

6-1-1965

From Chinquapin Farm - A Former City Dweller Says, 'Homesteading Yes, Farming, No!'

Victor A. Croley

Follow this and additional works at: <https://research.library.kutztown.edu/greenrevolution>

Recommended Citation

Croley, Victor A. (1965) "From Chinquapin Farm - A Former City Dweller Says, 'Homesteading Yes, Farming, No!'," *Green Revolution*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 6 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://research.library.kutztown.edu/greenrevolution/vol3/iss6/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Research Commons at Kutztown University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Green Revolution by an authorized editor of Research Commons at Kutztown University. For more information, please contact czerny@kutztown.edu.

THE GREEN

FOR HOMESTEADERS, ON-TO-THE-LANDERS,
AND DO-IT-YOURSELFERS



REVOLUTION

SCHOOL OF LIVING, BROOKVILLE, OHIO 45309
PUBLISHED MONTHLY

Volume 3, Number 6

June, 1965

25c per copy, \$3 per year

Camp For The Summer ; Work On Your Homestead Site

By Sam Eisman
1551 N. E. 158th, Miami, Fla.

The summer of 1964 was one of orienting ourselves to what we had on our 60 New York acres. Our party consisted of my two nephews (Mike, 15, and George, 14) and myself. My wife was working on her English M.A. Our first job was to provide the necessary basic facilities.

Shelter. We took ours with us in the form of a tent and truck camper. Construction of a more permanent type will have to wait for future years.

Water. Fortunately, we had known enough to buy a place with a spring, neglected though it was. "Dipping it out" is what they call the job of cleaning out the years of accumulated mud. Long ago, some skilled individual had laid up the rock that formed the walls of the spring. They were still so sound that a bucket brigade was all that was required in order to pour the water far enough from the spring so that it would not run back. After an interval, the spring had filled itself and the dipping out process was repeated. The water flowed clearly after the third dip-out and it was quite cool, safe and delicious. This without the addition of chlorides or fluorides!

Several small projects kept

us busy for a few days—table, benches, a stand on which to place the camper, a water bench.

Privy. Then we started on a privy, a project we would like to discuss in detail.

We have all been repelled by the bad odors emanating from the usual privy. We were determined to have one that would not suffer from this fault. We felt that most privies are heir to their usual defects because little thought is given to their construction and use. Undoubtedly our solution is not original, but we did work it out ourselves.

There's nothing special about the structure. It's framed with 2x4s (rough lumber from a nearby sawmill). The siding consists of back slabs (the first piece to be sawn from a log) because they are cheap, and blend well among the trees surrounding the structure. In fact, the structure looks like a log cabin. The roof is a single sheet of asbestos board well supported by light rafters because though the asbestos is long lived, it is quite brittle.

No-Odor Technique

The privy is made odorless by treating it as a modified compost heap. It's a modified compost heap because its depth is built gradually. In order to be sure that aerobic conditions pre-

(continued on page 4)

Homestead Foundations

In Miles City, Mont., is a remarkably active, energetic and persistent man, maintaining his youth into advancing age. He is Tolley Hartwick, whose writings in behalf of a better world are known far and wide. Here is an editorial interview by mail with Mr. Hartwick:

Question. Do you feel yourself to be part of the Green Revolution?

Answer. I observed and experienced the last turning-to-the country around 1910, when southeast Montana was officially opened up for homesteading and the Northern Pacific Railway offered its land for sale. People flocked in from every state with all their possessions and high hopes. Every half-section had a settler on it. They leveled land, built log, sod, gumbo and stone houses and barns; dug wells and cellars; planted trees and crops; built fences and dikes for irrigation. Their visions were to live mainly from the land—raise their own vegetables, grain, fruit, meats, milk, cheese, butter, eggs, etc.—and engage in miscellaneous trades as sidelines.

Q. How did it work out?

A. As one of the victims, and as a three-times census taker, I witnessed these struggling settlers hopelessly giving up. By 1920 only 6 out of each 100 were left; by 1930 only 2 out of each 100. Now there are even fewer. People living on the land are from their one-time 95% to the present less than 10% of the population.

Q. What do you think are the chief handicaps or hurdles to the "green revolution"?

A. (Take a long breath.) The land is provided free to human beings by Providence. But it is no longer free! The land and everything the settlers can do or construct on it to make it habitable are all plundered by taxation by presumptuous politicians. (Of course ignorant citi-

zens let them do it.) And this tax has to be paid in money. Money as now issued by the government is counterfeit. So the settlers are driven to commercial farming to get money to pay taxes. Some have to borrow to pay. Just imagine borrowing from a bank at high interest rates to pay TAXES! Commercial farming to get cash requires thousands of dollars worth of expensive equipment. Now all this—the unjust, irrational taxation against land, improvements and expensive equipment, incomes, sales, etc.—bears heavily on the settlers, and forces them willy-nilly into the money markets. They are forced to sell at whatever prices are of-

(continued on page 3)

New School of Living Book Is Exhibited By Bookstore In Exeter, New Hampshire

Young people in Exeter, N. H., are attracted by the exhibit of School of Living's bright new book, arranged as shown here by Manager Snow of the local



From Chinquapin Farm—

A Former City Dweller Says, 'Homesteading Yes, Farming No!'

