

WILLAMETTE VALLEY FARMER News and Views of Farm and Garden —By LILLIE L. MADSEN

Well 'Witcher' in Action



You couldn't tell Henry Holman (above) of Monitor that the divining rod is "witchcraft." He has complete faith in this forked stick to find water if there is water. And he's backed up by Rudolph Stadel, Silverton well-driller who claims that Holman has "almost never failed" to find a good well. (Statesman Farm Photo.)

Truth or Bunk?—

Water-finders' 'Divining Rod' Dates Back to 17th Century

By LILLIE L. MADSEN
Farm Editor, The Statesman

If a long-time following gives any credence to a belief, then the divining rod should have considerable substantiation at its back by this time.

The divining rod is really not, as a rule, a rod at all, but a forked stick, one for of which is held in each hand in such a manner that the butt end of the stick normally points upward. The supposition is that when carried over a place beneath which water lies, the butt end will be pulled downward.

The opinions of the kind of wood of which the twig should consist has differed greatly at different times and places, but hazel, witch hazel, willow and peach are common favorites.

The origin of the divining rod is lost in antiquity. The much quoted passage describing "smiting of the rock" has been regarded by enthusiasts of water witching as a significant reference to the divining rod.

What is believed to be the first published description of the rod is contained in Georgius Agricola's "De Re Metallica" published in 1556.

Used Also for Mining

Birthplace of the modern divining rod is in the mining districts of the Marx Mountains in Germany for it was used as much to detect minerals as water. Before the end of the 17th century its use had spread through Europe.

Its use today seems stronger than even in 1659 when Jesuit Father Gaspart Schott denounced it as "an instrument controlled by the devil."

While there was much controversy concerning the powers of this rod centuries ago, there seems to be none less today. Down through time it has been described alternately as "witchcraft," "work of the devil," "supernatural perceptive power" and while it is still referred to as "water witching" by the general public, those who practice it—and it has become a well-paid profession—and others who believe in its power, refer to the forked stick as divining or dowsing or detection rod.

Some Call it Bunkum

Although most well-drillers, and certainly the majority of geologists, discredit the practice as "bunkum," I have been unable to learn of any well-driller who has not at one time or another drilled in the site selected by a water dowsing. Reports of results, however, vary. Most of the drillers claim they have no better "luck" with the "divined" location than with that selected for convenience or because the lay of the land might indicate geologically that there would be underground water.

On the other side, however, are those who have complete faith in the power of the stick, and the numbers in this group are legion. Among these are Rudolph Stadel, Silverton, one of the valley's long-time successful drillers. He expressed complete faith in water witching, although he frowns upon the term. To him it must be "water detection" or "divining." In fact, Stadel is so con-

vinced that a good dowsing can locate underground water that he worries not a little about drilling in a location which has not been dowsed.

Like the Homing Pigeon

"It's science and it's nature," says he, as he points to the homing pigeon, and other means used through science and nature to "detect" a location.

Then there's W. F. Barrett, professor of experimental physics in the Royal College of Science for Ireland, who writes in his "Physical Research" in 1910, that after an extensive study of water divining he, who had no faith in it when he began his studies, draws three conclusions: (1), "Those who really possess this curious faculty of divining are rare, and many pretenders exist; (2), the involuntary motion of the forked twig which occurs with certain persons, is due to a muscular spasm; (3), the explanation of the success of good dowsers, after prolonged and crucial tests, is like that of any other obscure human faculty or instinct, a matter for further physiological and psychological research."

Then we come to 1932 when the government of British Columbia showed so much faith in the dowsing that it employed Miss Evelyn M. Penrose as official water dowsing. Miss Penrose held that the most modern scientific "explanation of water divining is that underground water, minerals and oil give off electromagnetic waves and fields of force; that certain human beings are tuned to these waves and therefore pick them up and react to them in the same way a radio set reacts to certain wave lengths."

