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Doubts Appeal of Home Production

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Red Bird Mission

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THE GREEN

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



REVOLUTION

SCHOOL OF LIVING, BROOKVILLE, OHIO 45309
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Lower Mill Creek, Appalachia, Tries The Green Revolution

This is the first of a series of articles examining how home and community production could serve various areas and groups in our country and the world.

The Save the Children Federation (SCF), which is allied with Community Development Foundation (CDF) has offices at 345 E. 46th St., New York City, and in Norwalk, Conn. The purpose of these organizations is to guide children, their families and their communities toward self-reliance through self-help. The following article tells the story of Lower Mill Creek Housing Project, as reported by Helen Gunther in the Summer 1965 issue of *World Reporter*, their publication.—Editor

By Helen Gunther

Last spring Charles Wesley came up the nearly impassable road to Lower Mill Creek, Ky. Lower Mill Creek is a remote hamlet in the vast Appalachian sprawl, where poverty is a condition of life. Charles Wesley is

rock walls were hammered into place and painted. A foundation was put under Gilbert Messer's house. Five houses were covered with weatherboard. Flooring was nailed down in Ike Hubbard's house; Mitchel Messer's porch was floored; windows and screens were installed at Crit Gambrel's house. Jeff Grub, who is on old-age assistance, was too sick to take part. But his two sons came home from Ohio to work with the others.

The wives of the men joined in the painting and repairing. Now they had some incentive to make curtains and spreads, too. Long before winter came to the hollow the work was completed.

Plans for the Future

The families of Lower Mill Creek have begun to believe in themselves. In another month—thanks to Charles Wesley's encouragement and a small SCF/CDF grant for cement, bricks and roofing—the men will be breaking ground for a community center. It will give their wives

A Withholding Action— Low Income Plus Homesteading Equals High Standard Of Living

By Rose Smart

Part I

The September editorial, "The Homestead—A Withholding Action," prompts me to look at another facet of homestead withholding or withholding—the financial one.

While we (the Ralph Smarts) do not keep our income below a taxable level, it is below the national average and we make it a goal and a game to see just how much good, substantial living (and fun!) we can get from our dollars. Since Ralph's business is his own, he can vary his dollar-earning time up or down according to our needs. Occasionally it is decided for us when the demand for his home appliance repair service unaccountably slacks off. Whatever the reason, we much prefer to have him at home instead of off the place earning money.

Do We Really Need It?

When it comes to spending dollars for which you have exchanged time, one of the first things to get straightened out is this: is the purchase a real need or is it merely to keep up with the Jones family or to show off

or consume in some other equally foolish, irrational way? For us this does away with new cars, rarely-used clothing, wall-to-wall carpeting, all jewelry, breakable dishes, etc., ad infinitum. However, it allows us to purchase some things the mythical Joneses might buy, too, such as records, books, wine, camping trips.

One way we determine if a purchase is "needed" is to let it go awhile. If it continues to be "needed" in a nagging, uncomfortable, persistent way, we plan to buy if we can. For example, if our car begins to cost more in repairs than a new one would cost (a "new" second-hand one, that is), we then plan to buy one. If I find I am putting patch on top of patch on somebody's underwear, but in the meantime the fabric has gone rotten between the patches, it is time to order new ones (isn't it?). This way of looking at money is so habitual that I rarely buy an item at the grocery store, for instance, unless it is on a list I brought with me. To keep a sense of perspective, we occasionally spend small amounts on a whim, for "kicks." I came home with a beautiful antique carving set for Ralph's Christmas

present recently, when what he really "needs" is a nice dress shirt. I bought him a book of poetry, too, in place of the shorts he needs.

You know about buying for cash. The interest on debt you pay is someone's income. Do not buy "on time" and you won't have to earn that extra money.

We Build It Ourselves

On a homestead, you build your own house and other buildings, of course, or fix up old ones. Here, at Sycamore Hollow Homestead, for the price we would have paid in town for a cheaply built small house on a small lot, we have 4 acres of park with our own creek and woods and a roomy, comfortable, well-planned, well-built house, plus a barn housing chickens, rabbits, goats and all the needed bedding and feed, plus a combination greenhouse and shop, plus an equipment storage building. We have a small mortgage, but we could have (and should have) continued to build as we were able to pay cash (as we did for the first two-thirds of our place). Our mortgage loan is from a friend, though, and when we cannot meet a payment he is not at the door with an eviction notice.

