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A Note from the Editor

Mildred Loomis

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good drainage is provided to quickly carry off all surplus water. Experience will soon teach how to maintain the best degree of moisture.

The last illustration above shows an end view of the Utility Bed, and it can be seen how the end members may be pried out, one by one, thus making contents easily accessible. This is an important point. The unloading of a permanent box culture of any depth, without removing the ends or sides, is a difficult matter, resulting in the destruction or injury of many worms. The culture material is heavy and wet and if it is "unloaded" from the top it has to be dug out with a fork or sharp shovel a little at a time.

With the knockdown construction of the Utility Bed, there is no difficulty in the unloading process and the worms are not damaged by unnecessary violence.

In the detailed construction plan we have not shown any cover. A suitable cover, in easily removable sections, should be provided to protect contents of bed from flooding rains and to provide shade and darkness. Worms work best in shade and darkness. Rain water is very fine for the worms, so long as contents of bed are not flooded. If a good shade tree is conveniently located, the bed can be placed, preferably, on north side of tree. This keeps the culture bed as cool as possible during the hot summer months.

Worms should not be exposed to hot sunshine directly. However, they are the most active when kept at summer temperatures of 60 to 80 degrees. In warm earth the greatest production of capsules will be had.

For moisture conservation and to prevent surface drying out, we always use on top of the compost surface a layer of old tow sacks or burlap. Old feed bags, potato sacks or other porous material can be used. The bed can be watered through this cover material without disturbing the surface of the compost.

The cover material acts as a water-break and spreader, so that in watering with a hose or sprinkler head, the worms and surface of compost are not disturbed by force of the water stream. It is always best to use a sprinkler head on the garden hose, as this distributes the water to better advantage, without flooding.

All kitchen waste (garbage) is perfect earthworm food and may be disposed of as it accumulates, spreading it on the compost layer by layer. We always spread the garbage evenly over surface of bed and then add a thin layer of sifted topsoil on top of garbage to absorb odors and furnish a base of soil for combining with the vegetable and other matter. The worms consume and combine everything, the final product being rich, black topsoil for potting use or other use.

Lawn clippings, leaves, small prunings, all trimmings from the vegetable garden, such as cabbage leaves, lettuce, or other organic material, can be used in the compost, adding it layer by layer and mixing in enough topsoil or subsoil to prevent heating.

Any and all kinds of animal manure can be used to great advantage. A liberal portion of manure can be worked into each layer of the compost. Manure is ideal food for worms and it furnishes the important culture material for bacterial action in the breaking down and transformation of nitrogenous material.

In composting with earthworms, it is highly important to mix the compost with enough earth so that a high degree of heat will not be developed. This is also one of the main reasons for keeping the culture bed of a shallow depth. Deep piles of compost may develop intense heat in the deeper layers, enough to destroy all animal life. This should always be borne in mind and avoided.

Where a rich compost is provided, a culture bed 8 ft. long, 4 ft. wide and 2 ft. deep will easily support a population of 50,000 Domesticated Earthworms. Once such a culture bed is fully impregnated and developed from a lug box setup, it is no problem to further develop earthworm culture.

In starting additional culture beds, or establishing large compost beds in the open, we simply take a liberal portion of compost from the old culture bed—a wheelbarrow load or more—with the worms and capsules it may contain, and use this as the starter for the new composting operation. This starter will quickly impregnate the new compost and by the time the bed is full there will be an adequate worm population to break it down quickly into fertile topsoil.

Basic Principles Emphasized

We wish to emphasize at this point that we are laying down certain principles for earthworm culture. We offer definite plans for culture boxes, culture beds, etc. However, each earthworm culturist should experiment and develop plans of his own. Any kind of box, container or culture bed will serve, provided they have good drainage and are kept shaded and moist.

The plans as set forth in this manual have been found, through long experience, to be good. By following a successful plan that has already been tested, many mistakes will be avoided. On the other hand, if no experimenting is carried out, new and better methods will not be discovered.

There is no mystery about earthworm culture and no highly technical knowledge is necessary. Any man, woman or child can comprehend it and engage in it. Here, in a few words, is what we are saying:

Provide earthworm food; wet it down; keep it moist; add the worms or earthworm egg-capsules; let nature take her course.

All variations used in earthworm culture, whether it be a small box or tin can, a specially designed culture bed, or a 100-ton compost heap, the principle is the same — wet food for worms, with worms added to start with. For efficiency and perfect control, we recommend the methods outlined in the foregoing pages. These methods are tried and proven and through their use we have become highly successful earthworm culturists, known throughout the world in this particular work.

