

One ideal condition for using the winch is to have the tree cut off about three feet from the ground.

One-half stick of dynamite is recommended for use under each stump to break away the subsoil from the roots, so that when the stump is pulled, the roots will come free of the subsoil and will not leave a hole to be filled later.

Power was transmitted to the winch from the tractor by a dual transmission.

The cable-drum can be set for any speed from one foot to 250 feet a minute. With the slower speed the stumps come out of the ground without any root breakage. The cable was wound around the machine cable drum. The free end of the cable line is equipped with a hook for cinching the line around the tree.

The most valuable feature of the entire operation was the top soil was not disturbed, so that the fertile layer of the soil remained on the surface of the soil, ready for cultivation.

Rotavator Tractor Attachment

The rotavator is indispensable for the preparation of land for the new harvest. Its rugged construction enables it to break up and prepare virgin or abandoned land overgrown with weeds, thus turning waste land

Tanana Fair



By DICK BALDWIN

The Tanana Valley Fair at Fairbanks, after a year of inactivity, was revived early in April of this year. New officers elected at the first meeting of the Board of Directors were — President, Daniel D. Bemis; Vice-President, Paul Grimen; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. James J. Goodfellow. The new Board of Directors were—Dan Bemis, Paul Grimen, Mrs. M. G. Bradway, Irving W. Abbott, Ralph Persinger, John O. Gustafson and George Schanafelt.

At their first meeting the directors decided that the fair need a "Home of its own." In previous years, the school house was used to house exhibits and it had not proved too successful. There was not sufficient room on the ground for livestock displays and sessions. Several new sites were studied and it was decided that a 40 acre block of section 33, five miles from town on the college road was the ideal spot.

This land was owned by the University of Alaska, so an arrangement had to be worked out with the college. The directors, with the help of Civil Engineer, Mrs Frank White, examined the area closely on foot, no easy job in a foot and half of snow, and prepared a diagram of the proposed grounds. It was, and is, the hope of the Fair Board to establish a recrea-

tional area without equal in Alaska. According to the plans, the entire 40 acres were to be developed as a public recreation area to be used by any groups or individuals who wish to use it. The plans of the Fair Association were submitted to the Board of Regents for approval. The Board accepted the proposal and the Tanana Valley Fair Association was given a 10 year lease on the land.

Work of clearing land was started as soon as weather conditions permitted, and on July 26 foundations and floor of the main building were poured. The building was completed and occupied August 21, the first day of the Fair. George Schanafelt, a well known local contractor, donated his time to the construction of the building which measures 50 by 100 feet with a 14 foot ceiling. It is constructed of concrete blocks and frame, has a full stage and a concrete floor suitable for dancing. Space is available around the outside of the building for many of the displays and for this year, other displays were housed in tents surrounding the building. These tents, borrowed from the Army, will be replaced by permanent structures as soon as possible.

Now being developed or planned for the near future are such recreational facilities as picnic areas, a ball diamond, bowling green and many others.

into areas of cultivated and fertile land for the production of crops.

The rotavator I saw at Clair Patton's farm was attached to a small Ford Tractor. It had two speeds which covered all types of work. The rotavator was provided with its own hydraulic lift and depth control winch.

McCulloch Chain Saw

The first step taken after the tractor and winch had pulled the trees down and pulled out the stumps was

to cut them up so the Ford Tractor Disposal Unit could dump them on the stump row. Cutting them up was done by a McCulloch chain-driven saw. It did this task very well.

Ford Tractor Disposal Unit

After the logs were cut up a Ford Tractor with a hydraulic lift picked up the logs and stumps and put them on the stump row. The stumps free from dirt would be burned completely afterward.

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This picture was taken this fall during a land clearing demonstration put on in the Matanuska Valley by Al Brooks of Brooks Feed & Supply, and Orrin Wright on the tractor, sales manager for Shafer Tractor and Implement Co. The Alaskan Agriculturist offered a prize for the best story written by the High School boys from the Palmer school on the land clearing demonstration. We will let the winner tell the story.

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SUCCESS IS HOW YOU FIND IT

Irvin Ivenson and his wife, Mildred, are among the many successful farmers who are not only making a living farming in Alaska, but building a solid future for themselves and their children. There are two husky boys in the Ivenson family, Dick, six, and Bob, three years.

Irvin came to Alaska way back in 1938. Most people say they came to Alaska because they always wanted to and finally got the chance. But not Irve. He said he came because he heard a man could earn 60c an hour working here. Sixty cents was plenty of money back in those good old days, especially in his native Wisconsin. It sounded like such a good thing, that he was able to borrow the money to make the trip. Friends and relatives tried to discourage Irve because they discounted the story of high wages, and they knew that the weather was so rough in Alaska that work could be carried out only two or three months during the summer.

He came, however, and found he could actually earn 60c per hour and that the climate in Alaska is much milder than in the famous farming state of Wisconsin. Irve worked two years in the Matanuska Valley, helping clear land and in the harvest, also working for the Road Commission. By the end of that time he knew he wanted to make his lifetime home in Alaska, and to establish himself as a farmer.

Although he had not been raised on a farm, his farming experience consisting of the two years working in the Matanuska Valley. He decided that farming was the life, and Alaska was the place. Before starting the long time job of clearing a paying farm out of the brushland, Irve decided to make a trip back to visit his folks. While there he met Mildred, his wife to be. Irve soon returned to Alaska, but first convinced Mildred she should come to Alaska to attend their wedding, which she did the following year.

The Ivensons purchased 40 acres of land, seven miles south of Anchorage in 1940 to begin their life as Alaskan farmers. In 1941 they homesteaded an additional 80 acres adjoining. To start with, of course, there wasn't a foot of cultivated land on the place. So they started a poultry business to make it possible to live off the land, while clearing the heavy growth of birch and getting enough acres under the plow to make a go of dirt farming.

By 1945 they had 20 acres cleared and started raising potatoes exclusively. They have increased their cultivated land to 40 acres now, but still grow only 20 acres of potatoes, using a three year rotation of crops. Three years in



Irvin Ivenson, left, and Clyde Sherman, commissioner of agriculture.

clover and three years in potatoes. The clover isn't cut or pastured but just left on the ground. Five hundred pounds of commercial fertilizer 5-20-10 is added to each acre when the clover is planted, and produces crops up to a man's shoulder.

Irve said when they were forced to use all the ground in cultivated crops every year, the ground was hard to work, muddy and sticky when wet and dried out quickly after rains and the spring thaw. Now the texture of the soil is getting better every year, and our annual drought through July and part of August has no effect whatsoever on the crop. Here in Alaska the disintegration of cover crop plowed under is slow, due to the long winter when all decomposition is stopped by the freeze-up.

The soil now on the Ivenson fields is the kind a good farmer likes to pick

up and run through his fingers. Irve fertilizes his potatoes what is considered heavily, using 1800 pounds of 5-20-10 to each acre. This fertilizer is all put on the ground with the planter and the time of planting, and his crop never falls under ten tons of potatoes per acre, come drought or short season.

A few years back when they were cropping every year, and using the recommended five or six sacks per acre, they considered a crop of five or six tons good. The cull-out was much greater then than now. Irve used to figure that 25% cull-out was a necessary evil, due to small potatoes ill shaped or through mechanical injury. Now, he says, less than 4% of the field run crop failed to make U. S. No. 1.

Alaskan potatoes never ripen in the ground. The tops are always killed by the first frost instead of dying by the ripening process, and are very tender and bruise easily by rough handling. The farmers are just learning to handle the new crop like peaches. On

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the Ivenson farm the potatoes are literally handled with kid gloves. The digging equipment touched by potatoes is rubberized. Even the pick-up baskets are protected with rubber. And the pickers themselves are asked to lay each potato in the basket, not to drop it in.

They built a special low truck for hauling the half sacks to the storage building, low so the potatoes can be handled with a minimum amount of damage. The bed of the truck is covered with one inch of celotex as added protection. Practically no damage can be found in the big storage bin when handled this way. A savings of more than 20% over the old ways means a lot to the farmer producing over 200 tons of potatoes, that are worth 6c per pound in the bins. Ivenson says, the funny thing about it is that it doesn't cost him as much per hundred to harvest, as it did in the old rough and tumble days. Of course both the crop and machinery are better now.

In digging, even three years ago, one man rode the tractor and one the digger. Irve finds it much better to operate the digger depth control from the tractor, using hydraulic controls. The cost of adding this equipment to tractor and digger is less than \$150.

The Ivenson farm boasts the most

modern farming equipment including a top-beater. This machine pulverizes the tops, making digging much easier and making it possible to dig before frost, if that seems advisable. Irve hills his potatoes extra high, eight to nine inches. The beater can than take an inch or so off the top of the hills, without injuring the tubers. The beater can, in this way, make a clean sweep of all the tops. The potatoes are all on top of the ground and are easy to pick up.

Due to the newness of the potatoes when dug, mechanical sackers are not satisfactory. All payments in the potato harvest are made by piece work. A good picker makes as much as \$5.00 per hour, quite a bit more than the 60c an hour that brought Irvin to Alaska in the first place.

The Ivensons built last year one of the finest potato storages in the North, being 40x90 feet. The storage is built on a hillside. Trucks drive right into the bin. The back-end of the building is truck high, so that loading out is easy. The storage is an above ground building, using one foot of shavings as insulation all around, and holds the temperature easily with just a little heat added during the coldest weather.

The only piece of equipment not up to date is the grader. This they built themselves some years ago. Irve says he doesn't like to destroy the grader as long as it is doing a good job.

Mrs. Ivenson tends the sorting table and says it isn't much of a job anymore, so few of the potatoes have to be hand sorted. She works in the harvest and cutting of seed and shows her farm rearing by the expert way she handles these jobs.

Irve thinks it is very important that the seed be thoroughly dried after being cut and treated. They cut the potatoes, treat with Semasanbel and spread out on the root-house floor, not over four inches deep. All doors are left open where a breeze can play over the potatoes for three or four days, until they are thoroughly dry before planting. A small potato is used for seed. The seed is brought out of cool storage about two weeks before planting, so that they can get a quick start. The seed is planted very shallow in Alaska, the seed piece being left practically on top of the ground and hilled up. This puts the seed in the top inch or so of soil and gets a much quicker start than if it was planted deep.

The Ivensons have always been very careful about selling a good grade of potatoes on the local market and have done a great deal to force the grade of Alaskan potatoes up, so that today most of the potatoes used are Alaskan grown.

A few years back the farmers thought they should be able to market everything they raised as is. The merchant didn't know he could get a good grade of local products, and so purchased most of his produce from the States, rather than clutter up his bins with cull and damaged local produce. That's mainly over now. The finest produce seen in Alaskan markets is Alaskan grown and graded. A few farmers and luckily they are getting fewer each year, think they can sell low grade produce. The Ivensons like Alaska, because they say Alaska has been good to them. Alaska likes the Ivensons and other folks of their type, because what they are doing is certainly good for Alaska.

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RANCHING IN THE HOUSE

By THE ELLIOTTS

Have you ever seen a Chinchilla? Perhaps, if you are a new resident in Alaska because in the States they are a growing new industry. However, people who have been in the territory some time, may be much like ourselves. We never saw a Chinchilla or even a picture of one before we bought our first pair. We lived on Annette Island, the air base near Ketchikan, and actually we knew very little of what people were doing in this new industry.

A friend of ours heard from his dad about Chinchilla raising becoming a profitable hobby, so Joe and Kitty, Sam and I decided to buy a pair with Joe's dad elected to care for them. We went on for some time with our only link with the animals in letter writing. Joe took a trip Outside, bringing back pictures and thereby we became better acquainted with our little brood. Time went marching on, thence our move to Anchorage, with prospects of a home of our own. We then began to think of getting to know the animals first hand.

A little investigating, or perhaps, I had better say a lot of asking, finally uncovered a few people in Alaska owning Chinchillas. We sought these out to check on just what we'd need to prepare for the addition to our family. We shipped our small new tenants up then, ranching them out while we built an extra room on our home to accommodate our little fluff balls that are literally worth their weight in gold.

The first of May of this year "Elliott's Chinchilla Ranch" became a

reality. I'll never forget the trip I made after my herd without any spare tire for the car. One of my mamas was expecting her family any day and I was actually a nervous wreck when the four worn tires taxied me safely up to the door of our new unit where all were to live happily a few years, at any rate, until pelting time arrives. There is no hobby, business, or even

to the Chinchilla ranch. To begin with I hesitated to handle my little powder puffs on the hoof, but each one has his own individual personality and all are such friendly gentle bits of humanity that things went very smoothly. Let me say here, quite truthfully, if something caused me to give up my contact and care of these new found friends, I'd be completely lost. You can be sure that when pelting time arrives in five or ten years I won't be in on that end of it.

After checking my "children" each morning, I wander back through the kitchen, opening the door for the dog, then go into the unit to see that all is well — checking the drinking water and any cages with expectant mothers. Most babies are born in the Chinchilla world between midnight and nine a.m. They are a nocturnal animal, waking up in the evening, playing all night with their wheels or swings or ping pong balls, or whatever it provided for their necessary exercise. In the daytime, visitors come in and I am sure many think what inactive dopy creatures these fabulous Chinchillas are. Just come to see us any evening about feeding time or sand bath time. There is no chance for any such opinion then. Every cage is alive and all are trying to get our attention. Some



Photo by Ward W. Wells

Sam and Billie Elliott with their two daughters, Lucille May and Sandra Lee.

pleasure where some elbow grease is not involved, so we were prepared to put out some time and energy.

I, being home all the time, fell heir

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will rattle feed dishes, and others pull and chew on cage doors. The first ones to be given their sand baths are envied characters.

I better make all of this clear to people who know nothing of Chinchillas. In their native habitat in the Andes Mountains there is a quantity of powdered stone or volcanic ash. This makes a perfect bed of sand for them to bathe in. Here we furnish them with a hand basin, one-half or one-third full of sand, and they roll to their heart's content, removing grease and grime from their dense fur.

After their bath we change the papers underneath the cages. The next step is feeding a handful of hay and a tablespoon of specially prepared pellets for Chinchilla consumption to each. Last, we refill the water bottles and the animals are ready for a good breakfast and a night's frolicking. For our approximately fifty animals this takes about an hour ordinarily, but often we spend much longer playing with and giving special attention to one and all.

Our equipment is simple and inexpensive, consisting of essentials. Home made all-wire cages, nest box, dropping pans, coke drinking bottle, feed dishes and exercise wheel. Our unit, built for the animals and paid for by them, is a light airy, cedar paneled room. Incidentally, any of our neighbors will tell you about the fun we had chopping through the frozen ground last spring to lay the foundation for our new Alaskan enterprise. We felt we were doing our small share for the Alaskan economy by bringing this new year 'round cash crop to the attention of Alaskans.

By the way, let me quote from the San Diego, California livestock quotations for the year 1951, as brought to our attention by the Commissioner of Agriculture. Now listen to this, for it is something not many of you would expect. Chinchillas are listed as one of the major livestock products of the country and although they are not as yet in the same bracket as beef, butter and egg industries they are well ahead of turkeys, for example. The figures are as follows: Hogs netted \$1,709,239 . . . Chinchillas \$1,704,400 . . . Turkeys, \$1,691,400. Naturally when crop values run into the millions they are an item worth mentioning. To anyone statistically minded, these figures make a definite impression.

Coming back to Anchorage, the foundation laid, the unit up, we are definitely in the Chinchilla business. If you are one of those who has never seen a Chinchilla, or even if you have, drop by and let us introduce you to Junio, Butch, Crybaby, Andy and all the rest at our little ranch.

There is no law against betting on yourself.

Canning Contest



Bertha Meiers, winner of the 1951 Alaskan Preservation Contest, showing her prize to the members of the Anchorage Homemakers' Council. The prize, a silver covered vegetable dish is given by the National Garden Institute to the contestant having the best variety of Alaskan foods canned, frozen, dried or preserved in some other manner. The deadline for the 1952 contest is October 15. The winner will be announced at the Homemakers' Short Course to be held at the University of Alaska, October 24 to November 1. Shown in the picture are: (left to right) Audrey Davies, Home Demonstration Agent; Bertha Meiers, 1951 winner; Gloria Vaughan, Council President; Esther Merly, Secretary Pro Tem; Leone Braaksma, Vice-President; Merle Mosher, Treasurer.

A newcomer to Alaska complaining about the lack of hospitality said he had been here a month before he was asked out anywhere. Now he says after two months, he is asked out everywhere he goes.

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ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

SPENARD -- BOOM CITY, 1952

(This story on the thriving community of Spenard, written by Oliver P. Shaw, will be concluded in the Spring issue.)

One of the real sore spots so far as those who were denied City electricity was concerned and indicative of the real attitude of the City toward the suburban residents was the affair of the 'Sackett Harbor.' The after part of this vessel, which broke in two in the North Pacific, was obtained from the Department of the Interior almost as a gift, ostensibly to "relieve the acute power shortage in the area."

It was generally felt that the addition of some 3000 kwh to the total output available would make it possible for a long waiting list of applicants for electricity to secure at least a minimum of power for elemental household use. This hope proved to be short lived, however, for despite the fact that the Sackett Harbor was the property of the United States Government and made available to the City for the general welfare of the community, the City maintained its policy of no power extensions outside the City.

To add insult to injury, it announced through the newspapers that there was now sufficient power available so that the City would resume the hook-ups of **ELECTRIC HOT WATER HEATERS WITHIN THE CITY.** It should not seem strange, in view of antics like this, that Spenard became extremely concerned that the City might eventually acquire, by adroit manipulation, the complete control of CEA.

Meanwhile CEA had begun construction of its pole line, subject to strikes, material shortages, and con-

tractor difficulties. Most of the poles were set before actual stringing of wire was begun, and a new fight was on. Those physical evidences of Chugach success prodded the City into immediate action, and the congested part of Spenard became the scene of wild activity in the electrical business.

The City electrical department, so long indifferent to the needs of their neighbors to the south, became extremely solicitous of their needs for electricity, and went virtually door to door soliciting consumers. All available manpower was rushed into the area and evenings, Saturdays and Sundays were marked by frenzied attempt to construct transmission lines at time and a half and double time. Sub-standard construction was the rule, and no effort was made to plan an area distribution system.