We Grow Our Own

Concerning food, our goal is to raise perhaps 70% of what we use. The garden produce costs so little it is difficult to estimate the cost. Milk costs us 10¢ a quart to produce, meat 40¢ a pound—with all the animal feed purchased. (If we worked a little harder around here we could produce much of the animal feed and cut the milk and meat cost considerably.)

The coldframes and garden give us fresh raw salads the year round. My canning closet holds a thousand jars, not all of them filled for we don't need that much as yet. (The canning jars were purchased secondhand at 25¢ a dozen or scrounged for free from a junkyard or friends.) We are not yet raising our own wheat and it costs us 3¢ a pound. The flour mill (cost \$100) has paid for itself. Before we had it we ground our wheat by hand. Our Enterprise juicer (retails at \$160, but cost us only \$80 since I was given a wholesale price at the time of a homestead festival here) pays for itself in juices used fresh and canned, fruit and nut butters, and ice cream.

(to be continued)

Heathcote Notes

Some accounting is doubtless overdue from the first residents of the Old Mill—Dee and the "Terrible Trio" (as they call themselves and perhaps sometimes are)—Jerry, 15; LaVerne, 13; and Keith, 7. What more fitting time than betwixt Thanksgiving and December, as the first snow flurries appear in the hollow, chased now and then by bursts of sunshine coming through restless gray clouds.

After the rigors of our few months here and facing the realities of winter, there is much indeed to be grateful for. The pervading feeling is one of warmth, warmth we have felt from and warmth we feel toward those who have made our continued stay here possible. This includes many unseen contributors of financial, material and moral support; the spontaneous results of four different group endeavors: the June Youth Rally, the July Workshop, the Labor Day Workbee and one other group of some 15 September weekenders. Most critical, however, when it came to winterizing the south end of the mill, has been the sustained and the intermittent efforts of certain individuals.

Tim Lefever and son Evan, who despite a jam-packed schedule of activities, manage to find a few hours or a day in which to bring materials (supplied at cost and not yet remunerated for) and to do skilled work in many departments (electrical, carpentry, water and gas systems; you name it)—and with speed—have been invaluable.

From Hugh Graham, thanks to his engineering, with assorted assists from others, we have a fireplace (sealed and useless last summer) as our chief source of warmth and cheer. Along with an Ashley stove in one of the upstairs bedrooms, this means wood heat (unless severe cold necessitates a small portable heater, especially in the bathroom). Hugh has served as treasurer and given generously of his building know-how.

Leo Rainer's three-week donated labor stint deserves an accolade, because it was almost entirely masonry work—critical sealing around doors and windows, over areas of inside and outside walls. Leo cheerfully took on this unpopular (and often chilly) job with skill and tenacity, working from dawn till late evening with time out only for meals. He certainly held up his end of the bargain with

James Iden Smith, who had offered \$200 to the Building Fund if it could be matched by other contributors. Instead of cash, Leo offered time and labor, and thereby we have all gained immeasurably. Mr. Smith's generosity, as we all know, goes along with a cheerful persistence at work. In his several visits here, no job has been too menial and his concern for others is always great.

Walter Sprague's special contribution of time, many skills and much effort almost qualifies him as a "resident" of the mill. This he may well become, though at this writing he is away for several weeks, tending to commitments in Illinois, primarily in connection with his profession of servicing pipe organs. The Hamiltons anticipate his return.

Meanwhile we Hamiltons revel in our cozy, new little kitchen adjoining the "Hearthroom" on the ground floor.

Now for a stable, permanent core group to take up residence at Heathcote to help plan and carry out an on-going program.

—Dee Hamilton



THE MESSER children: a new foundation for their home and a new future for their community.

an SCF/CDF counselor. An immovable object—poverty—was about to meet an irresistible force—self-help.

In the hollow stood nine splintery shacks. Some lacked privies and all lacked running water. Charles Wesley talked with the polite, stoical men who, with their families, called those shacks home.

Two of them were coal miners who occasionally were able to find a little work. Three others, unemployed for years, were subsistence farmers who worked the stubborn soil. Two, the best of the group, raised tobacco. Two were on old-age assistance.

Charles Wesley's first efforts to rouse them to group action met with both apathy and suspicion. You can't change things, the men argued, you can just accept them. Sure they wanted snug, weatherproof houses for their wives and children. But where was the money supposed to come from? They didn't even have enough for food or clothes or doctors' bills.

Would they be willing to work together to rebuild their homes, Charles Wesley asked, if help was provided by SCF/CDF? Yes they would—and they proved it.