(the end)

On Going It Alone

By Paul Salstrom

Last fall while thinning a sugar bush, I discovered Ted Enslin's curious book, *New Sharon's Prospect and Journals*. By coincidence it dealt with timbering as a way of life. Enslin writes little of woods technique, focusing instead on the earthy, uphill lives of his sawyer's family. But he is a kindred spirit—a loner who finds Vermont too pretty, though friendly, and New York City maddening, feeling at

home only on his farm in northwestern Maine. I was amused that the publisher is City Lights in San Francisco, though Ted Enslin is as far from San Francisco in spirit as in distance. And ironically, much as I personally love New England country life, it's in those very San Francisco circles symbolized by City Lights and its authors that I plan to spend the next few years. Could it be that, like city life, the Yankee woods too lack something?

In my experience, yes: stimulus.

In search of stimulus Mr. Enslin left the woods at one point—for New York City, and stood it almost a year. Then to Vermont, not as barren of fellow intellectuals as Maine; but Vermont was not earthy enough. So Maine it had to be. To what Simone Weil wrote of the "need for roots," Enslin would apparently add the need for endless rocks in the root soil.

"It's hard," he says, "to make a go of it in backwoods Maine. If the winters don't wipe you out, the monotony or drudgery and loneliness may." For the Nearings and Bill Copperthwaite on the Maine coast this hardly applies; books and companionship (and frequent travel by both these downeasterners—Ed.) can make even Maine subsistence almost bounteous and fun. But for the backwoods native to subsist is another matter. It's their only home so they hate to leave, but it's a "hard chance." Alcohol becomes a tempting escape.

In a style as bare as November, Ted Enslin brings us close to the bone in his intermixed poems and prose. His chain-sawyer is part of a large family ruled autocritically by a father modeling himself on the Old Testament. When a living is sparse, paternalism is least escapable — in the land of Canaan or the State of Maine. But Enslin comes to believe that it's the father's autocracy alone which makes possible the family's closeness to the land, and thus independence from general American culture—their distinctive achievement, even compared with their neighbors.

Is It Worth It?

Personally, I thought till recently it was. Last summer while on that northern coast I was ready to build and settle in Maine—albeit unmarried for the nonce. It can be done. Neither Ted Enslin nor Arthur Harvey, for instance, is married. But is it worth it?

Depends on the individual. Messrs. Harvey and Enslin have developed some peace of mind by now. Apparently satisfaction of some sort can be sucked from the bleak hills themselves. Also a life style to press from the inner fruits, and then age and distill to taste. One can grow Yankee.

Robert Frost was such a case, each decade finding his roots deeper. "Not lately have I learned the love of bare November days before the first snow." Not only love comes through; also a style of insight. The same in Enslin, but interminglings with escape from such insight, like the turning and turning of a coin from full face to full reverse:

A dark morning.
We followed the horses
at a rein's distance
over the new snow
in the twitch trail.
The others were concerned
about the chance of another storm,
but, for the moment,
I was glad that the team
stepped over
a green frond
that had worked free to the winter air.

Gently, gently,
all must change
from what was not
to this that is/
is not again.
Strains as the yoke is drawn—
one long and level pull.
Ah, gently, gently,
whips and curses
break the spell,
and nothing is
as nothing is.

The full reverse of the coin of Yankee despair we don't find in Frost, and only pointed to, not recreated, by Ted Enslin. For its full reverse—of romance, fantasy and alcohol — we'd have to turn to Edwin Arlington Robinson. Enslin and even Frost have not made a complete statement*: the "escape" of E. A. Robinson is implicit in Yankee insight and despair.

But no thank you, New England. From the shortcomings of Yankee life, particularly its lack of love and laughter, I prefer to

turn to real love and laughter, not a fantasy thereof. . . . New England hill roots may scrape human as well as geological bones, but for going it alone, I choose the hills of San Francisco, where love and laughter can be easily the essence, not the reverse, of reality.

*[Editor's Note: Let's have reader reactions and suggestions growing out of Paul Salstrom's article. Briefly, my own would be that an either-or choice in life pattern is a mistake (as is any other either-or choice). Why limit the range to polar extremes: Yankee isolation vs. Manhattan crowds? Why not search for human "norms"? (See Borsodi's *Education and Living on Community*.) Why not seek, or develop, a pattern of living which provides maximum privacy along with maximum togetherness? Some believe this is possible in intentional community on the land — benefitting from the advantages of both country and city — above all, to make a life of love, laughter and joy. This is the hope and the plan at the developing Heathcote Community and School of Living Center, Freeland, Md. Who wants to help build it?—MJL]

A Note From The Editor

As indicated at the conclusion of this month's installment of *Earthworms*, this is the end of our printing of material from Dr. Barrett's booklet (out of print).

The author emphasizes that this material is a "how-to-do-it" presentation, giving all the necessary steps and information.

It is based, of course, on much study and research. Some of our readers may wish to delve further on their own. Dr. Barrett wrote a larger book, *Harnessing the Earthworm*, which some readers may be able to find in a library.