In general, construction of secondary, rather than of primary line was initiated, mostly paralleling Chugach lines already installed but not energized, and radiating from the central line running along Spenard. This sudden flurry on the part of the City was intended to crush Chugach and eliminate its potential competition by skimming the cream of the potential power consumers and effectively jeopardizing the loan risk for future Chugach development.

In the short but lively history of Anchorage-Spenard relations, this act

on the part of the City ranks as an act beyond justification and beyond condoning. The City, having acted capriciously and arbitrarily, and with a dog-in-the-manger attitude with respect to the much needed power for the outlying districts, now stooped to an all-time low to prevent the suburban residents from helping themselves. Fortunately, the City has since become more enlightened in its attitude toward its neighbors, but some of those under whose direction these ruthless tactics were initiated still participate in City policy making.

Sadly enough, many of the some 450 potential members who were awaiting the completion of the CEA program, and upon whose potential power consumption continued membership fu-

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ture REA construction loans were contingent, had neither the stamina nor the conviction to support CEA at any slight or real inconvenience to themselves. Understandably enough, but a sad commentary on the dog-eat-dog attitude of so many, defections were frequent, due to the intensive campaign by the City.

As this is being written, however, a new dispute has arisen between the City and CEA over the question as to who shall have the right to supply electricity to the 250 unit housing project, Anchor Homes, southeast of Eastchester. Strangely enough, the attorney pleading the case for CEA is the same one who won the preceding case for the City.

The original plans for CEA development apparently made no provision for the generation of power, on the

theory, no doubt, that in Stateside operation the REA is primarily a distribution rather than a generation agency. Thus, when CEA found itself with miles and miles of completed pole line installation, it had no definite and certain source of power. In order to satisfy the insistent consumer demand and actually to get into business, CEA entered into an agreement with Inlet Light and Power Company for the purchase of wholesale power at a rate of approximately 5 cents per kw. This is almost an unheard of rate, particularly in view of the fact that CEA and the Spenard Public Utility District had negotiated a franchise providing consumer rates as low as 4½ cents per kw over 200 per month. Nevertheless, it met with general approval, and CEA threw the switch energizing that portion of the line serving the Airport Heights district.

Hook-ups continued throughout the winter, and by early spring of 1950 virtually all the original members had been served. Since that time CEA has grown tremendously, now serving some 5000 members, and with applications, coming in faster than time and the availability of materials will allow their processing. With the completion of the ARR-CEA steam plant in the railroad yards the critical period will be over for the time being, and with this relatively economical source of power available, it is expected that a

considerable reduction in rates will be in order.

For the time being, then, the power situation for Spenard and other areas has been solved. The success of the venture was not made possible, however, by sitting back and 'letting George do it.' The results to date represent the combined efforts of a great many people of the community, who sacrificed time, energy and real hardship in order that the area might to-

Except for the Post Office at Mt. View, then called East Anchorage, the Anchorage Post Office had been the only office serving this area. The Federal Building erected in 1939, and housing a Postal Department designed for some 4000 people, gradually proved inadequate for the purpose, but no effort on the part of higher Department officials seemed to be made to alleviate the overcrowding and resulting inefficiency and inconvenience.

No house delivery was in effect anywhere, and since the 2000 odd boxes were long since pre-empted, long queues of general delivery patrons blocked the corridors, stairs and even sidewalks in front of the Federal building. This inconvenience, plus the installation of parking meters by the City, in addition to the long trips into Anchorage over something less than the paved roads now existent, prompted a concerted effort by Spenarders to secure adequate Postal service for their community.

No one in the Post Office Department seemed at all anxious to initiate such additional facilities as would be necessary to provide this service, and it evolved upon the residents to supply the necessary will to effect the desired objective. Despite the fact that the growth was obvious, and that any facility installed in Spenard would by the same token reduce the congestion in the Anchorage office, the visiting inspectors required that a door-to-door canvass be made showing the potential patrons, and that maps be submitted showing possible delivery routes.

Again it became necessary for the residents to lift themselves by their bootstraps in lieu of the indifference and apathy of those Federal officials who might have made their task im-

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Four Little Alaskans



Mary Ann and Betty Lou Melseth. The picture of the little gals and the cocker spaniels was taken in the Agriculturist office.

measurably less difficult.

These requirements were subsequently complied with but the attitude of the Department, which had undoubtedly presumed that the ground-work requested of the residents would be sufficient to discourage them, remained one of indifference and reluctance. New blood was enlisted in the campaign to convince the Post Office Department that it had a real obligation to render a more adequate service to the hundreds of persons who were daily inconvenienced by the totally inadequate and obsolete facilities then provided. Much correspondence ensued with the Office of the Postmaster General in Washington, and many and strange were the excuses offered for the maintainance of the status quo.

One by one these evasions were countered by logical and legitimate

argument. Their strongest argument against a rural free delivery route, that there was no connecting road between the Potter and Sand Lake Roads was resolved by the committee going to work on that project, too. Finally, with the invaluable assistance of E. L. Bartlett, Delegate to Congress, authorization was granted for both a Post Office and a Star route to serve the outlying areas.

The Post Office was established on Jan. 2, 1950 as a fourth class office, in Parker's Store at Fireweed Lane and Spenard Road, with Nancy Parker as Postmaster, and Star service was inaugurated on April 18, 1950 with some 12 patrons and 31 miles of route. At this writing, the Office has advanced to second class, and the appointment of a permanent Postmaster is pending.

(Will be concluded in Spring issue)

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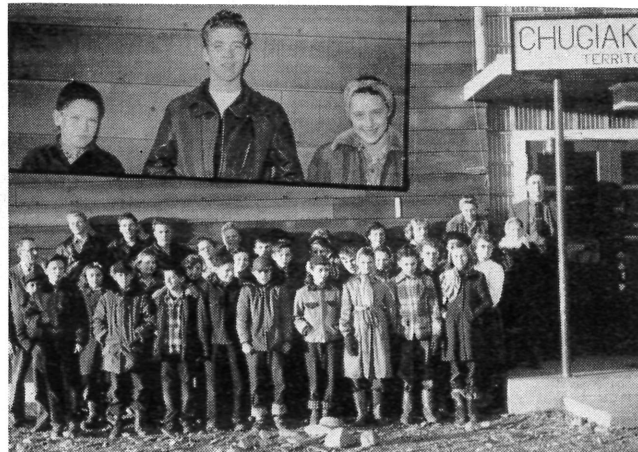
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All of the children and teachers at the main school at Chugiak. Inset, the three best salesmen: from left to right, David Pipple, William Cairns and Beverly Haik.

We are grateful to all you boys and girls from Wasilla to Homer who sold subscriptions to the Alaskan Agriculturist this past month. You did a fine job and by your efforts we are able to welcome over a thousand new subscribers to our list this issue. We feel

sure that the folks who bought the subscriptions from you, will enjoy the Agriculturist as much as you enjoy the basketball or other play ground equipment or whatever else you decided to buy with your share of the money collected. Thanks a lot, kids.

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By HANS AUTOR

In centers of habitation, activity and merriment; organ notes mingle with the chimes from God's edifices; gifts exchanged symbolize goodwill to good men; choirs intone carols; the eyes of youth sparkle with expectancy and Christmas moves over the lands.

Upon an island far; lone and sinister; beyond the meridian of time; gather a handful of men to express the profundity that rises in their hearts — a wind-shaken quonset hut harbors an abandoned organ and a bare altar upon which stands a simple cross. The men of Attu are gathered here, of every faith, and reach one another in the communion of spiritual fellowship. The organ notes resound and almost burst the fragile hut as "Holy Night" streams forth from husky throats. — There is no chaplain; but someone remembers a prayer. Some kneeling, and some deeply bowed, murmur with deep emotion the Lord's Prayer. Hands are clasped, and tears glitter in eyes as loved ones far away are remembered. The community with mankind is deeply felt here, and gladness and humility calm their souls.

A languid river winds itself across the icy tundra toward the Arctic Sea. Ice has also encrusted the billowing waters, and lonely dog teams make their way from hamlet to hamlet along the Kuskokwim. — Cold is the night, but warm are the hearts that beat in gladness with the spirit of Christmas. The lights of modern run-

ways vie with the stars above, and over crunching snow stalk befurred figures to a meeting place. — A beam of light opens a path upon the white trail, and invites all comers to the warmth that reaches out from a candle-lit altar. — Youthful voices are singing "O Little Star of Bethlehem" — the community of Bethel, at the mouth of the Kuskokwim, is rejoicing in Christmas. A stranger enters the simple church, and gladdening eyes from Eskimos bid him welcome.

A group now encircles the altar. The old ones of the town, men and women, intone in a strange cadence a Christmas carol in their native tongue — the elder, a true patriarch, chants in typical Eskimo fashion the Lord's Prayer, while the youngsters follow his words in English. The infants upon the women's backs are strangely hushed, as if aware of the sanctity of the hour — a dog lies

quietly upon the threshold of the church. — * * * *

The glimmering colors of the Northern Lights flutter like angels' wings over the massiveness of Mt. Denali. The Cathedral Mountains with their white spires become a prayer that rises to the dome of heaven, while the scintillating flutter of hosts sing of the Glory of His Creation — the airliner, carrying men, women and children from a northern city to the new Arctic metropolis, drones steadily between the spaciousness below and above. Its silver body glows in the

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inter-play of light from stars, aura and the reflecting snows. The chief pilot faces the passengers: "Merry Christmas all;" and responsive greetings echo through the flying ship — a young stewardess, with a beatific countenance, starts "Noel" —

The Christmas carol is still ringing through the plane, when the glimmering runway of Anchorage spreads its carpet of welcome. The many homes of the city are aglow with festive lights, and multicolored Christmas trees stud the countryside with their heart-warming gladness. The plane is met by homefolk: Daddy, Mary, John and Jane fall into each other's arms. "Glade Yule"; "A Merry Christmas;" shouts of joy and youthful questions accompany the homecomers to their hearths.

Over the Northland rings on song:
PEACE ON EARTH AND GOODWILL
TO MEN!

POET'S CORNER

Fairy Land

By ESTHER McDANIEL

We awoke bright and early on Christmas morn

With thoughts of turkey and pie.
And lo! Mother Goose had been picking her geese
In her fairyland up in the sky!

She'd been busily plucking them all night long
And the white feathers drifting below — —

Had covered the earth with a blanket of white,
A glistening holiday snow.

The old broken stump that yesterday 'eve

Was too common and drab for words,
Was neatly spread with a snowy white cloth — —

A breakfast table for birds!

We sprinkled their breakfast of holiday crumbs — —

They chirped out their thanks by the score,
We laughed at the tracks their tiny feet made
As they hopped about begging for more.

And the garbage heap at the back of the yard

That for weeks has had me in a stew—
Had overnight been completely transformed

To an Eskimo fairy's igloo!

Yes, — — some people long for the bursting through

Of the first daffodil in the spring,
While others await the robin's return
For the thrill that his first song can bring.

To decide between welcome summer rains — —

And autumn leaves — ummm — that's hard.

But I think the greatest thrill is to wake

And find Fairyland in your back yard!

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Lone Land Christmas Trees

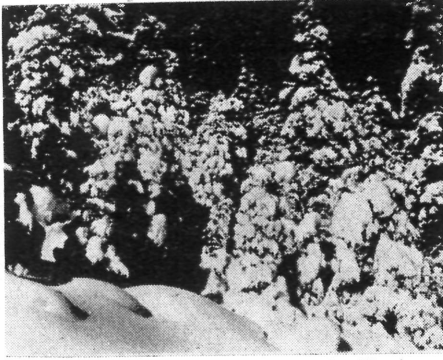


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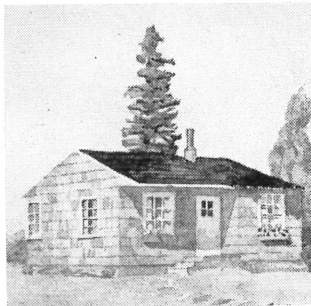
By E. E. EMERSON

No Star of Bethlehem adorns
These trees on Christmas night;
But high o're head the North Star
sheds
Its guiding light.

Each tree itself a Christmas tree
Though perhaps unseen by man;
They stretch away across the gray
Expanse of a lonely land.

The rabbits snug beneath the spread
Of snowy limbs so warm;
The Children of the forest here
Are sheltered from the storm.

Each one a thing of beauty
In rarest Ermine dressed;
A million million Christmas trees
Each one just like the rest.



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Nature's Lesson

Sam James

At dawn the sky was over-cast
The breeze was now a chilling blast
And I could see that ere the morrow
My garden would have come to sorrow

Of courses there remained but one
The harvest must today be done
For quickly I must get inside
Those vegetables, which were my pride

At breakfast it began to rain
With rivulets slanting down the pane
But don I must my coat and boots
And hie me out to gather roots

The cattle lowed beneath the shed
The pigs snored on, in their snug bed

And on the porch my old dog stayed
While in the rain I plied my spade

The ants now worked within the
mound
The bees had honey by the pound
The squirrel slept in his snug tree
As full of nuts as he could be

But I the smartest of them all
Had frittered off the golden fall
And now must work out in the rain
It served me right and made it plain

That sunny days were made for
working

So rainy days could be for shirking
And man shall fare as he shall earn
And still can much from nature learn.

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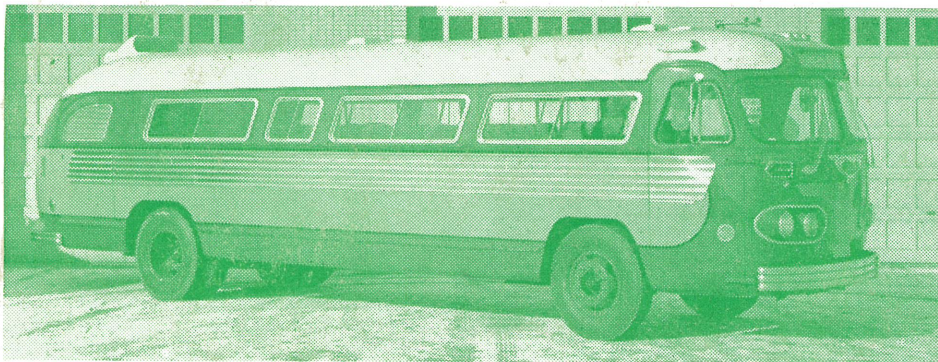
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AGRICULTURIST



*Published in the interests
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Spring 1953



Alaskan Egg Factory



Page 4

Our Front Cover

Mrs. Bannon candles eggs that will be weighed and graded on automatic machine, an Elmore Egg Grader made in Oneata, N. Y. (Inset) Part of the Leghorn breeding stock. Photo by Robert Matsen.

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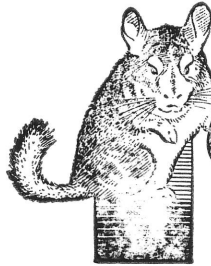
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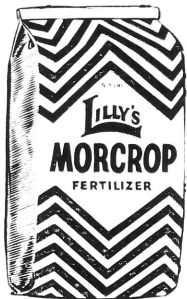
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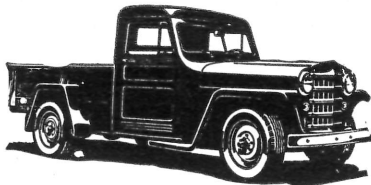
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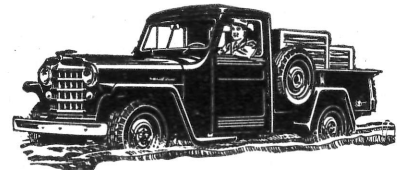
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*Published Quarterly in the interests of
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COVER: Alaskan Egg Factory — Photo by Robert Matson

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ED BALDWIN, Editor—1314 I Street, Anchorage.
DICK BALDWIN, Associate Editor — Anchorage

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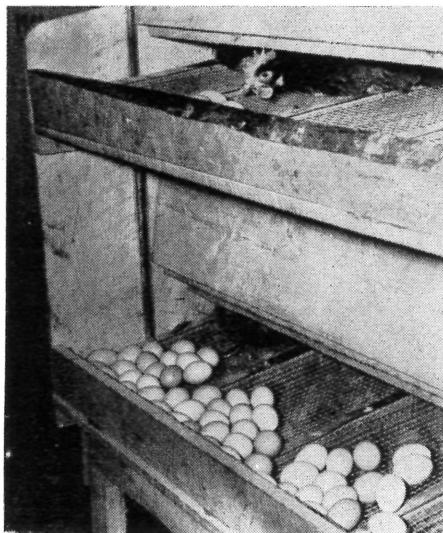
ALASKAN EGG FACTORY

By Robert Matsen

Going into its fifth year of production is one of the largest chicken and egg factories in Alaska. Located high on a bench on the north side of the Glenn Highway, it is sixteen miles east of Palmer and two miles east of Sutton Post Office. Mr. and Mrs. Albert Bannon, the owners, started their enterprise in 1949, after having taken up their homestead there the previous year. Before coming to Alaska, the Bannons owned and operated a chicken farm and hatchery at Mesa, Arizona.

That first year of operation was one of the most difficult for the young couple. They had had neither the time nor the money to put up buildings of sufficient size so their beginning was crude at best. Their laying stock consisted of 125 White Leghorn hens. The following year they switched from the Leghorns to Rhode Island Reds, having obtained 400 baby chicks from Crooks Farm, North Brookfield, Massachusetts. They were flown from there to Alaska.

"We like the Reds better than the Leghorns," Bannon told me. "They are less tempermental, lay more eggs



"Hey, What Goes Here?" A Rhode Island Red hen looks under the edge of a nest to see what has been happening to her efforts. Nests were designed and built by Bannon. Eggs roll out of way as soon as they are laid.

to end a month's production would reach a mile and that's a lot of eggs," Albert said.

While they have been busy building up their laying flocks, the Bannons have been putting up buildings to house them. Their main building is a two-story frame structure of 30 x 60 feet. The egg-grading, hatchery and brooder house is 16 x 24 feet, built of railroad ties. "When we get our big chicken house finished we will be able to take care of twice as many chickens as we have now," Bannon stated. "Our biggest worry is that of having disease infect our flocks. So far we have been lucky here in Alaska where disease is concerned, but once it hits a flock, a chicken farmer can find himself out of business in a hurry."