Kenneth Roberts, widely known author, writes of Miss Penrose's work in the Saturday Evening Post in 1943, "as a result of Miss Penrose's efforts in the Okanagan Valley and the Peace River Block, there are today hundreds of individual and community wells where in early 1931 there was nothing but drought and discouragement."

Take it or leave it... but if you are going to take it nowadays you are going to pay for it. While there are still a few who like to play around with the forked stick and who have not sufficient faith in its powers to charge, there are many of the other school. Each community has a number of "professional" water dowsers and for their services you pay anywhere from \$4 to \$50 or more a "dowse."

Find Loot Before Man Reports Theft

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—M. L. Weatherington of Beaverdam, Va., walked into Richmond police headquarters to report the theft of a suitcase containing clothing from his automobile.

"Say, that looks like my shirt," he told Detective J. G. Smith, who was holding the garment.

It was Richmond police had picked up the thief. And Smith had already checked the owner's name through a laundry mark.

Farmers May Be Paid for Tree Planting

You can plant your own little forest on your farm and get paid for doing it. Not big pay, but \$15 an acre. That's a figure said to be about half the cost of planting if the work is done on a hire-basis.

That's what Ben A. Newell, Marion County agent, told this week in speaking of some of the new conservation practices approved by the Marion County ACP committee.

The trees don't really, have to be planted with idea of reforestation, either. The committee approved those planted for windbreakers, fence post or Christmas Tree production.

There are two common situations in western Oregon where tree planting can go a long way in building up the value of the farm, Newell points out. The first of these is the logged-over area. Some older logged areas have not restocked themselves satisfactorily even after 10 or 15 years. Where old loggings have not restocked, or where new loggings do not promise to reseed promptly, tree planting is being strongly recommended.

Forester Will Help
The farm forester who serves the county will visit farms without charge and will advise if a logged area would benefit from planting. In some places tree planting is very important to "beat the brush" after a logging, because if the fast growing brush gains possession of the land it may be practically worthless for a generation or more.

The second situation in western Oregon where tree planting is especially recommended, applies to old fields and fern areas, where scattered tree and groups of trees established themselves years ago, many openings have persisted. These openings are detrimental to the whole forest and could well be interplanted to "thicken" the forest land.

Non-stocked forest land now worth no more than \$10 per acre could well have a value of \$50 per acre in 20 years if successfully planted. An active person can usually put in 500 or more trees per day. The work is best done in the winter or early spring seasons, times when labor is usually most available.

Brush Removal Paid For
If the planting area is obstructed by scrubby brush which needs to be cleared or killed before planting, there is an additional conservation payment for this practice. It is not to exceed \$10 per acre. The committee usually requires that the farm forester serving the county give his approval if brush removal is contemplated.

There is also a conservation payment for fencing a windbreak or woodland which may go as high as 75 cents per rod of barbed wire, or \$1.10 per rod of woven wire fence. This practice can be extremely helpful in eastern Oregon counties where windbreaks require fencing to protect them from stock and chickens. Tree windbreaks are a great asset in both the irrigated and dryland farming areas of eastern Oregon. The ACP fencing payment will go a long way toward paying for the fence that should be placed around the windbreak. The county ACP office or the county agent's office will help to arrange inspection by the forester where this is needed.

Milk Hearing Expected to Draw Crowd

Dairymen are watching with interest the attack on the constitutionality of Oregon's milk control act which is being carried on by Elmer Deetz, Canby dairyman, under fire for selling natural milk in gallon jugs at his farm.

Deetz is scheduled to appear in Oregon City circuit court Dec. 21 to answer an injunction suit brought by the state milk marketing administration, which accuses him of selling milk in violation of the control regulations.

Norman L. Easley, Portland attorney will be his counsel. In a statement Easley says: "Attempting to regulate the private enterprise of Mr. Deetz conducted on his own property through customers willing a pay a mutually agreeable price is an unauthorized exercise of the police power of the state and as such unconstitutional."

"We will show that the milk marketing act unreasonably and unnecessarily interferes with and restricts Mr. Deetz's constitutional right to carry on his business at prices suitable to himself and his consumers."