Your attention is called to the upcoming April 22-23 seminar at Heathcote Center, in which A. P. Thompson will present material on earthworm culture. Mr. Thompson is a modern, practicing, earthworm enthusiast. You will find it worth your while to attend.

In order to present the remaining portion of *Earthworms* in this issue, *Flight From The City* has been omitted. It will be resumed in May.

Letters, cont'd

wood fire, cut our wood, carry water from a well, use little electricity, have outside john and ride a bike or walk to town, 4½ miles away for supplies. We make rugs of braided bailing twine; I model for artists, do housework and help with photography, and Steve does part-time carpentry and odd jobs.—Sue and Steve Frankhouser, Hoo-sac Rd., Conway, Mass.

Beauty Available

To the Editor:

I have started a trading company with the sole purpose of disseminating objects that expand people's horizons—make them aware that there are objects of beauty and love, both ancient and modern, for a low price. Our prices are reduced as volume goes up; we remain solvent, but profit is returned to the customer directly. No way to make a million dollars, but a sure way to make thousands of friends. . . . In May, near L. A., is the KPFFK Pleasure Faire—a marvelous event, medieval in character, with many of the best craftsmen and most of the "revolutionaries" in the state attending. Last year, 50,000. Come, distribute literature; fan the flame! A better world for all is what is at stake — Chris West, Box 368, Santa Fe, N. M.

McCaffreys to Peru

To the Editor:

We will be leaving for Peru about the end of March. There, in a small village (Nana) about 14 miles outside of Lima, in co-

THE GREEN REVOLUTION — 3 April, 1967

ADVERTISING RATES

Classified: 35¢ per line. Minimum 3 lines or \$1.05. Average line has 40 spaces.

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Deadline: 10th of preceding month (example: April 10 for May issue).

Send ads to: School of Living, Brookville, Ohio 45309.

TWO NUBIAN GOATS for sale, cheap, good milkers. Peter Van Arsdale, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Phone 372-7944.

WANTED — Someone to work in garden, house & health store in exchange for food and private trailer living quarters. H. R. Lefever, Rt. 1, Spring Grove, Pa.

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CHICAGO Intentional Communities group is being formed to do research and to establish an intentional community. Write Richard Simonson, 2459 N. Seminary. s(2)4-67

HOMEGROWN SEEDS for sale: Delicious winter squash, large; large pumpkin, thick salmon fleshed, pink rind, oblong; large pumpkin, thick salmon fleshed, heart-shaped; big red beans; white hominy corn, largest grains of any; sugar trough-bushel gourds; 3 to 4 foot dipper gourds; mammoth zinnia, mixed. All the above, 15¢ a pkt. plus postage. elephant garlic cloves 25¢. Aloe plants 15¢, larger 35¢. Tree of Heaven plants, 4 for \$1; 2 to 4 ft., 3 for \$1. Strawberry plants, 100 postpaid; Gem, \$4.50; Ogallala, \$5.50. Effie Neie, Box 1025, Alpine, Tex. 79830 n(2)4-67

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LIVING HIGH by June Burn. Joyous homesteading classic. New illus. edition, \$3. Wellington Books, 346 Concord, Belmont, Mass. (y4)

THE OWNER-BUILT HOME is now completed. Volumes I, II, III, IV are available (\$2 for each volume) from: Ken Kern, Sierra Route, Oakhurst, Calif.

COOPERATIVE LIVING aimed at a permanent community patterned after B. F. Skinner's *Walden Two*. Write Walden House, Box 8971, Washington, D. C. 20002.

WANT CONTACT with persons interested in gradually forming a joint family, large and stable enough to effectively and efficiently fulfill functions listed by R. Borsodi in Part III of *Education and Living*. Max M. Lund, Rt. 1, Box 174, Shelby, N. C. 28150.

ORGANIC GARDENER, vegetarian, desires position with salary and family quarters. Wife, executive secretary. Trustworthy, clean-cut, capable; highest references. Prefer a warm climate. Write RFT, c/o Green Revolution, Brookville, Ohio.

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INDIAN HOLY PICTURES, from India, 50¢ each. Indian shirts (Kurtas), thigh length, S.M.L., white embroidered, \$8. Double Happiness Traders Unlimited, Box 368, Santa Fe, N. M. He who loves has no time for hate.

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operation with an independent international voluntary group. We will be working in a nursery and Montessori preschool for children from broken families, and doing what we can in the way of adult education and community development. We hope to use what we have learned from the School of Living, and by way of the pages of *Green Revolution* will probably be asking advice when we discover specific problems.

We would like to thank all the School of Living members who helped us on our trip over the country in '65 and '66. We are writing an account of the School of Living aspects of our trip, but have not yet been able to finish it due to the press of time in preparing our photo-environmental exhibit we call "The United States of McCaffrey" (recently given a successful showing in New York), and

(continued on page 4)