Except for the animal heat from the chickens, the chicken house is unheated. Electrically-driven ventilating fans provide air circulation and fresh water is piped into the building from the creek that runs through the farm. In early summer Bannon places fresh sawdust litter a foot deep in the chicken house so that bacteria can develop before cold weather. Bacterial action disintegrates the droppings rapidly and eliminates the need for frequent cleaning of the chicken house.

Although they have cleared several acres of land the couple have not found time to raise their own feed so they buy commercial feed. Each chicken consumes between nine and ten pounds of feed each month at a

cost of seventy-five cents. That means the entire flock eats approximately six tons of feed every month.

While Albert takes care of the housing and feeding of the chickens, Mrs. Bannon supervises the candling, grading and packaging of the eggs, as well as watching over the incubator and brooders. She is sometimes assisted by her two daughters, aged five and two. They have an electrically-operated candler and grader which candles and grades every egg. Their incubator is a Jamesway with a capacity of 2400 eggs, is also electrically-operated and heated.

They hatch and sell around 5000 baby chicks every year, and while it does not furnish a large percentage of their income it provides a welcome supplement to it. Every other year they replace their own flock with baby chicks from the Crooks Farm.

The Bannons are well satisfied with their progress to date. It has meant a great deal of hard work for both of them, with little chance to get away from the farm and go to an occasional show. Mrs. Bannon told me that in the five years they have been in the business she has been to Anchorage only three times.

"We're just now beginning to show a profit in our business and as soon as we get our building done and our flock built up to full capacity we will be able to make a nice living. Right now it ties us to home pretty closely," they say, "But there's one thing we don't have to worry about. As long as we are in the chicken business we'll never be out of a job."



Mrs. Bannon checks 2400 eggs Jamesway Incubator

and produce more meat, so they are better all around chickens for us."

At present the Bannons have over 1200 layers, about half of them Leghorns and the other half Reds. From these they get over 900 eggs per day or 28,000 eggs per month. "Laid end

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By D. E. SKINNER

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Ever-increasing use by farmers, nurserymen, green house operators and average citizens who like to garden

and keep well-tailored lawns, is beginning to tax present supply.

In the past, increased consumption has been met by improving the process of harvesting peat from small deposits in the Central and Western States and by imports from Canada and the Scandinavian Countries.

Now, urged by the uncertainty of the domestic supply and the desire to be less dependent on foreign imports, producers of peat can turn to the rich and highly attractive sources provided by the Alaska muskegs.

The big question facing those who are considering Alaska operations is: Can costs be kept low enough to com-

pete in major markets?

A recent report prepared by the U. S. Forest Service indicates several favorable factors with respect to peat deposits on the Tongass National Forest of Southeast Alaska.

1. Substantial commercial deposits, some of sphagnum peat and others of sedge peat, are within the Tongass National Forest, close to harbors and water transportation facilities.

2. Many are located where water is readily available for excavation by the hydraulic method.

3. The product could be economically piped from the pit to tidewater processing plants.

4. The large deposits make long term operations possible.

There are three types of peat bogs in Alaska—pure moss, pure sedge, and stratified layers of moss and sedge. In general, moss deposits range from ten to eighteen feet; sedge from six to ten feet.

Inquiries for more complete information should be directed to D. E. Skinner, Alaska Steamship Company, Pier 42, Seattle, Washington; Alaska Development Board, Box 50, Juneau, Alaska; or the Regional Forester, U. S. Forest Service, Juneau.

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THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

During the next few months the fate of next fall's harvest will be decided. Now, well before planting time, plans must be formulated and carried bit by bit as the spring and summer progresses, if we are to have crops to harvest come next September.

Quite a few of the folks who read this will be planting their first garden in Alaska this spring. Quite a number of others will be planting their first successful gardens, having learned the hard way that gardening up here is very different from what they followed successfully in the States.

One of the most common mistakes made by the newcomer is to assume that the soil is rich because it looks black and fertile. Alaska soil is not fertile, unless made so artificially. This in spite of all the propaganda to the contrary. Most of the soil here is potentially fertile, made up largely of moss and other vegetable matter. But since bacterial action has hardly started yet it is still in an undecayed form and therefore is releasing practically no plant food. The soil made up of dust and sand blown in, as in the Matanuska Valley, is somewhat better. But even here on the best of Alaska's soil large quantities of fertilizer is a **must** if good crops are to be harvested.

Much of Alaskan soil is shallow, sometimes being formed with less than a foot of top soil over gravel. This has advantages as well as disadvantages, because it can be worked quicker in the spring than can deep soil. As soon as the ground thaws out 18 inches or so deep it dries out so it can be worked.

The disadvantages are, because of drying out sooner, it gets drier during our annual drought the latter part of July and August, making the plants suffer more. No soil should be worked too soon. It should not be plowed or spaded until it will crumble when harrowed or raked without muddying up.

There is no object in planting in ground that is wet and cold because the reason it is wet is the winter ice is melting; and until it is dry it is too cold to start the seed. Even those varieties that sprout at a low temperature cannot grow until it is warm anyway.

TIME TO PLANT

Most people who are new to the country and some that are not, get fooled by the few warm days in the spring. There are always two or three weeks of the most pleasant kind of shirt-sleeve weather, before anything

starts growing. Of course it must warm up to even start the icy ground melting. Then after it melt down two or three feet the ground must warm up enough to start the seed and keep the little plants growing. This usually come about the latter part of May or the early part of June.

It is always better to let nature herself give the sign that it is time to

plant. The Birch trees are usually the first trees to put out leaves. When the Birch trees nearest the ground to be planted begin putting out their first leaves, it's time to plant, and not before. If seed is placed in the ground previous to this time, you are almost sure to get a poor stand or no stand at all, regardless of how good the seed is. Those plants that do manage to

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come up turn yellow and do badly. Don't plant too early.

HOW TO PLANT

Because Alaskan soils are cold, especially in the spring and get colder rapidly as greater depth is reached from the surface, until in many cases perma frost is reached, all crops must be planted shallow to take advantage of the warm surface soil.

Crops root shallow for the same reason. All small seeds like carrots, radishes and turnips should be covered about one-fourth inch and firmed down over the row to insure moisture. Potatoes should be planted about one-inch deep and then hilled up about two inches. In all cases, the ground should be firmed down over the planted row, with a hoe or the feet, because the top inch or so of soil tends to dry out too quickly. All mechanical planters have wheels that do this firming job. It is advisable to place a little more tension on these wheels than is ordinarily recommended with the machine.

WHERE TO PLANT

Usually the backyard gardner is limited in his choice for a place to plant. Planting as he does, all of his ground to garden stuff. If a gardner has a plot of ground 50 feet square, it doesn't make too much difference what part of the garden he puts different kinds of vegetables. Except those things like tomatoes and cucumbers that most people insist on trying. These things should be planted on the sunny side of a building or along hedges with southern exposures, to give them the best possible chance to produce. Some people think there is an advantage in running rows north and south, claiming more sun will reach the individual plant this way.

WHAT TO PLANT

There are really only two things to consider when deciding what to plant. The first of course is "What will grow here and produce good crops." The second is "What will the family use and enjoy the most," or "What does the market demand," in case of commercial production.

Alaskan gardens are rather limited in what they can produce, although those things that do well do wonderful when handled right. The summers here are rather short in days, but long in sunshine and it's the hours of sunshine that make the crops anywhere.

FERTILIZER

Heavy applications of fertilizer is absolutely necessary if crops are to be harvested. Different farmers have different ideas of how much fertilizer to add to each acre. Using 5-20-10 or 10-20-10 the amount used by farmers range from 700 to 2000 pounds, with the heavy application consistently

getting good crops and the lighter application falling short.

Only a few farmers in Alaska have enough acres of land to plow under cover crops occasionally. Those that do, are building up their soil every year. Most farmers must depend entirely on commercial fertilizer to make their crop.

The backyard gardner of course can't plow under cover crops. A few have compost heaps that are very beneficial. The making of a compost is a slow process due to the fact that the heap is frozen so much of the year.

A good compost maker should be added in the spring to give the thing a boost. The commercial grower of garden stuff has specialized equipment designed to do much of his work accurately and easily. Seed and fertilizer placed in the ground at the same time with the same machine.

A small gardner must do this work by hand. The best way to apply fertilizer on the home garden is to broadcast the required amount over the entire area, after it is spaded or plowed. Then rake it in. Never spade it under. Too much is wasted in this way.

On a garden 50x50 feet, 100 pounds of 10-20-10 or 200 pounds of 5-10-5 is about right. That amount will make a good crop and will not burn a thing if broadcasted evenly and raked in before planting the seed.

Every sack of fertilizer has been

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plainly marked as to what it contains. If the formula marked on the sack is 5-10-10, that means that to each 100 pounds there is 5 pounds of nitrogen, 10 pounds of phosphate and 10 pounds of potash. The balance is inert matter used as a filler. The higher grade fertilizer is always cheaper per usable unit, especially here in Alaska where the freight rates are so high. Naturally formula 10-20-10 is worth twice as much as formula 5-10-5 and there is freight charge on only one sack instead of two.

LIME

Lime is seldom needed here although many people think it is. It should never be used unless a test is taken to make sure. Our soils are too sweet more often than too sour. To use lime when it isn't needed is an expensive mistake. Not only is money spent for

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lime wasted but the ability of the soil to produce a crop is lessened.

BEST VARIETIES

Choosing the proper varieties for the Alaskan garden is an important part of pre-spring planning. Alaska soil is cold especially down a few inches, so it stands to reason that deep rooted crops do not do so well. For instance, the long varieties of carrots and parsnips do not do well, unless under very favorable conditions seldom found.

It is always better to plant the half long varieties such as Danvers half long carrots and short thick parsnips.

All of the greens do well except Noble spinach. This spinach goes to seed so badly it is almost useless to plant it. New Zealand spinach, however, does very well. Chard, either the Lucullus or the Rhubarb, mustard, kale, collards are all grown extensive-

ly in home gardens, where they can be harvested when ready and canned or used right away. Greens don't seem to be a profitable market crop because they wilt so quickly after harvest.

Radishes, probably the most popular for the home garden, is Sparkler, a round, red, white tipped radish that is crisp and looks pretty on the table. The Sparkler is inclined to show the scars of harvest on the white portion of the radish after a day or two and so is not quite so popular as a market radish. The Scarlet Globe is usually the market gardeners choice. Scarlet Globe and Sparkler are much alike except that the Scarlet Globe does not have a white tip. White icicles do fairly well when the soil is in good shape. Radishes should be planted in small quantities about every ten days all summer, to insure a continuous supply. Winter varieties for storing should be planted in extra rich soil, about the

middle of July. They will store with and keep like potatoes.

Turnips and rutabagas for winter use should be planted about the middle of July. If planted in the spring they get too large and it is hard to keep the root maggets out of them. Cabbage, broccili and cauliflower are among those plants that do extra well here. There are several varieties of cabbage used, Golden Acre leading. Most any of the early cabages and many of the mid-season varieties are O.K. Late varieties are doubtful.

Celery is a fine crop when the soil is kept extra rich and moist, Utah Green is used almost exclusively. Celery must be set out as big husky plants in spring to make it. Lettuce, beets, squash (Zucchini), green onions, leek, selsify, kohlrabi, peas, potatoes, green beans (under good conditions). Peas do wonderful. The dwarf variety is favored by most people because this variety is easy to care for. They can be planted in rows about six inches apart, instead of just one row. In this way they tend to hold themselves up. Peas should always be inoculated to insure a good crop. Potatoes are one of our best crops. The most popular variety of potatoes is the Arctic Seedling. They are heavy producers and good keeping spuds.

The Experiment Station is starting this year to release a new potato that will probably beat the Arctic Seedling, but the seed is not too plentiful yet. It is a bad idea to plant stateside potatoes as shipped into the grocery stores. Green beans do pretty well some years. It is doubtful if it pays to raise beans when the garden is small. When there is plenty of space it's fun to raise a few messes of beans. Bush beans are the only ones that will do, Golden Wax and Tender Green are the best. Zucchini Squash either black or grey, do well if given plenty of fertilizer and water.

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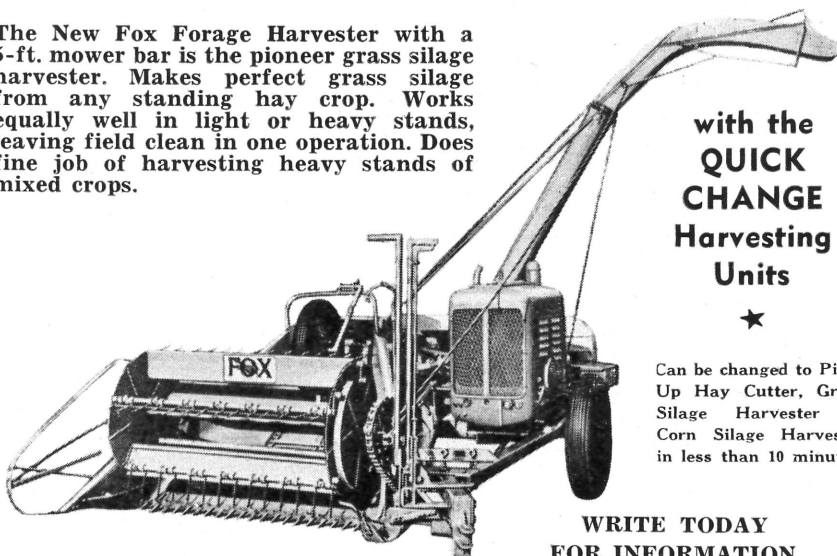
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The Growing Community

IS ALASKAN FARMING A GAMBLE?

By E. Kavanaugh

"This is no farming country," a homesteader told me in Homer. "And homesteading is a big humbug — a deception and a swindle!"

I wonder if the farmers in the Mid West weren't saying the same thing when their country became the Dust Bowl. And how about the citrus fruit growers when heavy frosts and snow freeze the profits? What would we hear, if we could eavesdrop, after a Florida hurricane had left the ground strewn with a ruined crop?

Well I remember that unseasonable cold wave that settled over the Willamette Valley in Oregon, when my unharvested carrots froze solidly overnight. I was not the only one who re-

peated that statement, as old as agriculture, itself, — "Farming is certainly a gamble!" A friend of mine had been counting heavily on a field of fine cabbages almost ready for the market.

Late last fall the rains came to the lower end of the Kenai Peninsula. Water came down in the traditional buckets and blew in thick sheets and blankets, in my little valley. Streams went wild and took on the proportions of rivers, doing a good deal of damage. I was not only disgruntled, I was shocked that nature could become so severe in my favorite country. But, recalling the time I watched the Clackamas River, near Oregon City, eat away an orchard that had stood safely along its banks for more than forty years, I easily refrained from boarding the next boat south.

Old Man Frost annoys us, too. But he doesn't pick on us, alone. He takes his turn everywhere, outside the tropics. I saw snow in San Francisco and heavy frost in Los Angeles and Long

Beach, where it was just as unwelcome as the visitations I grumble about away up here in Alaska.

In Homer, which is called the Banana Belt of the Territory, frost paid a call as late as June 15, in 1949. Early visits are made on occasion, too, as witness September 1, 1943. And, at higher elevations or farther from salt water, frost can descend almost any time.

Nature being what she is, I believe that farming is a gamble in Alaska—but then, I think farming is a gamble practically every place in the world. If it isn't some climatic factor that turns a farmer's hair grey, then it is an outbreak of plant virus or a plague of insects. Farmers, north, south, east or west will agree, I think, that while farming is a gamble, the odds usually leave them on top. It's my opinion that this holds true in Alaska, too.

Naturally, we can't go in for corn and expect to have any odds at all—our choice of chips we throw into the game must be considered carefully. Very few of us can be big-time operators now, so the kitty is small, but this picture may change later on.

To insure more favorable odds, the farmer who studies the weather records is wise, for it will help him to guess the future by the past. There is one fact we must face up to and that is, no matter what location we choose, our weather is erratic.

Using common horse sense reasoning, it would seem that we could look over the terrain and say that since the prevailing summer winds and the winter air movements are so and so, and here looms a range of mountains that will affect climate such and so, and the salt water so many miles distant will equalize to this extent. But there is where we'd get tripped up because of the erratic element!

Here is an illustration of the point: Kenai and Kasilof, —two settlements on the Kenai Peninsula located on the shores of Cook Inlet—are only about fifteen miles apart, as the crow flies.

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In 1944 Kenai had an 88-day frost-free summer and Kasilof had 114 days free of frost, while in 1946 the tables were turned when Kenai had 132 to Kasilof's 57!

That sounds discouraging, doesn't it! But this eccentric weather is part and parcel of our gamble. And farmers can take it. A great uncle of mine, farming in Alberta, would probably have dropped dead had he ever succeeded in harvesting his crops three years in a row! But on the long-term haul he made money.

If would-be farmers in Alaska take this lengthy over-all view and plan accordingly, I think they will be greatly encouraged at the bright prospects. Making money is essential, our society being what it is, so naturally this consideration must be placed high on the list. But usually a farmer picks his vocation for other than the monetary rewards. These compensations are practically endless, and they vary with individuals, of course. So the man who is thinking of farming in Alaska is considering other things besides the cash income he can wrest from the soil.

This is brought home to me in letter after letter of inquiry from the States. They would like to farm in Alaska because: they love to fish and hunt; everything is rushing at too fast a pace Stateside; they want to get their children away from the mad crowd; they are being suffocated; they want good, pure air to breathe; they want to have done with red tape.

After deciding on the particular piece of ground to call the farm, the weather, whatever, must be accepted. However, something can still be done about it. Remembering that cold air flows over the land very much like water, will help in picking out locations for particular crops—giving the more favorable spots to the crops most sensitive to temperature. Another good way for checking this is to go over

your farm after the first light frost—before it melts. Then you can see the spots that are cold pockets and you may find places that have escaped entirely. If you can place your crops to avoid a summer frost, you "have it made."