Apathy Turns Into Action

First the men worked out a budget for each house. Those who could contributed a little cash. Next they worked out a plan for the number of man-days each was to give to their housing project.

For the first time, Lower Mill Creek was alive with activity. In Lester Smith's house, sheet-

a convenient place to weave rugs for sale, and a place for their children to get together. Already they're talking about the project to follow—a playground for the children.

Doubts Appeal Of Home Production

A list of simple self-help activities (including gardening, the milling of flour, baking bread, root cellar vegetable storage, compost privy, etc.) was sent to the director of a school and community center in Kentucky, with a query as to how members of their institution would receive them. Her reply is below.—Ed.

"There are some good proposals and worthwhile ideas, but personally I doubt if they would have wide acceptance here. This would depend on the approach. Many of our people are quite ready to accept the glitter of urban life and money-based economy. They want education to fit into such a life, not escape from it.

"For the most part, our people are not doing so bad right now. Those with sufficient initiative to carry out successful homesteading are already living in something of this way. We have the land; we know how to do it ourselves, and we often help one another. We could use more information at points of course. On one creek, eight or ten nice ranch houses have been built with the men helping one another."
(continued on page 4)



LEO POKORNY, 1209 C Ave., Lawton, Okla., inspects his loaded persimmon tree.

"Big" Persimmons In Oklahoma

The dictionary says "persimmons are plum-like" but down in Lawton, Okla., Leo Pokorny produced a first-harvest of organically grown persimmons considerably larger than plums. Neighborhood children asked, "Could we have a few of your oranges, Mister Pokorny, when they ripen?"

"This shows how fruit can be raised in this part of the country," he says. "They are the most beautiful as well as useful fruit trees I have ever seen in this country, Mexico or Cuba."

Mr. Pokorny worked on his two trees. He fertilized them with kelp, cottonseed meal, manure, granite dust, and compost.

What Logic Among Leaders?

By Mildred J. Loomis

On Dec. 9, 1965 I heard three predictions on the radio:

1. In 35 years (year 2000) the world population, at the present rate, will have doubled.

2. By 1970, 90% of our people will live in cities!

3. Vice president Humphrey said, "Cities everywhere are like bombs, ready to go off! We can expect urban explosions that will make Watts (Los Angeles, August 1965) look like a summer picnic."

So the clamor and the effort among officials is to pour more billions of dollars into cities to "handle the problems."

But the simple logic of a homesteader asks:

"Why unquestioningly accept population increase and drift to cities? Why not a challenging education for population control and for the skills and values of country living? Why not teach and help people to move out of cities? Why not education for an honest economy—a free market and no monopoly—so the average family can more readily get land and buy equipment, and keep the products of their work when they get a homestead?"

Why 66 billions for war in 1966? Why use most of our skill and brains for space and military problems rather than human, living problems?

Medics Muddle

In the medicine section of Dec. 3 *Time*, there is a story of a doctor's discovery that a certain form of high blood pressure, as well as perhaps the adult kind of diabetes, seems to be caused by too much sodium and not enough potassium in the victim's blood. This creates minute tumors on the adrenals, but they can be removed by surgery!

Why, WHY wouldn't the simple deduction occur to these doctors that the situation could be changed by more potassium and less sodium in the blood, and that one way to achieve this would be by way of food—eat less salt (sodium) and more po-

tassium foods, vegetables?

Another article said that a new form of cholera is gaining ground in Southeast Asia and is likely to appear in the U. S. via our men in Vietnam. It also says, "The drastic reduction in recent years in the death rate from cholera has resulted from the method . . . devised to maintain the victim's balance of fluids and those all-important electrolytes, the salts of sodium and potassium. . . ."

Many will recall that Dr. Max Gerson's famous therapy for cancer centered on improved potassium-sodium balance in body cells.

Suggestion: Let V. P. Humphrey and *Time* magazine have your reactions.

Can You, cont'd

Green Valley School, will present new ideas and practices with children; a paper by Henry Winthrop, University of South Florida, Tampa, will consider changes in college education; and an invitation has been sent to a member of the Free University of Florida to be present.

Saturday evening our Homesteading Film will be shown; W. W. Newcomb will talk on Obtaining Land for Homesteading, and there will be singing and dancing.

Sunday Program

Sunday morning will include a meditation on nature and country life, followed by an open meeting with the local Unitarian Fellowship on Major Problems of Living, a Lifetime Search, led by Mildred Loomis, director of the School of Living.