By Victor A. Croley

Mr. Bert Garner, 78 years old, lives in a two-room Arkansas cabin he built for \$87.50. His diet of dried corn and soybeans, plus 27 other varieties of vegetables, fruits and nuts he grows in his garden, costs less than 15 cents a day, but, since receiving a small Social Security allotment, he varies this with an occasional restaurant meal.

Mr. Garner held many jobs from Manhattan to California before he decided at 60 to try the simple life. "I believe in simple living and high thinking," he says. "Freedom means more than money anytime. I choose to live the way I do so I can live the way I want. Leisure is one of the great words in the English language. I have leisure. I want to learn and study."

2000 Book Library

Garner's cabin has no radio, television or electricity. His annual utilities bill is 38 cents—for lamp oil. But the cabin is stocked with 2,000 books, and Garner knows that some of the largest libraries in the country, including the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., are as close to him as his mail box—made available by the special low rates the postal department offers its rural readers. Garner spends more for magazines and newspapers than he does for food and clothing. "That's the trouble with a brain," he says. "It has to be fed. A man with a brain can entertain himself."

With his large and varied garden, his household chores, nature observations, reading and study, Mr. Garner says he is far too busy ever to be lonely. And though he has withdrawn from the world of industry and business, he has visitors from near and far who find the way to his humble cabin. Not all agree with his simple life. One university professor told Garner: "If everyone lived as thriftily as you do, it would wreck the economy almost overnight."

No need to worry about that. Followers of the simple life are

still few and far between, and perhaps it is just as well. Most people see little need nor much to be gained from Spartan sacrifices. We try to point out only that it is possible to "Live Better on Less" in a simple rural life where you can raise much of your food and do many services for yourself unhampered by restrictions from city ordinances, regulations, building codes, union rules, utility requirements and heavy service taxes which add to the cost of living without adding to its comfort and security.

Near Pastures Are Green Too

That is what brought us to this very lovely center of the Ozarks more than a decade ago, though there are many other sections of rural America where living can be equally pleasant. For many, of course, the far pastures are greener, but for others there are advantages right where you are, in an environment with which you are familiar; where you have made friends and, not least, have established citizenship and residence.

Homesteading Yes, Farming No*

When we found our retirement farm here in the Ozarks, we had dreams of dividing it up into smaller plots—An Organic Village—and sharing it with others. When you get involved with more than an acre or two, you are competing with farm neighbors, and no business is more difficult, more depressed, more

insecure, or more economically unprofitable today, than farming. A subsistence homestead, yes; but a competitive farm, no, a thousand times, no! Unfortunately, ill health and limited resources made this impractical and so we have confined ourselves to the stewardship of our land, with the hope that one day Chinquapin Farm can be turned over to those capable of making it into an Organic Village, a retirement community for those who would live the Simple Life.

The Chinquapins are gone. They were a small variety of chestnut and fell victim to the disastrous "chestnut blight." But one day, with new health and vigor in the soil the blight disease will be conquered and the sweet, flavorful nuts will grow again. On that day, too, the pleasant land, worn out by neglect and overwork, will be restored to fruitfulness and provide for a new generation who will enjoy the leisure, the comfort, and the independence of the simple life. Toward that end, we continue to distribute our little book, *The Freedom Way*, and try to "light a candle, rather than curse the darkness."

*For newcomers it may be necessary to say that homesteading is a way of life in which a family provides for its own needs directly from the land, while farming produces crops primarily for the market and cash.—Editor

Headquarters Community News

School of Living Annual Workshop—July 3-11

At Heathcote Homesteads

Leave Rt. 83 at Freeland, Md., exit; continue across intersection; down hill; turn left at Heathcote sign. Phone W. B. Anacker, 301-357-8210.

Arrive early Saturday, July 3. Get settled in tent, trailer or indoor shelter. Bring sleeping gear.

Program

Mornings—9-12—work projects—W. B. Anacker; 7-8 for early risers—Human Relating and Personality Insight—M. Loomis.

Afternoons—rest and recreation; 2:30 crafts—Syble Brigham.

Evenings—7:30 Music—Barney McCaffrey; 8:00—discussions.

Sat., 8 p.m.—Proposals for Heathcote Community—Bill Anacker.

8:45 p.m.—Possible School of Living Center—M. Loomis.

Sun., 8 p.m.—Homesteading in Automated Age—Lefevers.

Mon., 8 p.m.—Taxes, Zoning, Land Allotment at Heathcote—Hugh Graham.

Tue., 8 p.m.—Weight Reduction and Heart Health—Mrs. Mayfield Grove.

Wed., 8 p.m.—Program by Young Adults.

Thur., 8 p.m.—Program by Human Relations Group (Early Birds).

Fri., 8 p.m.—Parent-Child Relationships—Dave & Kitty Stephens.

Sat., 7 p.m.—Festival Dinner—Special Address—Paul Goodman invited.

Sun., 9:30 a.m.—Annual Meeting and Address by newly elected President.

Costs

Registration—\$1 per family—mail it early to Brookville, Ohio, to facilitate planning.

Meals—\$1.50 per day per adult; \$1 for children; education \$1 per day per adult—50c for children.

Everyone will welcome the news that Mrs. Dee Hamilton and children will be in charge of hospitality, food and comfort—which they supplied so effectively in 1964.

Headquarters Fund: E. Strong \$5.85; H. Kaplan \$10; J. Eastman \$3. Total \$1042.85.