It is also well to remember that wind is an enemy to plant life and it sometimes pays to put up windbreaks. Heat will bounce back from a steep hill that faces the sun, allowing an increase in warmth.

Last summer a few farmers on the Kenai resorted to smudges to stave off frost threatening to ruin their potatoes before they were developed enough to harvest. For the future, I can visualize portable heating plants equipped with blowers or fans, as insurance against that odd year of unseasonable cold waves.

Agriculture is bound to grow in Alaska because Alaska is going to grow in population. There will be a few set-

backs due to one thing or another, for that's in the nature of development, but in the near future this feeding of ourselves is going to be a big factor in our economy.

That money now spent for Outside potatoes, carrots (at five cents per carrot) rutabagas, beets, cabbage, celery, cauliflower and all the other vegetables that grow well here, could do more for our Territory if kept at home.

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THE GREENHOUSE

The first planting in the spring is of course in the green-house, for those folks who are fortunate to own one of these "indicators of spring." Here in Alaska we are more liable to hear people say, "We saw so and so working in the green-house," than to say "We saw the spring's first robin."

There is a lot of work to do around the green-house previous to the actual planting of seeds. The ground should be thawed out two or three weeks before planting time, and disinfected if there is any trouble with damping off or bugs. Sometimes when the green-house has been in operation several years and the benches weren't treated with a good wood-preservative, it is necessary to replace the benches. This is a good time to correct any defects in the original planning of the green-

house. Perhaps the benches were too wide or too narrow, too low or too high.

One common mistake is having the dirt too shallow. It should be at least twelve inches deep. One of the first things to do is cleaning the glass. Often without being noticed, dirt and cobwebs and the like, will clutter up the glass, holding out as much as 40% of the light. This light, especially in the early spring is very important. If you don't believe a good going over with plenty of soap and water will help, just try it on a small section and see what a difference it makes.

Soil can be used for many years in a green-house if rejuvenated with compost, or, lacking compost, a good grade of peat. Of course, fertilizer must be added each year. Dirt that has been leached out by years of watering from above will soon become hard to work, hard to water and hard to grow plants in, if new humus is not added each year. If there is plenty of humus the ground will absorb water and at the same time drain off excessive amounts.

If you have had trouble with damping-off, it is probably the texture of the soil that is the main cause. Soil that is heavily mixed with peat, say about one-third, will dry out quickly on the surface where it is exposed to the air. But will hold the moisture for days, an inch or so under the surface. When these conditions are maintain-

ed, so that plants stand most of the time in dry top soil, and the roots must seek out the moisture and fertilizer in the lower level of the soil, seldom is damping-off a problem.

Next to a complete lack of care, over-watering is probably a No. 1 fault, in a non-professional green-house operation. Plants, like people, don't develop very well if things are made to easy for them. Any good, complete fertilizer is satisfactory for green-house use. Probably the most satisfactory type for small green-house use, is highly soluble fertilizer. This is put on with the water. It is always better to under-fertilize a little to start with, than feed the plants up until they are doing well. Too much fertilizer and moisture discourages root growth, and encourages top growth in the early stages of plant life, causing an unbalanced condition, producing plants that are unsatisfactory for transplanting.

It is possible to get two complete crops in one season by raising field crops like cabbage and celery. About a week before these are ready to transplant, set in tomatoes and cucumbers in the green-house. In the small family type green-house the hybrid tomatoes are not too successful. They must have too much headroom. The best type of cucumbers are the long slicing varieties such as Straight eight or Longfellow.

The most common mistake made in Alaska is planting too early in the green-house or in the open ground. From the first to the 15th of June is usually the proper time to plant in the open ground. In the green-house from the time of planting seed until the plants are ready to be set out of course vary with the different types of plants.

Cauliflower, cabbage, broccili, brussel sprouts, head lettuce take about 45 days. Celery, pansies, snapdragons, take about 55 days. Most people like to start their gladiolas in the house. These should not be started more than three weeks before setting out. They shouldn't be much over six inches high when set out into the garden.

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Rabbits for Fur, Fun, and Frying

The raising of rabbits for home consumption interests quite a number of Alaskans, and it should be of interest, considering the cost of living in Alaska, especially the price we must pay for all kinds of meats.

Ordinarily rabbit productions increase sharply with the beginning of a war, when other meats are rationed. Or during depressions, when cash money is hard to come by. The fact that people are more conscious of waste during times of stress, also has a bearing on this.

When times are hard, people hate to see anything go to waste, and rabbits are a very efficient method of turning the waste from gardens and fields into delicious meat. The ordinary backyard garden has enough space and enough waste from the garden, in the form of outside leaves of lettuce, turnip tops, small potatoes and the like, to go a long way towards keeping the family supplied with meat. People, who do so, feel a sense of accomplishment in turning what would otherwise be waste into a fine food for their own table.

Often in families where there are boys and girls of teen-age or under, with nothing much to do, the raising of rabbits offers responsibility and education that is hard to get in any other way, besides the certainty of having a hobby that pays off. The growing of rabbits in commercial quantities fluctuates in every community. Because rabbits are so prolific, growers tend to oversupply the market, then all go out of business together, leaving the market completely unsatisfied, for a while.

There is always quite a market from the health laboratory. This market, when rabbits are scarce, takes all the available supply leaving none for the table trade. No doubt a steady supply of locally grown rabbits attractively packed and kept before the public the year 'round would be a profitable operation.

Rabbit skins are not to be overlooked when planning a rabbitry, whether for home use or whether the rabbits are to be grown in commercial quantities. There is a never ending demand for rabbit fur. The better grades go into fur coats, gloves and the like, while the cullskins are used in the making of felt and in the manufacturing of glue.

It is estimated that not more than two percent of the rabbit skins used in America are American grown. The grade of rabbit skins grown in Alaska is far superior to those grown in the

states and command a much higher price.

Beginners in the rabbit business should start small. There are things to learn that can't be learned entirely from a book, although a good book on rabbit growing should be the first investment of the beginners.

A steady demand can be built up in any community, even though rabbits have never been sold there before, if the grower will take pains to build up his market and grow with the demand. Ordinarily the best place to locate a commercial rabbitry is near the larger cities for the obvious reason that it is near the market and near the source of feed supply.

A choice of breeds to raise is of great importance in Alaska. The prime reason for raising rabbits is the meat. The value of the fur and fertilizer is of secondary importance. Although these things must be considered when entering the rabbit business. Therefore large quick growing breeds are best, such as Flemish Giants, New Zealand Reds or the Blue American. Mature animals of these breeds will weigh from 12 to 16 pounds at about one year of age.

It is very difficult right now to buy breeding stock in Alaska. The industry is at a low ebb, however, which makes it a good time to go into the business. Over the course of the next two or three years, the better rabbits could be sold for breeding stock right here in Alaska at a somewhat higher price than the meat animals usually bring.

There are several reliable rabbitries in Washington and Oregon. Since it is almost impossible to go personally

to pick out your own breeding stock, it is better to get in touch with several of these breeders, asking them for the best they have and be willing to pay the price. Ordinarily to start with, it is better to get only a few rabbits, maybe one buck and three or four does although if you plan on going into the rabbit business on a larger scale, one buck and up to ten does.

It is best for the beginner to choose his breed of rabbits carefully and then stick to them. Although in the future, when things are running smoothly, several breeds can be profitably raised, not because one would be superior for meat production or for fur, but in order to supply breeding stock of various breeds.

Rabbits are very prolific, usually having three or four litters a year. Probably it is better in Alaska to have them kindle, three times a year instead of four, missing the coldest time during the winter. This allows the doe to build up extra strength and probably produce larger litters.

We have found that rabbits are not bothered by the cold if given a simple box to sleep in with plenty of straw for bedding. They develop a very heavy fur and seem to be immune to cold even at 30 to 40 below.

The heavy breeds of rabbits should be bred the first time at from eight months to one year of age, depending on how well grown they are. Rabbits are ready for the table or the market at two months of age. They will dress out at this time from three to four pounds, dressing away about 25 percent from their live weight.

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way is to buy one of the scientifically prepared feeds in pellet form that is one the market. It is especially good for the backyard gardener and the beginner, as these feeds in themselves supply a complete and balanced ration. This in addition to the garden waste will make cheap meat.

The farm grower can feed local hay and grain to supplement his feeding program, providing the hay and grain are not moldy. Moldy hay seems to be often fatal to rabbits. I remember my own first attempt to raise rabbits when I was 12 years old which suddenly ended with a moldy armful of alfalfa hay.

There are not too many diseases effecting rabbits and there are many books on the subject telling how to prevent and treat outbreaks of diseases. Or the Department of Agriculture, through the extension offices, distributes bulletins on the subject, free.

Rabbits should be supplied with plenty of fresh, pure water. In summer they require large quantities; a 10 to 12 pound doe and her 8-week-old litter of seven will drink about a gallon in 24 hours. Water should be kept available at all times. When freezing temperatures prevail in the rabbitries

the rabbits should be offered water (not too cold) at least once a day just previous to feeding. The water containers should then be emptied to prevent freezing. Salt bricks should be kept before the rabbits at all times, preferably the mineralized type.

One common fault in the beginner, in feeding rabbits, is over-feeding. Many of the ills that rabbits suffer from are due to too much fat, especially failure to breed. Dry does and bucks should be fed once a day all of the pellets and protein mixture they will consume within 20 to 30 minutes. Nursing does with their young, should be fed all they will consume each 24 hours without waste.

A good quality of hay, preferably legumes such as alfalfa or clover should be kept before the rabbits at all times.

Green feed such as turnip tops or root crops should be fed very sparingly until the rabbits become accustomed to their use. One pound is plenty to feed ten rabbits to start with. The feeding can then be increased gradually until the rabbits are consuming all they will eat, without waste.

Regularity in feeding is more important than the number of times fed. Rabbits can be fed two or three times a day as long as they clean up without waste all of the feed they have been given. When they leave feed, the amount should be lessened at the next feeding to the point where they clean it up eagerly. Sometimes rabbits or a rabbit in the herd will go off its feed. When this happens it is best to skip a feeding, and then give the rabbit a special carrot or something else for an appetizer.

Most rabbit growers of any size, soon develop a market for roasting rabbits, weighing from five to seven pounds. This takes care of the old does and bucks and rabbits that are deliberately kept until they are this size for

the roasting trade. To condition these rabbits for slaughter they are simply fed a full ration that is kept before them at all times until they reach the desired weight.

The cost per pound of producing rabbits is tied of course to the cost of feed. When a rabbit ration is used, coupled with hay and green stuff from the garden, it takes about four pounds of all feed used to produce one pound of rabbit meat. This includes the feed used by the doe from the breeding date until the fryers are slaughtered at two months of age with an average weight of four pounds.

Rabbits are usually raised in close confinement and quite large numbers in the same enclosure. Therefore, sanitation is the ounce of prevention that prevents disease. Rabbits are usually raised in hutches with wire bottoms to facilitate the cleaning and the care of the rabbits. It is very important that the hutches be constructed properly from the start. Here again, books on rabbit growing, or bulletins from the extension service dealing with this subject, are essential.

Successful management, like the management of any other business, depends on careful organization. Records should be kept on individual animals, their age, date of breeding and all pertinent information. Costs of various feeds are important so that the grower can feed the type of feed that will put the most pounds of meat on his herd with the fewest possible dollars.

In the selection of breeding stock, great care should be taken. This should be done at weaning time, and only the very best out of each litter should be chosen for breeding stock. In the case of fryer stock, the object is to get the most meat on the rabbit in the shortest possible time. This is not true with breeding stock. They should be kept growing, but at no time be overly fat.

In the states in large rabbit growing areas, rabbits are usually sold "on the hoof," and are taken to central slaughter houses and handled by large companies. In Alaska, the grower must do his own killing and marketing because, as yet, there are not enough rabbits grown to support such a business and due to our limited population here, there probably never will be.

Fryer rabbits that are cut up and placed in cartons with small sprigs of parsley or watercress and covered with celophane, sell much more readily than the whole carcasses. In the case of roasters, of course, they are sold as complete carcasses, with head and feet removed. Either way they are fine and an enjoyable addition to the family larder.

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Beavie, the Beaver A Story For Children

By J. WRIGHT

Beavie, the Brown Beaver, stood all alone pulling the red neck tie tighter around his large neck.

There was a feeling of winter in the air and a cold wind blew the leaves around his feet. He was alone, lost in his dreams. Beavie couldn't seem to get over the spell the neck tie had cast upon him. It seemed to be a witch's spell. He had become lazier and lazier, so lazy that he couldn't get even one tree cut in a day. His main trouble was that he didn't want his beautiful neck tie soiled. Working on a beaver dam meant getting in the water and water would soil his lovely neck tie.

"Beavie, Oh, Beavie! Come here and see if this log is right for the pond," called Whack, Beavie's brother.

He slowly came out of his dream and started to run but Beavie fell over his neck tie and he couldn't get up. Beavie lay there and beat the ground with his large tail, crying "I wish I had never seen this neck tie. It's nothing but trouble!" Beavie was ashamed but got up and walked slowly down the hill, the neck tie dragging in front between his feet, getting soiled. He had forgotten himself and was walking like all beavers now instead of just on his hind feet, man fashion. The neck tie was an added burden trailing as it was.

When he arrived at the pond, every one of the beavers looked at him and shook their heads and said, "Beavie, what has happened to you? You have changed so."

"This neck tie is my downfall," said Beavie.

They said, "Why don't you take it off? It isn't worth it."

Beavie said, "Why, I can't take this off, someone else would get it. It belongs to me. I found it. Why, the wrong kind of animal might get it. But when the time is right, I'll put it

back on the stump — I mean when the moon is right." The beavers live by the moon. "I found it when the moon was round and full."

Beavie stood up full and appraised his beautiful brown coat. The red and white spotted neck tie really looked fine on him. He wished with all his heart it had been a bow tie. Bow ties weren't so much trouble. His thoughts were so wrapped up in the neck tie that he didn't hear Elmer, the Swamp Moose, approach. He should have for Elmer makes enough noise to be heard for miles.

Elmer said, in his swampy voice, which actually was so heavy you could hardly understand him, "Where did you get the rag around your neck?"

Beavie came awake. "What rag are you talking about?"

"That red and white thing tied on your neck."

"Now, my friend, that's a neck tie. Some man thing left it in the woods.

I found it and I'm going to wear it."

"What say I try it on?"

"It wouldn't go around your neck. It's not large enough."

Elmer looked unhappy. "I'm the most unlucky creature! I was born ugly and a moose and I've never had a neck tie. Just let me feel it on my neck."

"Well, O K, but you give it right back."

Meanwhile, Mortimer, the Black Bear, came up. He said, "What's cooking with you two?"

"Nothing much. Elmer is trying on my neck tie."

"May I try it on, too?"

"I guess so, just don't soil it."

By this time, Beavie began to wonder who would come up next. Elmer put the neck tie on his drab self, and breathed a great sigh. Stars came in

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his otherwise drab eyes, and his coat — it seemed to lose the drab, mossy look. Of course the neck tie wouldn't go around his large neck, but just the feel of it touching him made him so happy.

Beavie said, "Well, Elmer, don't you think you had better take off the neck tie?"

Elmer was under the spell of the spotted neck tie and he walked off into the swamp, leaving Beavie much troubled and disturbed. Mortimer said, "Why don't you get it back? It will be in the swamp if you let him have it."

Beavie said with a sigh, "Be at ease — just look at him, Mortimer, he has taken on new beauty."

Sure enough, Elmer's body seemed to glow.

Beavie said, "Mortimer, let us sit here on the side of the hill and watch Elmer."

Elmer wandered deep into the swamp and stood for a moment in

quiet. He then kicked up his hind feet and let out a loud moose call and then came dashing out of the swamp back to where his friends sat.

He said, "Beavie, this neck tie is magic. Let Mortimer wear it awhile."

"Well, take it off!" Elmer did so and handed it to Mortimer. Mortimer looked at it carefully. Mortimer said, "I don't know if I want to wear it or not. It made you a dreamer, Beavie, and made Elmer come out of the swamp. What will it do to me?"

"Try it on and see!"

Mortimer said, "I'm afraid. I think it's bewitched."

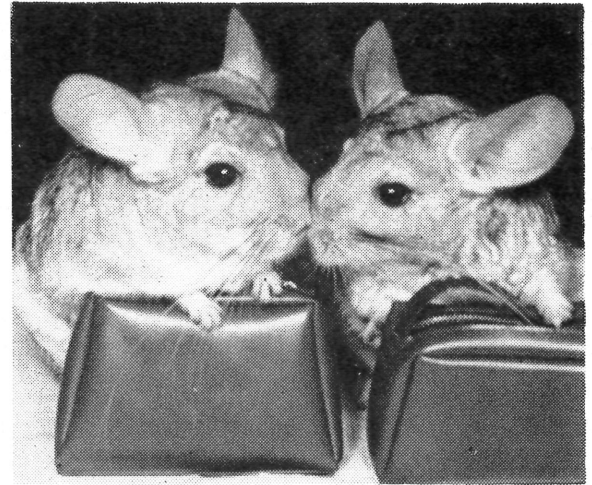
Beavie said, "Hurry up or I'll put it back on,"

Mortimer stood holding the neck tie. He slowly put it on his neck. The stupid look left his face and he lumbered off into the fading sunlight, leaving Beavie and Elmer standing watching him.

Evening came and the moon rose, large and full.

Beavie said, "It is time to return the

Chinchillas



All packed up and ready to go.

neck tie to the stump. But where is the neck tie?"

Presently Mortimer returned with the neck tie and another bear. It was a lady bear. They had stars in their eyes.

"Here is the neck tie, Beavie. I hope it isn't too late."

"No, it isn't. Come, Elmer, let us return it."

Elmer had wandered off. The moon was the hunter's moon. Beavie hurried to the stump where he had found the neck tie. He laid it down and hurried off into the forest to watch what would happen. Several forest animals went to the stump and looked at the neck tie. But none of them put it on. The night passed. The moon went down and the sun arose. It was hunting season and the guns began to fire. Still the neck tie lay upon the stump forgotten.