In the afternoon a session on Community will include the History, Structure and Goals of Melbourne Village, by Elizabeth Nutting, and discussion of other types of community. Before adjournment at 4 p.m., Continuing Fellowship for the Green Revolution will be considered.

Registration for the weekend is \$2.50; some rooms are available at moderate cost in Mel-

bourne Village homes. Write to W. W. Newcomb, 8240 New Haven Ave., Melbourne, Fla.

Preliminary Seminar

Mrs. Loomis will offer a discussion seminar on six major problems of living on Thursday and Friday, Jan. 27-28, at the home of Mrs. Virginia Wood, 530 Hammock Road, Melbourne. Fee \$6. Write for program and outline to M. Loomis, School of Living, Brookville, Ohio.

Spinach!

Beware left-over spinach. Spinach has long had its skeptics who say it contains substantial amounts of oxalic acid, which is suspected of a role in forming kidney stones.

But now a doctor's journal in West Germany (*Medical World News*) carries an item which says that pediatricians there have blamed a number of cases of a rare and sometimes fatal disease on spinach.

It is methemoglobinemia, a condition in which the oxygen-carrying chemical in the red blood cells is attacked by nitrites, and prevented from carrying out its life-sustaining task. Sometimes the victims perish of oxygen starvation.

Spinach, the German doctors say, is rich in stored nitrates absorbed from nitrogen fertilizers. If it is not eaten immediately after being cooked, the nitrates are broken down into nitrites by bacteria. Officials have warned parents to give children only freshly prepared spinach.

John Ewbank Comments

In submitting the clipping from which the above is quoted, John R. Ewbank (1150 Woods Rd., Southampton, Pa.), who lives in Bryn Gweled Community, writes:

I am not an organic gardener, natural food faddist, etc. I encourage use of nitrate fertilizers, etc. However, I am angry with physicians who report on the dangers of spinach today without calling attention to the fact that the high nitrate content is attributable in part to the nitrogenous fertilization practices of spinach farmers. The item from Nov. 29 *Philadelphia Enquirer* provides the natural food writers with some of the best ammunition they have had since the discovery of vitamin B₁₂.

Possibly the physicians were so specialized that they were unaware that modern spinach farms use much fertilizer, and that our grandparents raised spinach without fertilization.

Doubts, cont'd

other. County agents furnish whatever gardening information people will accept, and through 4H and Future Farmers there is a kind of crusade for new farming methods. I wish the government would expand the existing ag and home ec programs rather than introducing new programs through O.E.O.

"We will do all right if we have the personnel to handle the present programs effectively. And if the government does not insist on putting money in in such a way as to destroy initiative, which it is now doing at points. I think it is some of the government people who need educating. And I think probably your proposals for self-help are needed worse in the cities than here in Appalachia.

"In our immediate area, we may soon have a national forest. The Forestry Service is trying to buy up the land from large corporations. If they succeed it will mean better roads and other facilities. Then private homesteads can be more easily maintained. Then the County Agent, the Home Demonstration Agent and other groups can get information out more effectively."—D. B., Red Bird Mission, Beverly, Ky.

Please send us your Zip Code Number. Magazines will not be delivered in 1966 without Zip Code.

\$136,000 Needed to Report That The Air In Chicago Is Polluted!

Now the secret is out! A study coordinated by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, on a Federal grant of \$136,000 reported in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, says that there is "a cause and effect relationship between some air pollutants and illnesses.

"Air stagnation with a high incidence of air pollution, possibly causing deaths, has occurred 25 times in the Chicago area since 1936. Periods of four-day stagnation may have caused deaths because weather conditions would not allow dispersion of lethal pollutants."

The study also reports conditions in other cities: on Oct. 25, 1948, 20 dead and one-third of the 14,000 citizens in industrial

Donora, Pa., were ill from smoke, gas and exhaust fumes; in December 1952, a five-day fog in London, Eng., caused 4,000 more deaths than usual; New York City suffered 200 deaths over the normal rate in November 1953 stagnant weather; in one year physicians report air pollution a contributing factor to illness in 1,600,000 cases!

Now, Chicago's Air Pollution Dept. has 43 stations in its six-county area recording buildup of foreign matter in the air. It is installing 8 more to measure the extent of sulfur dioxide from coal burning. "We must ask ourselves," says the director, "what is going to happen in the future that portends more industry and more autos?"

Milton Wend Continues Human Engineering Research In Nutrition

Milton and Florence Wend now live at Edgartown, Mass., a resort town which has a population of 6,000 in the winter and 55,000 in the summer. Now at home with the regular citizenship, they hope to interest summer visitors to their island, in their hand-made craft items. Mrs. Wend has for years designed and constructed beautiful lamp shades combining plastic and pressed flowers, seaweed, etc.