In discussing his failure to permit inspectors on the property, Deetz inspectors remarked, "That would make me a Grade A dairy and that would mean more regulations. They tell me they'll placard my milk as being unfit for human consumption. So what? How do I know what the people do with the milk after they come here and get it? That's their business. I don't advertise Grade A milk. I don't advertise at all. It hasn't been necessary. A lot of folk just come to the ranch to

Ranch Ramblings

At the recent meeting of the Nut Growers Society of Oregon and Washington held at Multnomah Hotel in Portland, we were rather interested in a report by Rudolph Schadd of Newberg. He said the mechanical harvesters have caused some reduction in quality of filberts. Then he went on to blame much of this on careless hulling and on not getting the nuts picked up in time.

It sort of set us to thinking. When we go from hand to machinery farming we get the idea that the machine should do everything perfectly, and sort of forget that unless we run that machine right at the right time it might fail us.

Growers should have been happy to hear him blame lack of sunshine for the immaturity that is causing the shrivel of kernels in walnuts. That at least is something they were not to blame for.

But the nut growers took rather a beating the whole way around this year, and the feeling that they realized it, was certainly present in the Portland meeting.

Some of these legislature approvals, we gather, are almost like a father approving a youngster's purchase of an automobile without giving him any where-with-all for buying it.

The 1953 legislature adopted a program to eradicate ragweed in Oregon, but made no appropriation, department of agriculture officials report. The state emergency board also has refused to approve an appropriation, we hear.

"There's just a lot more ragweed in Oregon than the 1953 legislature suspected," E. L. Peterson, state director of agriculture, said as he hoped that none of the legislature members would get hayfever—or did he? Frank McKennon, chief of the plant industry division of the OSEA, says the weed has been found in Clackamas county, in Umatilla, Multnomah, Marion, Columbia and Douglas counties.

Makes us a little bit worried about the real estate men. That was one thing they used to brag about when the wrote prospective eastern land buyers: Just no hay fever weed in Oregon!

A winter wheat fertilizer trial has been placed on the Dale Ponsford farm in the Buena Vista section across the bridge in Polk County.

A series of 13 different plots has been replicated three times to test various types of fertilizers on fall wheat on Melbourne clay loam soil. Fertilizer trials include small applications of nitrogen on some of the plots, plus application of phosphate in two different rates—40 and 80 pounds of actual phosphate per acre, during fall.

A second application of nitrogen will be made on some of the plots next spring, and other plots will receive their only application of nitrogen next spring. Nitrogen rates being used in the spring will vary from 30 to 90 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre. The trials are designed to determine the relative increased production in the various combinations. They will be observed in a field day to be arranged in spring by N. John Hansen, Polk County extension agent.

We had a look at the trials on the Charles Dear farm recently. He also had fertilizer trials on his ranch near Independence. These dealt chiefly with alta fescue and subclover. With the excellent growing conditions this fall, there was a definite response from nitrogen showing up in the fertilizer trials with the higher rates showing more growth at this time. A small increase in growth on the part of the subclover where phosphate was applied, was also noted.

The trials on Charlie's farm, will be harvested on a clipping basis. He has fenced in the area in order that there will be no grazing on the trials and all of the forage will be harvested by clipping method in order to get the yield actually produced by these fertilizers.

Two filbert trees sent to Hawaii in a "trees across the sea" gesture of goodwill by the Portland Chamber of Commerce are still struggling along after three years, but are barely holding their own, according to John Cross, Oregon State College graduate, now manager of Castle and Cooke's macadamia nut plantation at Hilo, Hawaii.

The filbert trees were planted in the company's museum orchard, which also includes apples, pines and peaches. No sooner had the little trees been planted with proper ceremony including the aid of a Hawaiian beauty queen, than the Island gods thundered their disapproval. The earth shook, the night grew livid and Moana Loa spit fire and molten lava. However, the trees survived—barely—as a monument to Portland-Hawaii good will.

The macadamia plantation has

get it. So far as I know may be they are buying it for their cats."