It lay there for several days and then one day when the forest was quiet again, Beavie went to the stump and picked it up and again put it on. He wandered into the beaver pond and set to work. Ignoring the neck tie, but it got in his way. He took it off and laid it down. It was nothing but a nuisance.

But Beavie wasn't aware of a young lady beaver who was admiring him while he wasn't looking.

"Beavie, why don't you wear the neck tie? It makes you very handsome!"

Beavie reached down and picked up the neck tie. It had brought romance to many and last but not least to him.

Beavie and the lady beaver and the neck tie went off into the forest with stars in their eyes, in search of the stump. Beavie again returned the neck tie, hoping it would bring happiness to some other creature.

THE END

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SPENARD -- BOOM CITY

(The following story, written by Oliver P. Shaw, is the conclusion of an article that has told of the amazing growth of Spenard.)

The liquor question has, from time to time, been somewhat of a controversial question in Spenard. In 1946, with but a few local residents, Lena Hansen opened the first package store in what is now Sweum's Grocery. Some opposition was encountered, but there was no general dissatisfaction.

When, however, the Anchorage dealers decided to branch out and establish stores in Spenard, considerable more opposition was voiced. This was due particularly to the fact that true local option does not exist under Territorial Law, which states only that in order to secure a liquor dispensing license outside an incorporated city, consent of 51% of the residents within a two mile radius is necessary, making no provision for overlapping boundaries. Since a two mile radius with the business district of Spenard takes in most of the City of Anchorage itself, most petitions for a liquor store in Spenard are generally made up of residents of the City who have no real concern with liquor not too closely identified with their own neighborhoods.

On several occasions the anti's have been successful in opposing the granting of licenses, but in a majority of cases the applications have been approved. A greater and greater influx of transient-minded people is reflected in the gradual increase of liquor stores and bars, and it seems apparent now that, barring some changes in the law, no effective control will be possible.

At the present time there are some ten licenses operating in Spenard, with others pending. In fairness to these establishments it must be said that despite less rigorous control than is possible within the City, there is relatively little disturbance or nuisance evident. Since most of them are located in the business district pro-

per, their impact on the residential areas has not been too severe.

Probably the single interest in which Spenard residents have shown a sustained concern has been the school problem. Although since the inception of the District in 1947, and the virtual automatic election of W. D. McKinney to the Board, there has been no representative of Spenard on it, although each year has seen a Spenard candidate on the ballot, in 1948-Cyril Robar, 1949-Tron Anderson, 1950-Phil Durant, and 1951-Edward Bantz. Lack of an effective organization, however, has precluded the possibility of securing the organized PTA support, without which election is extremely doubtful.

Under a previous school administration, somewhat lacking in foresight and initiative, schools in the outlying areas were not contemplated, and largely in protest to this discrimination, it was the residents of Mt. View and Spenard who were instrumental in defeating the first bond issue which proposed a \$1,500,000 super-school where the Denali school is now located.

As a result of this opposition, the administration was forced to adopt a different outlook, and after a ding-dong battle of words in the Commu-

nity Hall in the winter of 1948, the Board went on record as advocating schools in both Spenard and Mt. View. Bonds for this construction were subsequently approved and Spenard residents felt confident that a school building would be erected on what is known as the Weiler Site, located just off Spenard Road, on Weiler Avenue.

The opening of the Woodland Park Subdivision earlier had prompted many to build there in the expectation that an elementary school would be built on the site. Bids were called for the building without specifying the location, only the type of building to be constructed. Approximately two weeks before the bids were to be opened, the Board announced, that, for reasons since found to be erron-

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eous, a building could not be constructed on the Weiler Site.

Considerable consternation reigned in the area, but protests were to no avail. With no real clarification of the issues and despite the opposition of a majority of Spenard residents, the school now named North Star, was subsequently built. At that time, no one felt that another school was likely for Spenard in the foreseeable future and, when the North Star Site was far removed from the center of population, the temper of the local inhabitants was indeed tried.

The advent of a new administration

and the election of new Board members has proved more favorable to Spenard. Not only is a new elementary school being built in the Woodland Park area, near the Community Hall, but the site of the much needed High School lies in a 65 acre tract overlooking Chester Creek, near the Romig Subdivision.

The controversial Weiler Site, no longer of strategic importance to the District, has been approved for sale by the voters at a recent election. It is unfortunate that the location could not be set aside as a public park or recreation center, so badly needed by

the community. No organized legal body of sufficient financial capacity exists, however, to promote such an endeavor, further evidence of the need for some type of governmental reorganization of the area.

While on the subject of schools, some mention should be made of the bus transportation problem, which for several years was one of the real headaches of the community. Under Territorial Law, the Commissioner of Education is empowered to let contracts for the transportation of students in all types of school districts.

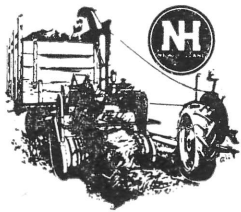
For a number of reasons none of which need to be discussed here, this system had degenerated, at least in the local district, into a haphazard, almost totally unsupervised operation, fraught with danger to pupils forced, of necessity to accept the only transportation available. Obsolete and completely worn-out equipment, unsatisfactory drivers, and scheduling which generally suited the convenience of the contractor and resulted in almost unbelievable overcrowding, was the rule rather than the exception.

Protest after protest to Juneau, the local superintendent, the contractor, and the Highway Patrol went virtually unheeded. The fact that almost all minor mishaps, of which there were an unlimited number, went unreported due to lack of supervision, and that despite the deplorable condition of the equipment used to transport the children, there were no serious accidents, made it extremely difficult to whip up any large scale public protest, since the large majority of parents naively assumed that school transportation here was handled as it is generally done in the states.

In a desperate but ultimately successful attempt to remedy a most unsatisfactory condition, some half dozen Spenard parents formed a Citizens Committee to gather the facts and

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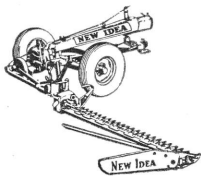
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place them before the authorities concerned. After some weeks of intensive effort a complete report on the transportation problem was presented to the Territorial Board of Education, at its annual meeting, detailing present grievances and outlining remedial measures necessary.

Fortunately a change in the local school administration about this time insured sympathetic and comprehensive hearings on the transportation problem, not previously obtainable. Too much credit cannot be given Mr. Don Dafoe, Assistant Superintendent, in charge of bus transportation, for his adamant stand in the matter of refusing to condone substandard and unsafe operating equipment.

As a result of the work of the Committee and the courageous stand of Mr. Dafoe, the beginning of the 1951 school year found the school system with no transportation whatsoever. Ultimately the local school board was prevailed upon to see its own responsibility in this matter, and an appropriation of some \$68,000 was authorized for the purchase of busses.

Pending negotiations for the purchase and delivery from the states, the parents co-operated by forming car pools for the transportation of the pupils. Some hardship was inevitable, but was well recompensed when, in January 1952, 14 new busses were placed in service, providing without doubt the safest, most comfortable, and most dependable school bus transportation to be found in the Territory.

In all, there have been three separate legal attempts to alter the gov-

ernmental status of Spenard, first, a hearing on behalf of the City to annex that part of Spenard known as Turnagain Heights, but denied on a technicality by the Third District Court; second, a hearing for the incorporation of Spenard as a first class city, dismissed without prejudice; and third, another hearing on this same subject, with the Court granting the petition but failing to set a date for the proposed election to determine the wishes of the voters.

This latter hearing was marked by demonstrations of extreme differences of opinion being aired in court, although the findings of the Court would in no way be final, since an affirmative vote of the residents was still to be required to accomplish in-

corporation. More than a year has elapsed since this hearing, but nothing further has been done in the matter, perhaps on the theory that it is better to let sleeping dogs lie.

One of the phenomenon common to all boom towns is similarly having its impact on Spenard. The trailer, and the resultant trailer court, have become landmarks in the community. The first known trailer in Spenard appeared early in 1945, having been shipped up by Alaska Steamship Co., since the Alaska highway was not yet opened to general public use. At that time there was not a single trailer park in the whole area, including Anchorage.

Gradually, as the highway conditions improved, more and more trailers

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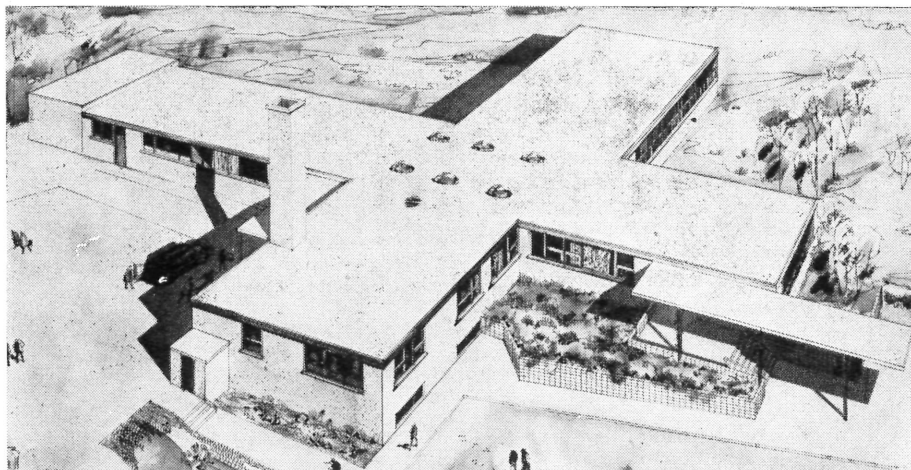
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appeared, and, with the rather rigid Anchorage code, virtually all trailer camps were forced outside the City. At this writing, Spenard has some twenty trailer establishments with an estimated total of perhaps 800 to 1000 trailers, with many more trailers located on private lots on which the owner is building or contemplating building a permanent residence.

What effect this influx of trailer dwellers has on the general tenor of the community is perhaps hard to define, but on wheels, rather than with any roots in the soil, it is doubtful whether too many of these people, by the very nature of their mode of living, will concern themselves with the ever-increasing problems that concern us; it is only fair to note, however, that those who live in trailers either by choice or necessity also contribute to the overcrowding of our highways, and avail themselves of all

New Hospital For The Matanuska Valley



This is an architect's drawing by Edwin B. Crittenden of the new Matanuska Valley Hospital now underway at Palmer, Alaska. The C. R. Foss Company of Anchorage won the contract on a bid of \$564,885 for this 24 bed structure. The building is constructed so an additional wing can be added when needed, furnishing an additional 20 beds. The folks of the Matanuska Valley have been working many years to get their sick and injured out of the Quonset Huts they have been forced to use since the hospital fire. Many a dance, box social and community effort was put into this project to raise money to get the ball rolling. About two years ago the Presbyterian Church took over the sponsorship of the project. The women of the Churches National Mission group made the Palmer Hospital their project of the year. A national drive was made through the church in every state of the union. The project was called "Pennies for Palmer" and raised a grand total of \$230,000. The balance of the money to construct this badly needed hospital is being raised in Alaska.



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other facilities which are strained to the breaking point.

So, on the point of strained facilities it is perhaps well to end this article, since that is invariably the place that any discussion of Spenard automatically begins and ends. The almost overnight conversion from a rural to an urban community would present a challenge to the most ambitious civic minded persons with both unlimited time and energy. How the problem will be resolved locally, if at all, is anyone's guess, but the prospects for orderly and systematic development seem more remote than ever.

For example, in the 1948 Utility District election, an estimated 50% of the eligible voters participated; in

the 1951 election probably not more than 10% took part. With such a paucity of individual interest, who is to solve the traffic problem where ten thousand vehicles daily are funneled through a solitary two-lane arterial highway?

Who is to provide a solution to the problem of a central water supply system in an area supplied entirely by individual wells with a constantly diminishing supply of water, and the ever present danger of contamination?

Who is to plan an adequate sewage disposal plant where each house has its own cesspool or privy, and where some types of soil will not admit the use of ordinary disposal methods, but must be designed by competent sanitary engineers?

Who is to preserve the law and give the ordinary citizen the protection to which he is entitled when every phase of his living is congested, confused, and confounded by a myriad of conflicts?

Living in Spenard is sometimes difficult, sometimes tedious, and sometimes downright exasperating, and a great many people refuse to put up with it. Almost no one is neutral in his opinion of Spenard in particular and Alaska in general. Both boosters and and knockers share one viewpoint in common. They wouldn't have missed it for anything in the world.

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ALASKA REINDEER NOTES

By J. SIDNEY ROOD

(Synopsis of December Issue)

If American Eskimos has raised no other species except sled dogs, American whalers raised nothing except hell with Eskimos. As killers, they surpassed Eskimos; for their harpoons and Winchesters beat Native spears. They stripped so many whales and walrus from the bloodied waters of Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean during the last century that our Eskimos got short of blubber, hides and meat.

So our Government's Sheldon Jackson had some domesticated reindeer breeders moved from Siberia to a new Reindeer Station built near Teller, Alaska. He knew Alaskan Eskimos liked reindeer meat and skins, and that the reindeer would like Alaska's plants as well as Siberia's. He reasoned that Alaskan Eskimos would become good reindeer farmers if they were taught HOW. He hired four Siberian Eskimo reindeer men to teach it.

The reindeer ate, fattened, rutted, fawned, increased during that biennium ending the spring of 1894. Wolves were absent killing caribou far away. But the local missionary whom Jackson hired to run the Station, William Lopp, thought the Siberian tutors were ill-tempered, jealous and cruel to reindeer. One of them stampeded a tired sled reindeer almost to death.

(The story continues)

Although Alaskan Eskimos treated sled dogs unfeelingly and lacked pets, at least Lopp hadn't seen any of them appease anger by maiming or murdering the new reindeer. By July of 1894 he had 19 Eskimos helping at the station and nearby herd, including 13 youths. They had been impelled there by the prompting of missionaries, hunger and other forces. They had become willing to herd night shifts as well as daytimes, and, activated by competitive spirit, they had broken and driven some reindeer steers as well as the Siberian hirelings could do. Alaskan Eskimos were Lopp's flock, his challenge and his hope. The Siberians were sent home that summer.

But Dr. Jackson was wise enough not to minimize the importance of getting experienced herders to help protect the precious reindeer seed stock. And he was ethnologist enough to know that the world's best teachers of reindeer husbandry would be

needed, not merely to teach Eskimos the tricks of reindeer farming but, even more basic, to wean them from a hunting economy to a nomadic pastoral life until they, like the reindeer Lapps, would never leave it except with sorrow. Supported by Congress' first appropriation of \$6,000, he raised another \$1,000 from private donations and sent an alert Norwegian, person-

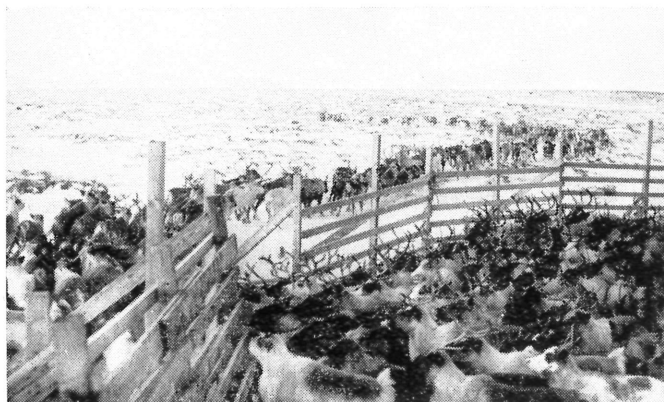


Photo by Gene Gyuriak, Stewart's Photo Shop

The deer are turned out of the corral after processing.

ally acquainted with Lapp reindeer men, over to Norway's Finmarken district to hire Lapps possessed of the finest herding, breaking and driving skills for an assignment at Teller Reindeer Station.

Now Lapps are like reindeer: they cannot be crowded or forced. And they hate to leave the fresh mountain air of their ancient homes. They are suspicious of strangers. But, after much parleying, seven were hired under 3 year contracts providing free transportation, subsistence, and up to \$400 per year cash, one of them being a hard-to-find Catholic youth (in a Lutheran country) who had run away from the confines of mission life to follow reindeer. Dressed in picturesque costumes they, with families and invaluable black Spitz herding dogs, crossed the Atlantic and America to a whaling brigg at San Francisco which landed them at the Reindeer Station six weeks later.

The black bearded Norwegian, William Kjellman, had guided them from Europe; and he promptly took Lopp's place as superintendent, the latter having to return to Wales to reopen the mission due to the murder of his associate missionary there by an irate Eskimo pupil with a whaling gun.

Already the herd totalled 491 head. Another 145 fawns had survived, despite a late spring. In 1893 the "Bear" had added 124 more Siberian deer to the original 171. Before October another 120 would be carried from life-

boats on stretchers up the beach to be loosed.

Although Mr. Kjellman's 7 Lapps and 19 Natives may appear to have been 5 to 8 times as many workers as the Government needed to tend its 588 reindeer, especially on a virgin, wolfless range, expansion of a widespread Alaskan industry was to be pushed as fast as the many daily chores permitted.

Driftwood for fuel had to be hauled by boat and sled reindeer. The Station, consisting of a 60-foot frame building, 2 log cabins and a storage cache, had to be expanded and made comfortable. Eskimo herd apprentices must hunt seal to enlarge the Station stock of skins and oil which the Government rationed to them and their families. Fish had to be caught and dried for winter. Lichens must be gathered and stored at the Station so sled deer could be kept there, as already there was no "reindeer moss" left within 3 or 4

miles. Tending a dog team was required, as reindeer are no good on ice. Reindeer milking in late summer, after fawns were weaned, was slow work. Instructions required castrating 90 percent of the bulls. Harnesses and sleds must be made, steers be broken and driven regularly. Fall, winter and sheltered fawning pastures had to be located before snow covered the plants. The Siberian reindeer were larger and wilder than Kautokeino's, so they needed more herding. There was no doctor, so Kjellman and a school teacher had to treat the sick. Rations were issued, ledgers kept.

And teaching about reindeer had to be made useful to the people by giving them reindeer. So 109 animals were given outright to the Wales Mission, 10 others to five apprentices who quit to drive and herd the Mission's deer 60 miles away.