Milton Wend was the author, in 1944, of a well-received book, *How to Live in the Country Without Farming*, a detailed presentation of practices and methods useful to modern homesteaders. He was a trustee of the School of Living when it was organized in 1936 at Suffern, N. Y. He has since continued research in publication in many aspects of better living. Now in his early seventies, tall, erect and vigorous, he enjoys sharing his discoveries and achievements in health, posture, making of suitable furniture, building, etc. At the 1964 Workshop at Sperryville, Va., he explained his success with low-cost building with Semesto Board. This is a 2 inch thick, composition-insulated slab with a weatherproof cover. For some 15 years his own Semesto Board cottage has withstood New England weather. One photograph showed it literally covered with snow.

Presents New Book

Milton Wend writes now of a new book, *Heart Attack: Are You A Candidate?*, by Blumenfeld. He says it is so carefully documented as to be completely convincing and for the Wends

proves to be the book of the year in nutrition.

Blumenfeld states that half the present males and nearly as many female adults will die of coronary attacks unless they change their eating habits. He has developed a Prudent Diet which calls for reduction of fat consumption, including polysaturated fats. He claims that cream, butter, margarine and all cheeses except those made only from skim milk should be eliminated. Does this require getting rid of the family cow or goat? If eggs contain the highest amount of cholesterol of any food, and their consumption would be limited to three or four a week, then less than a dozen hens would suffice. The cholesterol content in eggs from hens fed in cages is twice that of the old days when scratching for worms was part of a hen's feeding program.

Wends Experiment With Diet

Milton Wend writes: "We have been vegetarians for years, but in experimenting with the Prudent Diet we are undergoing some changes. No more salt on the table, since it is a big cause of high blood pressure. Cream, butter and fat cheese are out. We now use Pet powdered skim milk made by quick, low-temperature technic. Our milk costs are now less than 10 cents a quart. We are experimenting with a line of bread spreads made in the blender with ground up carrots, honey, wheat germ and other things (he supplies 25 recipes). If one is still dependent upon stores for food, then one has to consider possible vitamin and mineral deficiencies. To handle this we are turning to "Green Life" supplements, based on Schnabel's original work with high protein grasses. V. E. Irons has a farm in Kansas where nearly a million dollars has been invested in land, natural fertilizers and processing equipment to turn out their line of really natural food supplements.

"I am drawing up a mimeographed sheet so that one can check one's daily fat consumption accurately as to amount and kinds. Also I am reducing this book on Heart Attack to several sheets to be available in our small natural food store which we are starting."

Building Fund Financial Report

INCOME	
Contributions as of 5/28	\$350.00
Contributions 7/11	45.60
Contributions 7/15	579.50
Contributions 10/11	221.75
R. J. Stanewick 10/11	2.00
James I. Smith 11/16	200.00
Leo Rainer (Nov. Labor)	200.00
	<hr/>
	\$1398.85
DISBURSEMENTS	
Septic Tank & Work	\$395.60
J. Costa, plumbing	100.12
Freedom Lmbr., stairs	3.05
Wolf Supply, nails	14.49
Throne Lmbr., roof	60.98
Wolf Supply, roofing	187.85
Throne Lmbr., oil, putty	3.42
Kopps, finish lumber	12.53
Throne Lmbr., steel & cement	36.20
Kopps, masonry	11.02
Throne Lmbr., lumber & plaster	17.68
Kopps, window sash	8.24
York Hdwe., misc.	8.67
New Freedom, misc.	2.56
Throne, lumber & masonry	59.60
	<hr/>
	\$922.01
Balance	476.84
	<hr/>
	\$1398.85
Immediate needs: plumbing,	
—Hugh Graham, Treas.	

NEW YORK READERS
You are cordially invited to an informal meeting at our home, Jan. 21, at 8 p.m., to bring School of Living sympathizers face to face, and to consider possible immediate functions for a New York chapter of the School of Living.—Selma and Gordon Yaswen, 339 E. 94th St., Apt. 6A, phone 534-0567.

WRITE TO ME if you are troubled or heavy laden. Learn of Christ for he is meek and lowly of heart and he will bring comfort to your mind and soul. Write to me all your troubles and worries. No advice given unless requested. List of friendly Christian people, 75c. Basic Christian, 1837 Harman, Bend, Oregon.