As an experiment to determine how the most promising Eskimo apprentices would tend reindeer, if given the responsibility, a "bunch" of 109 was "cut out" and loaned to an Eskimo named Antisarluk, husband of the "Reindeer Queen" of later years, for nearby pasturing. The understanding was that Antisarluk and his four Eskimo associates would return 109 reindeer to the Government at the expiration of five years and keep the increase, which might be 225, as their private property.

Thus reindeer herds first began to

Glen Briggs

fan out from the busy Reindeer Station that winter of 1894-1895. Eleven private ownerships, each with its own earmark, were begun. And working at the Government herd there remained 10 Eskimo apprentices who, besides food and clothing, would earn live reindeer during each year until, at the end of a 5 year apprenticeship, each would obtain 50 animals to start 10 new herds under Dr. Jackson's original plan.

There was little danger of the small Wales, Antisarluk and Government herds getting mixed together again. The animals had ample food. At first the Wales and Antisarluk deer wanted to return to the home range from which they had been driven, for reindeer are like that; but they were watched. They could be kept close to the permanent sod igloos of their non-nomadic Eskimo herders, at least until the nearby supply of "reindeer moss" was gone.

If Mr. Lopp felt impelled to champion the pastoral aptitude of primitive Eskimos whose first missionary he had become four years earlier, his criticisms of the Lapps among the Natives aroused a competition which made the Lapps into livelier teachers and the Eskimos into more observant pupils. The Lapps showed Eskimos the "old country's" reindeer harness, much superior to the primitive Siberian, which placed the force of pull squarely against the front of the reindeer's neck and shoulder top and yet remained so simple, with its single tug between the deer's hind legs, that the impulsive animals could jump from side-to-side and over the tug without injury or tangling. They demonstrated how to milk standing reindeer, instead of extracting the half pint from each animal after making it so frantic, by lassoing and throwing it to be held under the brutal weight of men, that the reindeer fled desperately whenever they saw a lasso. They made inexpensive seines of twine with which they caught tubs of fish in the time it took Eskimos to snag dozens.

They taught milk drying, cheese making, the manufacture of butter. They showed how to waterproof leather after tanning it, instead of depending upon the smelly natural oils in untanned skins. They proved that a good herding dog is worth several men at times. They introduced simple pack saddles upon which reindeer can carry 80 pounds all day; their wonderfully cosy reindeer boots with turned-up toes; skis; and their native pulkas, like little dug-out canoes, were fine for sledding in forest and when snow was soft. They taught how to appraise plants for seasonal grazing, the high arts of lassoing, driving, breaking, defending sled reindeer from wolves and dogs armed only with their knives after throwing and straddling the



For many years Animal Husbandryman with the Alaska Reindeer Service. This picture was taken at Nome, Alaska just before the city was destroyed by fire.

deer. Kjellman proved the usefulness of sled reindeer by driving some 500 miles to Bethel and return via Anvik at a cost of \$1.53 per day. Those seven Lapps and Kjellman began making the Lapps' great contribution to our tundra life.

As manager, Kjellman observed the Eskimo apprentices closely. They were from coast villages between Pt. Hope and Unalakleet. One was from the Episcopal Mission at Tanana. It was so hard to keep them with the reindeer herd that finally, in desperation, he loaded those who returned to the Station with such heavy work that they preferred to quit or stay at the herd camp. This was necessary if, by actually tending reindeer, they were ever to develop the essential nomadic habits. He noted that those who had come from mission stations seemed to have developed a "taste for warm rooms," and he thought Eskimos taken from primitive villages where hunger was common might show more interest in managing reindeer. Although several showed promise, there were constant changes in the Eskimo crew, as some became tired of regular duty and others were dismissed because of habitual "carelessness." No Eskimos responded when, in the summer of 1895, "word was sent for apprentices up the coast . . . and Yukon River."

The Eskimos liked the Lapp herding dogs better than the Lapps, who were

early rising, future-planning task masters. Kjellman was ready to resign during that 1895 summer, although the immediate cause was argument over the sale of a wrecked schooner.

But the number of Alaska's reindeer herds increased again when, during the winter, Kjellman's perturbed successor had 130 animals driven to Golovin for later distribution to four Eskimos and the Golovin and Tanana missions. Every such distribution, by spreading Alaska's reindeer "eggs" to new "baskets," decreased risk of total loss.

The missions did not yet feel the "pinch" of having to feed and clothe Eskimos to herd their animals. But many wanted the prolific new species, the sooner the better. Dr. Joseph H. Romig was keen to get stock for his Moravian Mission at Bethel, while Jesuit Father Francis Barnum urged reindeer for Lower Yukon Eskimos. Famine was reported at Unalakleet and, as people could not raise seal, walrus, ptarmigan and other wild species, domesticated reindeer were requested. After all, Antisarluk's Eskimo herd had produced 71 fawns from 83 adult females the first year.

The Government's fawn percentage at Teller was more phenomenal the spring of 1896, 130 fawns resulting from 113 females. Healthy last-season bull fawns rutted; some females produced twins. Alaska's domesticated reindeer had increased to 1,175. Congressmen urged stocking the Aleutian Islands as a food supply to succor shipwrecked sailors, as the survivors of one vessel had lived only by eating their dead shipmates.

Two episodes during the fall of 1897 shook the world with "reindeer talk" and spread reindeer to our Arctic coast. The ice pack fastened its death grip around eight whaling ships and their 400 crewmen were reported in danger of starvation in the Barrow region. Low water in the Yukon halted the stern wheelers from St. Michael so that hundreds of stranded miners were feared to lack sufficient food to last the long winter. Our ingenious Government decided that reindeer must be the instrument to achieve relief.

After all, reindeer are useful to humans in the North. The meat, although deficient in fat tissue, has higher protein content than beef. Hides are thick-grown with hollow buoyant hairs having great insulation value for such things as sub-zero boots, mittens, sleeping bags and camp mattresses; and the light parka skins from fawns have an undercoat which makes them extra warm. Tanning will produce a velvet-like chamois, as well as tough shoe leather. Reindeer need no barns. Wherever their sharp hooves can paw down

through snow to "reindeer moss," they feast, which solves a problem for whoever may use them to draw sleds 30 miles per day or pack supplies. Although seasonal extraction of the milk is small and difficult, the milk has three times the fat of that from goats. Domesticated reindeer are a steadfast potential friend of all who need prolonged existence from our northern tundralands.

If images of ice-locked seamen and Yukon miners were packed with dammen's bold imaginations devised equally spectacular means of rescue. The Treasury Department would direct a drive of reindeer 600 miles north into Barrow's mid-winter gloom while, to aid the miners, Lapland would be promptly combed for herds-men and sled reindeer to be rushed to the Klondike's rich gold fields.

It was nearly Christmas of 1897 when the "Bear," oppressed by ice, managed to reach the Eskimo settlement of Tununuk, over 300 miles southwest of the nearest reindeer. Three fur clad officers, led by handsome Lt. Jarvis, were set ashore to commence a dog team journey overland to Antisarluk's herd, which was reached three weeks later.

Despite his family's poverty, that Eskimo, with the kind generosity of his race, agreed to loan the Government his entire herd to aid the hungry whalers. He and his Eskimo herders were hired and the hard drive north began, while Lt. Jarvis went ahead to borrow the Wales herd and, if possible, to get Mr. Lopp and his Eskimo herders to drive it. Successful in this, the two herds proceeded north separately along the coast and across 40 miles of pressure ice to Kotzebue Sound toward Barrow, which was reached two months later.

That drive was a greater feat than we can realize now. No weather stations existed. The Eskimos had not ranged among strangers far from home. The terrain ahead lay fogged in mystery. Yet White and primitive Eskimos together plodded north through storms and cold driving reindeer for 60 days, averaging 10 miles per day. And Lopp felt vindicated; his Eskimos were reindeer farmers, he felt sure.

So the Point Barrow herd began. For after everyone had gained a feast and more security from the slaughtering of 260 reindeer when the great drive ended, 201 remained alive to start herds which, later, spread to Eskimos along the Arctic Rim and back down the coast to Pt. Hope. Eskimos herded reindeer, thus earned some, applied their earmarks, hired other Eskimos, paid them reindeer. The chain of reindeer ownerships spread apace.

While reindeer were grunting, click-



Photo by Gene Gyuriak, Stewart's Photo Shop

Reindeer ready for the market.

ing their ankle tendons and making fine snow fly on their trek toward Barrow, William Kjellman, re-appointed as superintendent, was busy in Lapland. He had returned four of the Lapp herders to their homes after expiration of their reindeer contracts. Now he sought a whole colony for Alaska. And the Secretary of War cabled him to buy 500 sled reindeer for conveyance to the Klondike. So he sent couriers throughout Lapland to buy and hire.

Of the 539 sled deer which left Norway's port of Trondhjem for New York on February 4, 1898, only 122 reached our Klondike's Circle City a year later. The herd survived the Atlantic's storms, the strain of rail travel to Seattle and trans-shipment in a towed bark to Haines, Alaska, then met terrible starvation caused by lack of "reindeer moss" near Haines despite

the frantic efforts of the Lapps to peel enough lichens from trees to feed the dying stock.

And when the survivors reached Circle City, after months of struggling against obstructive forests, wolf attacks, open streams and blood-thirsty insects, the seven tired Lapp drivers laid down heavy packs to find that no emergency existed. The reindeer were not needed then; and, being steers, they bred nothing for the future of Alaska's reindeer enterprise.

But this "Klondike Venture" did not fail. For Alaska secured value from the human energy and skills of the hardy, already-acclimated reindeer-folk among the 113 Lapps, Norwegians and Finns whom Mr. Kjellman brought to Unalakleet's new Reindeer Station during 1898.

Great names came to be noted among these people: Redmeyer, Hatta, Per and Hans Siri, Boini, Bahr and Kjedberg, who had delivered the reindeer to the Klondike; and others to become equally prominent in our "reindeer country", including Spein, Pulk, Nilima, Anthi, Sara, Bals and Bango. One of them, Japhet Lindeberg, "struck it rich" at Nome and later became vice president of a big Seattle bank. Nearly half of the 68 men in this "colony" applied for American naturalization promptly.

The one-way transportation provided in their two-year contracts encouraged permanent residence. But it was encouraged by other terms, too: free food, clothing, medicine, freedom from taxes, a six-day week, \$268 to \$402 per year in cash, and opportunity to become owners of reindeer.

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Such terms tempted a people whose lives on Lapland's crowded pastures had required unusual thriftiness.

The contracts stated that should any, after two years' service, desire his salary to be paid with live reindeer, enough reindeer would be deeded to him to be worth the cash; furthermore, that every such person could borrow 100 reindeer breeders for up to five years without interest, so that the natural increase would be his private property after he had paid 100 similar breeders back to Uncle Sam.

This last feature was essential, for life without reindeer is empty of joy and promise to real reindeerfolk. The chance to earn reindeer compensated for such unpleasant things as homesickness, trying to "teach the Eskimo in Alaska in reindeer raising in all its details", and obedience to a host of strange Government rules and orders which the necessities of reindeer raising in Lapland had never imposed upon its resourceful nomads.

Even those who had not lived by herding the wandering reindeer in Lapland but, rather, had acted as drivers and trainers of sled deer for others, were captivated by Sheldon Jackson's confidence that Alaskan demand for cross-country freighting with sled reindeer would be substantial. Great new stampedes for Alaska's yellow gold were requiring more sledding and packing of goods across our roadless wilderness than ever before, and numerous were the pioneers who, considering the cost, weight and scarcity of dog feed, were anxious to

**Father Deschout
blessing Eskimo
herdsmen
and their families
before the annual
reindeer roundup
Tannunak on
Nelson Island.**



Photo by Gene Gyuriak, Stewart's Photo Shop

buy sled reindeer. The disadvantages of reindeer remained to be discovered by their buyers, such as: helplessness on glare ice, dependency during winter on the presence of "reindeer moss" along the trail, the bother of tethering and re-tethering them on good pasture, their vulnerability to loose dogs near settlements, and their retention of some of the capricious irritability of hitched cats that leave no doubt, while they yank at some damned weight tied behind them, that the entire situation is irksome.

If the Government's job was both to increase domesticated reindeer and to develop reindeer farming on the public lands, thus creating an industry of profit to the farmers and to the whole buying public, the opportunity given to expert Lapland reindeer men to acquire private herds was sound. They would do more than raise reindeer themselves. They were required to teach Eskimos HOW to raise them, and it has never been shown that these Lapp teachers did not prove to be sincere and capable. To the extent that Alaska's Eskimo hunters might not be impelled by the expert tutelage of Laplanders to become nomadic herdsmen, the Laplanders could not be blamed except by men who, possessed of such profound contempt for Eskimos that they hold them accountable for nothing, might blame others for

failing to accomplish the Eskimos' transition to pastoral pursuits. This, however, contemplates a future not yet reached.

Alaska's Reindeer Station had just been moved from Teller to Unalakleet when the Laplander colony arrived in July, 1898, to help manage the Government's 623 reindeer. The mosquitoes were at their angry peak and the great piles of logs which Stephan Ivanof had hauled to the Station site were not yet whipsawed for erection of quarters.

The Laplanders, however, were happy to settle again on the tundra in tents after their tiresome voyage. The local resources inspired them: salmon crowding the clear streams, chattering ptarmigan, migratory waterfowl of many types, virgin stands of the coral-structured "reindeer moss", familiar "Old Country" linden berries (cranberry) in abundance, graceful foxes and much else. And mens' talk rang with exciting tales of great gold strikes near Nome. Who knew but that all Alaska held promise for such hardy folks as they?

Their chance to test that question occurred soon. For it became apparent to the Government, especially after the big log Station was built in readiness for chill winter, that a staff of 68 reindeer men was too large. So the Government enabled many to leave to search for the gold which was inducing White Americans from every walk of life to rush to Seward Peninsula in a hectic search for wealth. But there were those among them who returned to reindeer herding later.

Thus Scandinavia's reindeer people joined Eskimos and Missions to develop private reindeer herds on Alaska's west coast pastures. And most will succeed until, as we shall see, the industry is brought near death by the grip of forces from which neither reindeer owners nor our Government achieved escape.

(To be continued)

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BEAR ON THE MOUNTAIN

(A STORY)

By DOROTHY BJORNSGAARD

I have seen a good many bear stories written into experience since Ed and I began spending our summers in the camp of the Collinsville Mines west of Talkeetna in the Fairview Mountains. But the one which gave me the most thrill "for my money" happened last year.

On a gorgeous day in August this red headed, six foot Norwegian of mine put his head in the door of our cabin and said, "Throw on your travelling togs, Ma. We'll go up the crick and pick a mess of blueberries."

I shoved back the sad irons and folded away the pressing board. Who wants to iron clothes when he can get an equal backache in a more delightful way?

Ed's work in the camp does not follow a rigid schedule and he can take an occasional day off. He packed sandwiches and coffee in a berry bucket to have for a lunch in the wannigan of the deserted camp at the head of Mills Creek where the valley's south slope is one enormous blueberry park.

Ed lifted his 32 Special from the wall. "A darn good hawk shooter," some of the camp men had said of it in derision. "Just the thing to get you into a jam with a Brownie some time if you carry it in these hills." Remembering which, Ed looked at his 30-40 Krag.

"Should I take the big gun?" he asked himself and answered promptly, "No. If bears have the patch we'll let 'em keep it. Or if it's a little Black, this gun will take care of him."

Kobuck, our black malemute, marked with a white neck spot and a white tail tip, was lunging on his chain and pleading to go along. "Sure, you can go," Ed told him as he slipped off the collar. "You're our bear dog." And we took off on the old foot trail of Discovery days (1906).

An hour's threading of willows, shoulder-high grass, and ripening fireweed cotton brought us to the deserted camp. We made a pot of coffee and while we drank it we scanned the opposite hillside for questionable elements. The berry bushes were low, so the slope was open except for an occasional clump of tag alders.

"I guess we're safe to go over," Ed decided after studying the area with his field glasses. "I don't see anything, and there's no bear scent in the air or Kobuck would never be chasing parka squirrels."

The dog hadn't once scented the air.

He'd been searching all over camp for squirrel burrows and all we could see of him at any time was the white tail tip bobbing erratically through the grass. Everything appeared serene, but to be doubly sure we climbed a high ridge back of the wannigan to look from a better vantage. And that's when we saw the big brown spot that moved, high on a ridge directly opposite our own. The glasses made him look as big as a moose. Fascinated, we watched him for half an hour as he moved this way and that in motions a bear would make stripping blueberry bushes.

"I'm not hungry for blueberries any more." I declared with emphasis.

Ed's eyes grinned. "No? Well, I can't say that I am either. My gun's not heavy enough to protect my appetite with that boy around."

With a few slips and slides on the newly frost-bitten hellebore plants we climbed down from the ridge and held a council over another pot of coffee. While we were drinking and idly watching the hillside the bear sauntered into view and continued his feast. He was half way up the mountain and plenty far away to let us go quietly back home the way we came. And that's what we decided to do. Calling the dog from his squirrels we started down the trail, but watched the bear with a wary eye.

Suddenly the Brownie lost his serenity. Throwing up his head for a quick look around, he dodged into a clump of alders, Almost immediately

he ran out of the cover and loped up the hill to a larger alder thicket. Then back down to the first one. Up to a third, and then in greater frenzy he half-ran, half-rolled back to the first.

"What's the matter with him, is he crazy?" I asked, goose pimples bumping up my arms.

"I think he smells danger and doesn't know whether it lays above him or below him," Ed answered. "The air must be drawing up the hill from us. That's why Kobuck hasn't smelled him."

In a longer move than any yet, the bear dashed over a hogback and began running downstream. The same direction we were going. Although he was still halfway up the mountain side, we slowed our steps and wondered if we should turn back to the camp. We'd be caught with no refuge and only a "hawk shooter" gun, if he decided to come on down.

"If he just wasn't so big—," Ed cog-

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itated. "I've killed two Blacks with this gun. But I don't know."

Our minds were made up quick and without any waste of words when the bear started running down a draw toward us. Not that he wanted us, any more than we wanted him. But how far can you trust a bear that's so crazy-scared as this one?

Once back in camp we scrambled up to the roof of the wannigan by means of the cache ladder and that crazy mutt of a bear, instead of going on away from the scent he was afraid of, raced back up over the ridge and dropped down into the draw where he had first sented us. He played mad tag with the alders again, dropping lower and lower on the hillside. Closer and closer to us and our frail refuge. And even yet Kobuck hadn't seen him, which maybe was a blessing.

"He gets down into the crick and comes over here, I'll kick the ladder down in his face," Ed chuckled small-boy fashion. But his hands, I noticed, were tense on the gun.

Myself, I didn't chuckle. The wannigan wouldn't be very sturdy against the thunderbolt of a frenzied bear. I was remembering "Pappy" Walker of the Kenai area who'd had his scalp ribboned in the mouth of a Brownie. He had lived, to be sure. But there were those who hadn't. I didn't want "Pappy" and "Mammy" Bjornsgaard running that kind of a risk.

Maybe Ed sensed by thoughts for he added, "The bear's too far away for me to kill with this Hawk Shooter, but I might scare him back over the mountain so we can get home."

The bullet evidently was high and plunked into the slope above the bear because he left his zigzag course and headed pell-mell straight down the draw. The next shot, lowered a little, brought him rolling end over end downhill.

"By gosh, I hit him," Ed exulted as he threw in another shell.

With the first report of the gun, Kobuck had taken off across the creek valley as fast as his plump barrel could weave through the tangled willows. At last he had seen the bear. With the second shot he had reached the blueberry slope and we could see his white tail tip laboring through the bushes nearer and nearer to the rolling bear. But he didn't close in and start mauling the carcass as we had expected him to do. He circled wide and warily, yapping in excited screeches.

We soon learned why. With only the briefest of pauses in a little hollow where the bear stopped rolling, he gathered his feet under him and took off up the creek. Apparently he had not been hit at all but just startled into trying to go faster than his legs could move. Kobuck's black head and

waving tail followed close behind.

The bear had to round a ridge that brought him into definite gun range even of the Hawk Shooter, but he was really making tracks. Ed's third shot nicked a front foot and made him limp a little but that didn't slacken his speed to amount to anything. He had frightening endurance. Kobuck followed him a while, dropping further and further behind. The last we saw of the bear was a big brown dot hump-

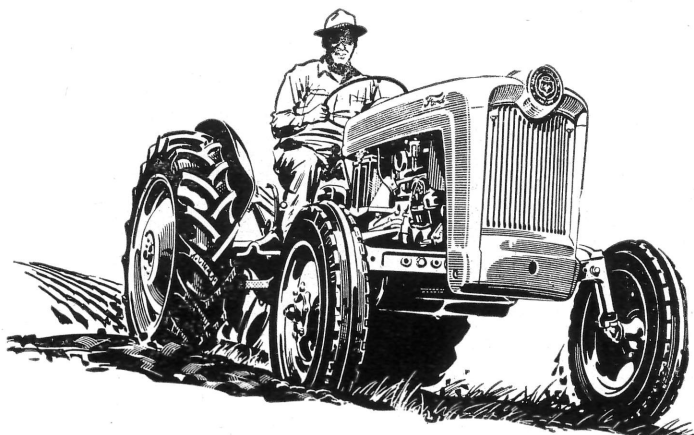
ity-humping over the saddle into the head of Twin Creek.

We had to go home without the berries and without the bear. But we didn't mind a bit. We got home. If anybody should happen to run across a big Brownie with hair prematurely gray and a front toe missing, that's the Boy.

Advice is like snow—we always get it when we don't need it.

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Rudolph's Berry Merry Christmas

By LOIS MELICKIAN

Once upon a Christmas-time, Seattle woke up short of cranberries because the large quantities she usually received from Norway and Sweden, had not arrived. It appeared many Christmas tables would not be decked with the cheery red berries that are as important as Santa Claus himself.

Though things looked bleak indeed, the magic of Christmas was hidden, only temporarily, for out of the frozen North, riding the crest of the waves, came another Santa Claus. It was the Veteran Alaskan sea-man, Hienie Berger, who on his previous trip South had noted the critical cranberry shortage. When he returned to Alaska, he talked to his sourdough friend Rudolph and told him of this.

"Well," snorted Rudolph, "I and my friends picked quite a few berries this year. Why don't you take them South with you and sell them for me?"

It was agreed upon, and Hienie and Rudolph, full of Christmas spirit, loaded this cargo aboard the ship at Anchorage. There were seventy-five gallons of Alaskan Cranberries in all.

It was two weeks later when Hienie arrived back in Anchorage. He sold the berries to a large chain store for one dollar a gallon, and now he was happy to present Rudolph, not only with a check for the delivered berries, but also an order for two thousand more gallons of the same.

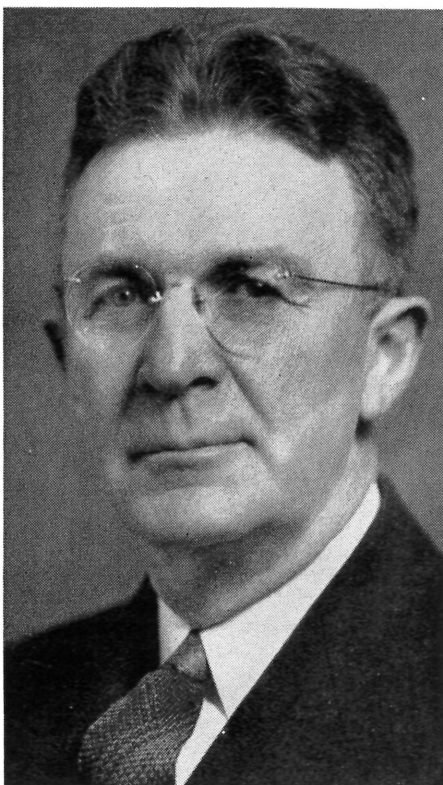
The seventy-five dollar check incidentally, made a Berry Merry Christmas for Rudolph.

THANKS (A Poem)

By Dolores B. Watson

Let us give thanks for eyes that see
Mountains of majestic beauty
Fields of crops to nourish its people
Millions of working people's homes
Nature and its changing seasons.
Let us give thanks for ears that hear
Music of happy people
Singing of birds in the wooded areas
Gleeful laughter of children at play
A baby's gurgle at feeding time.
Let us give thanks for hands
That discover the earth's many wonders
Which heal the sick and care for the wounded
That care for their loved ones
That help to make a better world.
Let us give thanks for hearts and souls
Of a generous understanding people.
Let us give thanks for a beautiful land
Untouched by war's destruction.
Let us give thanks for a land that is free
To men of all Nations and Creeds.

Governor Heintzelman



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The Braswell & Sons ad below advertising White China Geese for sale is the first such ad ever to appear in the Alaskan Agriculturist from the Bristol Bay area. We wish the Braswells a lot of luck. Editor.

White Chinas

Egg Goslings and Started Geese

Braswell & Sons
Dillingham, Alaska

French Alpine Dairy Goats

Reserve spring kids now from does producing up to 1400 lbs. of milk per lactation on Alaskan grown feeds.
"Grow your own dairy products."

WILLOWRIDGE FARM
Box 64-A Homer, Alaska

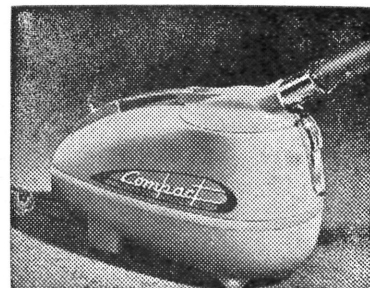
The Flower Garden

Not all flowers shown in the big Seed Catalogues will grow here. But those that do are marvelled at by visitors to Alaska, and enjoyed by everyone, especially by those of us who spent the long winter in Alaska. Due to the long days of summer from 18 to 24 hours of sunlight, depending on where you live, plants have an opportunity for uninterrupted growth, from planting time in the spring until the first frost of fall. No where else do flowers reach such size, perfection, colors and fragrance as those grown under the light of our own midnight sun. The list of flowers that do well here is given below:

Flowers usually planted from seed in the open ground after the ground warms up usually about June 1st, include alyssum, Calendula, Candy tuft, Bachelor buttons, Chinese forget-me-nots, Annual pinks, Baby breath, Scarlet runner, Senaria, Nasturtium, poppies, sweet peas, straw flowers, Nemaphelia.

Those that should be set out in the spring from started plants include: snapdragons, astors, cosmos, larkspur, lobelia, pansies, phlox, petunias, stocks glads, sweet williams.

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THE

Homesteader's Wife

By Laura Pedersen

For some reason Laura Pedersen's copy didn't show up in time for this issue. This below was left out of the winter issue. Can't get along without the homesteader's wife.

Just recently I have been informed that the farmers on the Kenai Peninsula are having a hard time selling their produce to the markets in Anchorage. There is one farmer with three tons of potatoes and he can't sell them. Another farmer has several head of cattle with no market for them.

I asked one party from Anchorage why the butcher shops there don't buy Kenai beef. He told me it was no good — the fat was too yellow. Now this I know for certain to be untrue. At one time I was in the restaurant business in Homer and I used all the local produce I could buy. I used thousands of pounds of the best beef money can buy, and thousands of pounds of potatoes that compared favorably with any State's potatoes, both for mashing and French frying.

Personally I think it's a sad condition when the local markets won't cooperate with the local farmers. Especially when one hears so much about trying to make Alaska independent and self-supporting.

* * * *

Here's an idea sent in by Mrs. Fred Gerber of Minneapolis, Minn. I've had this one in before but it missed the Christmas issue.

Christmas Tree Decorations or Place Cards

- ½ cup water (may need a little more)
- 1 cup salt
- ½ cup corn starch

Science Steps Into Your Garden

Perhaps our worthy ancestor, the American Indian, had a great idea when he placed a fish in the soil under each hill of Corn. Surely the Corn grew better. And if the Indian liked to fish, he had a wonderful combination of activities.

The modern gardener has used whole fish, acidulated fish scrap, and fish meal in various forms. More recently, he has used the so-called liquid fish solubles. They are usually sold in bottles, offered as a concentrated emulsion to be mixed with water. Some are clotted and thick; some are thin; some smell rich and offensive, like a dead fish; others are partly or completely deodorized.

Within the past year new forms of liquid fish fertilizer, made by a different process, have appeared on the market. The appearance of these products suggests that 1953 gardeners may take a second look at the liquids. Out of these new elixirs resembling liquid sunshine, comes new life, new vigor, new growth and beauty.

Our old stand-bys, the Alaska Fish Fertilizer and the Atlas Fish fertilizer are made from concentrated waste water from the presses of fish meal and fish oil manufacturing plants. This so-called "glue" water, or "stick" water, is boiled down to a 50 per cent solids concentration. Insect and dog and cat repellants and deodorizer are added, and the material is bottled and

Bring water to a boil in sauce pan, add salt and cornstarch. Mix together until you have a ball. Roll out like pie crust ¼ inch thick and cut out any pattern you wish. Decorate with water colors and let them dry on flat surface. And with that I wish you all a very happy Holiday Season.

sold. The fertilizer analysis of these materials runs about 5-2-2: five per cent nitrogen, two per cent phosphoric acid, and two per cent soluble potash.

The liquid fish fertilizers made by a newer process have a higher analysis, due to the fact that the fish materials are supplemented with other plant foods. Ortho-Gro and Lilly's new Marina Liquid Fish Blend fertilizer are examples of this process.

In making these fertilizers, the whole fish or the fish cannery offal is dissolved by means of a protein solvent. When potassium hydroxide is used as the solvent, potash is added, and this supplements the potash plant food derived from the fish. In this process, the entire fish tissue, including bones, is converted to liquid form. Then urea is added to bring the nitrogen plant food factor up to a desired level for fertilizer purposes. Finally, the material is neutralized with liquid phosphoric acid, to bring the pH to exactly the proper point. The result is a liquid fertilizer with a ratio of about 10-5-5. In the case of Lilly's Marina Fish Blend, the analysis is ten per cent nitrogen, six per cent phosphoric acid, and five per cent soluble potash.

It is claimed that this process, which dissolves the whole fish tissue, gives the gardener all of the minor elements and growth factors contained in the bones, blood, glands, and viscera of the fish, in balanced organic form. Also, vitamin B complex is present, derived from the fish, and from addition of thiamin. Thus, for the first time, we have in one product all the thirteen essential minerals, hormones, and necessary trace elements in a single fertilizer solution. Such a product ends forever the need for separate application.

All of these products surely have value for the gardener, especially since they are ideally suited for leaf feeding, and for transplanting use. Liquid fertilizers have taken an important and interesting place in the supply of superior gardening materials. One reason is their possible use for nourishing growing plants through the leaves. It is clear that plants are able to absorb the mineral and all small organic plant foods when they are applied to the leaf surface. Feeding in this manner may supplement root feeding, with the result that faster and better growth can be obtained.

Early in the season when growth processes are slow, needed stimulus can be given with a skillfully applied liquid fertilizer, fed through the leaves. Later, when the spring application of fertilizer in the soil is used by the plant, leached out, or partially bound in the soil, another feeding in liquid form may be most timely.

—Stolen from Northwest Gardens and Homes

ALASKA SEED COMPANY

Has made arrangements with Lacombe Nursery, Lacombe, Alberta, to handle their hardy grown nursery stock including:

- American Mountain Ash
- Grafted French Lilacs, many colors
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- Pixwell Gooseberries
- Red Lake Currants
- Newburg Raspberries

- Spirea
- Honeysuckles
- Flowering Currants
- Eskimo Rose (Sitka Rose), red, white and pink, doubles
- Rhubard (McDonald)
- Delphinium, white and purple
- Manitoba maple

This stock will be ready for delivery about May 15th from our Anchorage store.

Alaska Seed Company

1314 I Street, Anchorage, Alaska

Letters to the Editor ☆ ☆ ☆

Homer, Alaska

The Alaskan Agriculturist:

Intended to write some time ago to tell you we received much favorable comment on the article in the fall issue. Your introduction was especially appreciated by people who have goats.

Quite a few letters were received from the States as far east as Kansas and Wisconsin.

The Editor of the Capriculturist said your introduction was the most sensible thing he had read on the place the dairy goat has in the dairy product business.

Sincerely yours,
Willowridge Farm

Spenard, Alaska

Dear Sirs:

The wide circulation your magazine enjoys throughout the Territory has prompted me to write this letter of inquiry in the hope that some of your readers may be able to help me in a current project.

As you are aware, I have for some time been doing research into various phases of Alaskan history, and I am at the present time, endeavoring to reconstruct the establishment and development of Transportation and Postal Service from the early days to the present time.

I am anxious to secure therefore any old records regarding Yukon River boats, names, schedules, rates, etc., and all types of travel folders or guide books on Pacific Coast Steamship Co., Northwestern Steamship Co., and any information on the old Alaska Commercial Company and the North American Transportation and Trading Company.

With respect to Postal records, my principal needs are for post marks or cancellations from the earliest days to about 1940, or until the establishment of regular airmail service throughout the territory. I am in need too, of cancellations from discontinued offices and from offices that have had name changes. Any letter showing, aside from the regular cancellation, some indication as to how it was carried, might be of real interest to me.

I sincerely hope that any reader who has anything at all that seems pertinent will communicate with me thru the Agriculturist. No material will be considered too insignificant and every letter received will be answered.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ Oliver P. Shaw

The Alaskan Agriculturist:

I am writing to give your magazine my change of address and to ask help, if possible, in locating a supply of wheat for home consumption. The enclosed material will show you and Mrs. Pedersen the flour mill I have sent for. I trust that you may be interested enough to get one also. I guarantee that once you have tasted bread, corn bread and pie crust made with fresh ground whole grain flour you will not enjoy any commercial product ever again. Americans have lost track of what true taste is. As well as what is truly healthful.

We would appreciate if you could let us know if it is possible to get 100 pounds of wheat down your way as soon as possible and the cost of it. A couple of local farmers have wheat but it is not cleaned but we will be able to get all the wheat we need locally, I am sure, later on.

Altho we do no more than a bit of gardening for our own use, we are keenly interested in your fine magazine and hope that in time its articles will cover the whole territory. I am housekeeper for my Uncle who came over the Chilcoot as a young man in 1898. A more charming companion and well balanced mentality can not be found often among younger men. He knows Alaska as few moderns will take time to know it. He talks of forty sections of land that will out class any present farming area. When it is developed. Life is too short to realize the fruition of progress satisfactorily.

Wishing you people continued success in the fine work you are doing.

Respectfully yours,
/s/ Nickie Bell

* * *

(Editor's note: Thanks, Nickie Bell, for your nice letter. I hope some of the farmers in the Matanuska Valley with wheat suitable for your purposes will write you a letter. Address: 453 12th St., Fairbanks, Alaska.)

Box 277
Holbrook, Arizona

Gentlemen:

At last we are permanently located at the above address, so kindly send my Alaskan Agriculturist here. Should be one or two back numbers. Tho I am a long ways from Alaska, I still take a deep interest in it. We came here for health reasons and not because we don't like Alaska, for we most certainly do. Wishing you the best of success in helping to develop Alaska, I am,

Very sincerely,
/s/ E. S. Moore

Dear Editor:

We want to thank you for the space you so generously gave to the Chinchilla industry in the winter issue.

I imagine the interesting cover you used plus the personal autograph by George Ahgupuk added many subscribers to your list.

From our own experience we can tell you your circulation covers a large area, for we have had letters of inquiry from many obscure corners of Alaska and many visitors from close at home, because of our ad in the Agriculturist.

I'm enclosing a fetching little picture you might care to share with the public, to acquaint them with our cunning creatures. Perhaps we will send in pictures of our latest Chin twins (three weeks old) or our famous world's smallest Chinchilla cape made for a doll to model at the Rendezvous style show by the Alaska Fur Factory.

We feel we Alaskans, no matter what our individual job, have a great future ahead if we all pull together.

Don't forget to re-run our ad this issue.

Thanks again.

Elliott's Chinchilla Ranch

(Ed's note: We won't forget your ad. No, sir!)

How did the fool and his money ever get together in the first place?

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Complete Dinners

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Tractor Conditioning

There are busy days ahead, and before they start it is extremely important to get your farm machinery — your tractor, especially — in the best possible condition. A good place to start is on the air cleaner of your tractor. While most farmers do a good job of taking care of the pre-cleaner and oil cup, the air cleaner itself is often neglected. About 9,000 gallons of air goes through the cleaner for each gallon of fuel burned, and you must expect that a lot of dirt will lodge in the screen and element of the cleaner. The air cleaner should be removed at least twice a year and thoroughly washed in kerosene or a cleaning solvent. When it is replaced, be sure that all air hose connections are tight for a leaky hose makes the cleaner useless.

The next item that should be checked is the fuel system. The fuel screen located on most tractors near the sediment bowl and carburetor should be removed and cleaned. The carburetor should be cleaned and adjusted. You'll want to remember that the carburetor is not a gas plant but is a metering device, and it cannot measure the proper mixture of air and fuel unless properly adjusted. The motor should be warmed to operating temperature before any attempts are made to adjust the carburetor. There are three major adjustments on most tractor carburetors. The idle stop screw which merely stops the throttle lever at idling speed, the idle mixture adjustment; and the third is the load adjustment.

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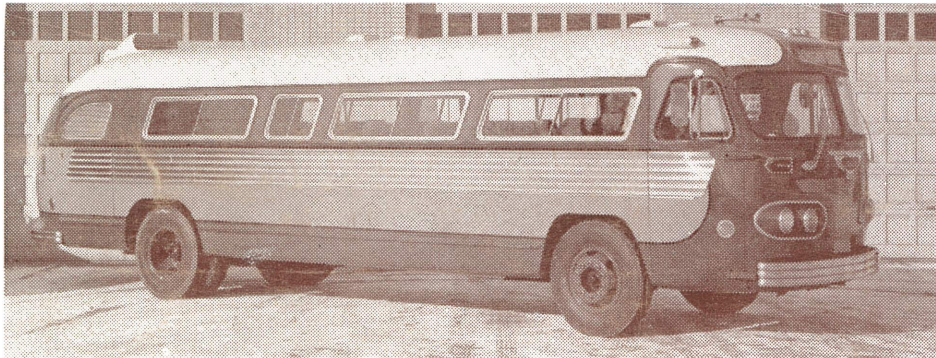
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If you must sell "We know you don't want to" write to us. Our farm salesman will call on you and take your listings.

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Leave Anchorage
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Except Sunday
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10:00 a.m. Daily
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To Anchorage and Seward
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AGRICULTURIS.



*Published in the interests
of Alaska's Modern Pioneers*

Summer 1953



In This Issue:

Building a Log Home

KEN's Ruth Briggs

Making an Alaskan Lawn

Front Cover

Front cover emphasizing summation time. The gals, Marge and Linda Gordan, the lake, Lake Nancy, Photographer Viola McMillen.

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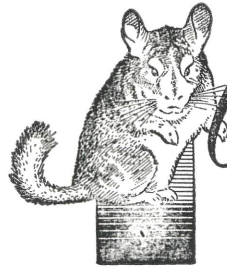
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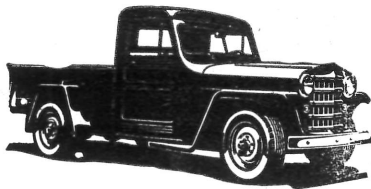
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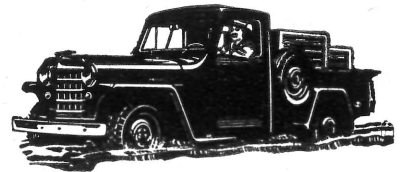
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THE ALASKAN AGRICULTURIST

*Published Quarterly in the interests of
Alaska's Modern Pioneers*

COVER: Vacation Time — Photo by Viola McMillen

VOLUME VI, No. 2

SUMMER, 1953

ED BALDWIN, Editor—1314 I Street, Anchorage.
DICK BALDWIN, Associate Editor — Anchorage

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Manuscripts on Alaskan subjects will be carefully considered, but no responsibility for their return is assumed. When submitting manuscripts enclose stamped self-addressed envelope for their return if found unacceptable.

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Check one, (.....) **NEW**
please. (.....) **RENEWAL**

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."

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



RUTH BRIGGS

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 recipes 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 Lorraine 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 cupfuls 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 (preferably 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

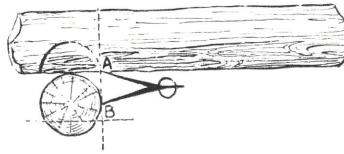
A short article like this cannot go into many details as to tools and operations necessary to build a good log house. But it should provide enough information and sketches to create a desire to build a place to live, which is inherent in all of us. References at the end of this article give plenty of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

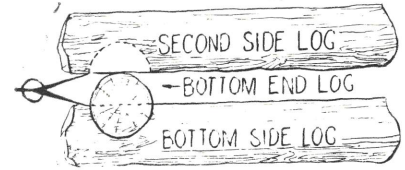
The first round of logs should naturally be the larger logs and hewed with a flat surface on the under side to rest on the piers.

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.



4. Top of curve.



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

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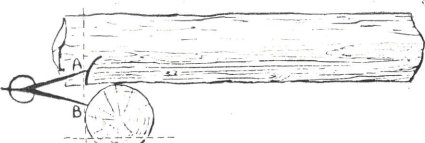


— BOTTOM SIDE LOG
— FLAT SIDE

1. Set scribe at half diameter of lower log.



2. Begin to scribe on bottom of upper log.

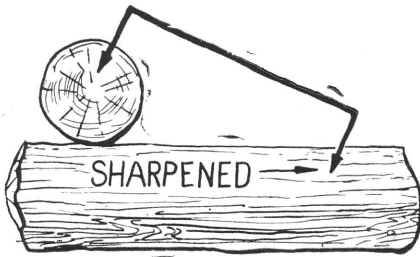


3. Move scribe upward.

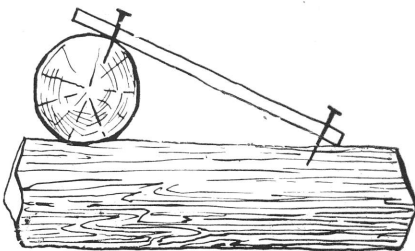
the same on the opposite side of upper log.

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.

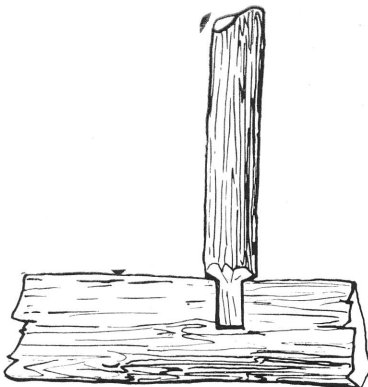
LOG DOG SHAPED 1/2" STEEL ROD



BOARD AND NAILS

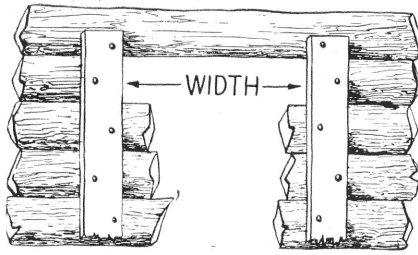


A good sharp double-bitted axe is needed to cut these notches. After the log is scribed at both ends, roll the log over and hold in place while cutting the notch with log dogs or short pieces of board nailed to the logs.



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 height 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 3/4-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.

References:

Building with Logs, Miscellaneous, Publication No. 579, U. S. Dept of Agriculture, Forest Service.

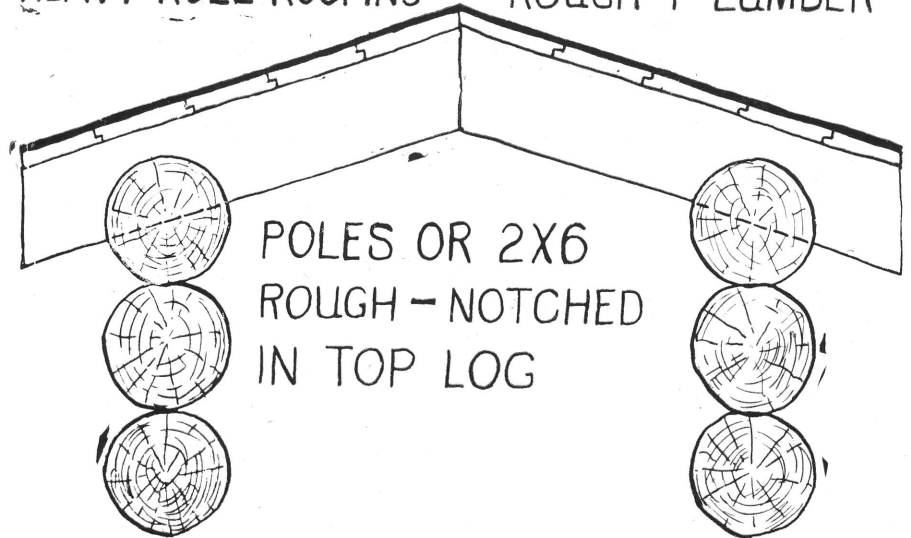
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BUILDING A LAWN

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 re-seeding 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 top-soil 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 peat. It's a good idea to mix local peat 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 unevenness 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 carefully 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.

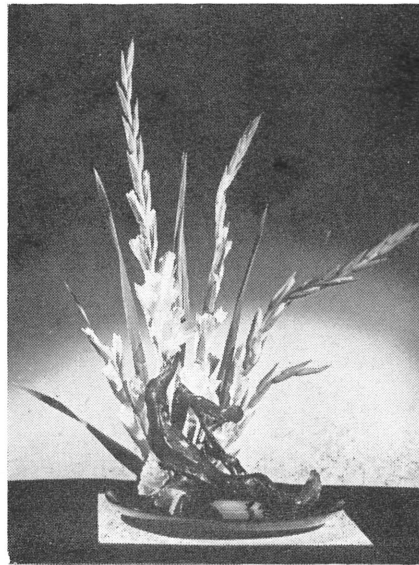
For the best results soak the bulb in warm water overnight before putting in Vermiculite. They may, of course, be started in any of your favorite starting soils. I mention Vermiculite only because I have had the best results from that method of starting. The time of starting depends a great deal upon 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 equally 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 win-



—Photo by Gin Wells

Prize Winning Glads

ter 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.

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, preferably 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 con-

tinue 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

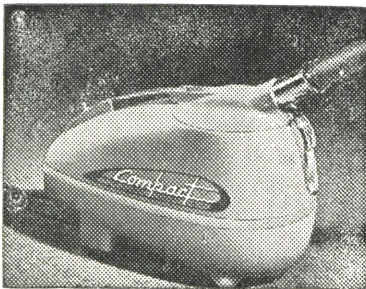
the garden the Russian Lily is an old faithful. It can withstand the severest winter without covering or protection, it can take digging and dividing, and neglect. I recommend it as the flower for a busy person to have. Even after the rich coppery-red lilies have faded, the deep green plant foliage remains 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

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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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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 blossoms in the spring. Some trees have pink blooms, while others have rich red. One year

(Continued on Page 32)

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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 devastating 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 leit-motif 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 enforceable, 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 accommodated 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 herds-men, 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 reindeer, 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 num-

bers 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 obscure 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. Examination 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 informa-

tion 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 improvement 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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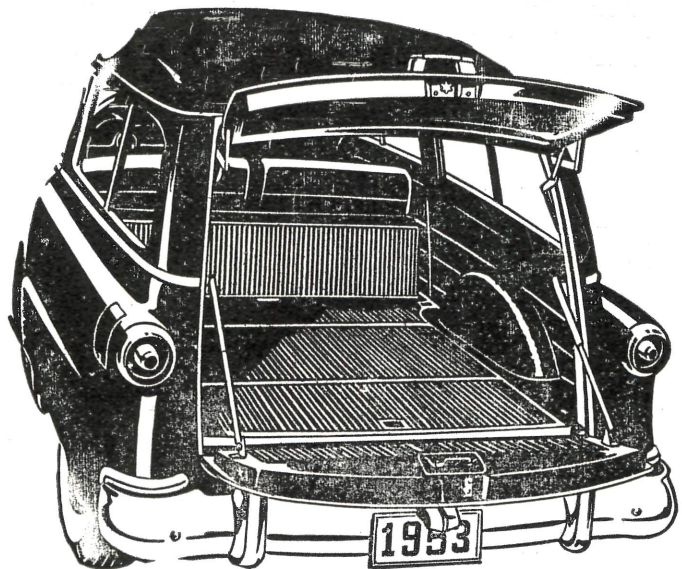
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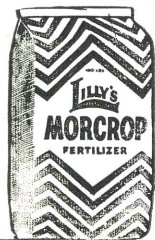
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What's New for the Garden

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. Cyanamid 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 1½ 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 1½ pounds of nitrogen, using standard lawn fertilizers containing 5% nitrogen, apply 25 pounds per 1,000 square feet every month in the growing sea-

son. 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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SEWARD, ALASKA

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 Countries

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 feel 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 advantage 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 prohibited 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, sweet-pea 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 everybody 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 Ergonomy 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 CONDITIONS SOIL WHERE PROPERLY USED

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 nitrogen 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 protec-

tion 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 manufacturers 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 anyone, 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 that women are angels. Always harp-en 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 still-born 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 melted 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 whalebone, 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-crusted everywhere will carry their weight) were not worth the expense.

Despite the presence of large numbers of wolves, only two had been cap-

tured 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.

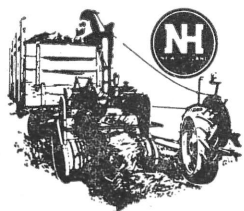
The terms we offered reindeer companies were these: we would pay a chief herder \$45 per month. We would also pay \$20 per month to each of three common herders provided their companies would match those wages. We published a full outline of duties for each man. The hope was that each company would take 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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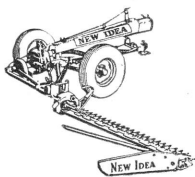
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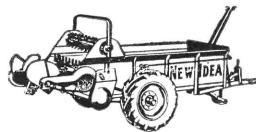
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Charles Burdick, representing the Secretary of the Interior, began purchasing all non-Native reindeer. An experienced career officer with a liking for people and of highest integrity, he was particularly suited for his difficult task.

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 actual counts and did exhaustive statistical research covering years of records to establish trends of ownership. I accompanied Mr. Burdick during 12,000 miles of aerial reconnaissance 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 become 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 Govern-

ment 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 herders, 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 bene-

fit 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.

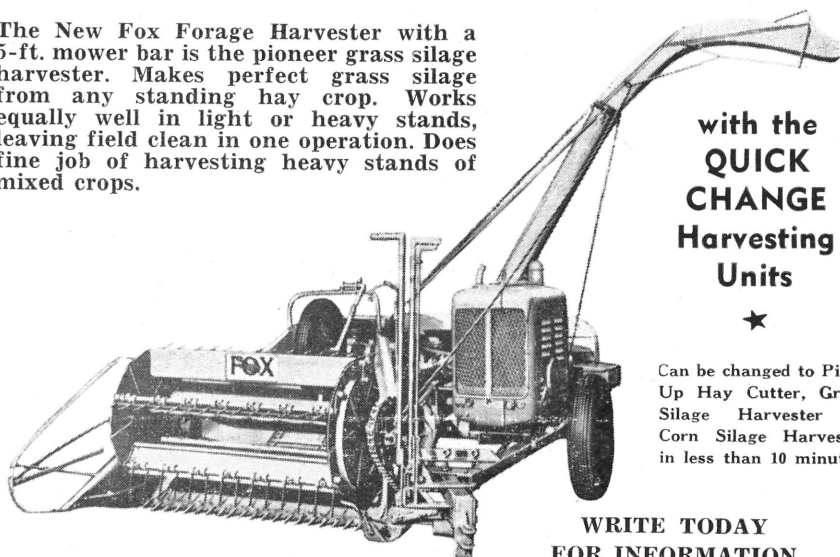
At the same time, reindeer operators should be eligible for loans from farm loan funds.

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.

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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 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 peat, 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 ex-

perience 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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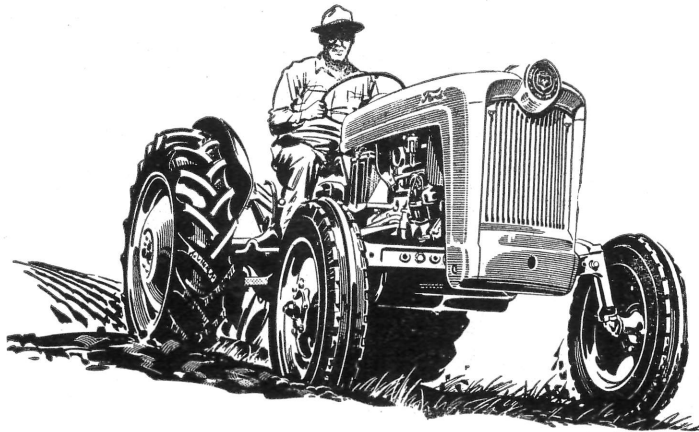
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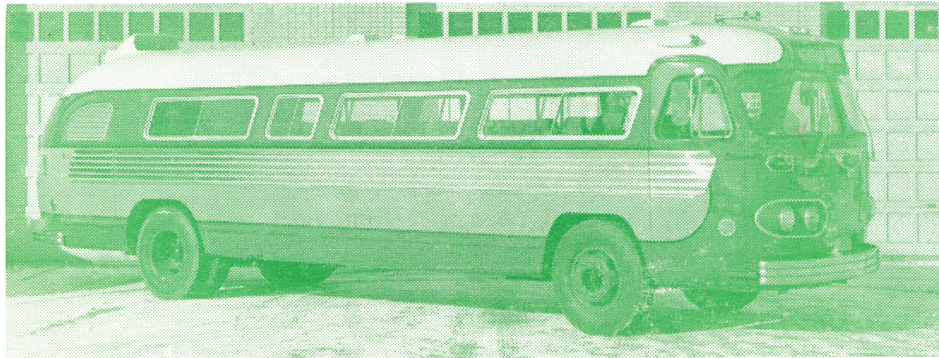
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