Even Mr. Deetz's enemies have little criticism to make of the sanitary conditions of his milking barns and milk house. Oregon City is reported as getting ready for a gala dairy day at the time of the hearing Monday, grown to 1,000 acres and 70,000

trees, the first of which will start to produce next year. Flourishing in the 170 inches of annual rainfall, the trees produce a nut said to taste like a cross between a cashew and an Oregon filbert, only much larger.

OSC Designs Self-Feeder To Cut Costs

A low-cost, self-feeder silo is cutting out \$10 a month labor for "forking" silage to 60 head of cattle at Oregon State College and can be built for as little as one-fourth the cost of upright silos with comparable capacity of 300 ton.

Designed by Joe B. Johnson, OSC animal husbandman, and L. W. Bonnicksen, agricultural engineer, the pole-frame constructed silo is simply a covered shed 70 by 21 feet, 19 feet high and open at the ends.

In a recent meeting Johnson attended at Salem he said that making use of the trench silo principle for easy unloading and packing, the silage is trucked in through the open ends and dumped on the concrete slab floor.

It is distributed by a tractor blade to a height of eight or nine feet. This permits clearance between the top of the stack and the roof for the tractor to work back and forth in packing the silage.

When the packing is completed, the tractor is driven off the stack onto a truck bed through use of loading planks and then moved to an embankment or ramp for unloading.

As the silo is filled, the open ends are blocked off with movable feed racks 21 feet long that will handle 12 animals at a time. The cattle press forward moving the rack ahead of them into the silo. Net result—the cattle eat their way through the silo and nobody lifts a fork.

Johnson also said there has been no silage spoilage this year at the ends or sides and only three inches on top. Next year he plans to top off the stack with hay and bedding that will be used ahead of the moving feed rack.

Another advantage of the silo, Johnson said, is that it can be adapted for other uses. Poles used as pressure treated and should last for 35 to 50 years. A lean-to on each side of the silo is being added at the state college. These are to be used for loading and feeding.

Farm Calendar

- Dec. 21 — 21st annual meeting of the Blue Lake Packers, Inc. 10 a.m.
- Jan. 6-7 — Oregon Livestock Conference, OSC.
- Jan. 7-8 — Oregon Dairyman Association, Ontario.
- Jan. 8 — Oregon Hop Growers Conference, OSC.
- Jan. 12 — Polk County Livestock Association meeting, Rickreall.
- Jan. 19 — Linn County Livestock Association meeting, Lebanon.
- Jan. 25-27 — Western Oregon Livestock Association meeting, Salem.
- Jan. 28-29 — Oregon Essential Oil Growers League, annual meeting, OSC.
- Feb. 6 — Oregon Swine Growers Bred Gilt Sale, Salem.
- Feb. 8-10 — Fruit and vegetable handlers short course, Multnomah Hotel, Portland.

Polk County Lamb Show Now Talked

Re-establishing the Polk County Fat Lamb show in 1954 is under discussion by two groups in the county. The Polk County 20-40 Club and the Polk County Livestock Association are both interested in the move. At the week's meeting of the former, the president, William Cadie, appointed a committee to work with the livestock group toward the show for this coming spring. Serving on this committee are Ronald Rowland, chairman, William Dalton and Virgil Trick.

The next meeting of the 20-40 Club will be jointly with the Polk County Livestock Association, with Robert Hamilton, Rickreall chairman of the program committee.

Barbecued CRAB AT NORTH'S 1170 Center

COLORADO PAN-SAN AT THE SAN SHOP

Twilight Time

By FARMER'S WIFE
Dusk and darkness falls early—far too early—this time of the year. And at the Christmas season there's much to be done after the lights are on.

Speaking about when the lights are on makes one recall the time when all the lamp chimneys had to be polished extra good for Christmas. Polishing lamp chimneys—and in our house polishing meant POLISHING; those glass chimneys had to shine—was done every Saturday afternoon with all the bedroom lamps lined up on the lamp shelf and the globes from the dining room and living room hanging lamps set along side of them. It was quite a chore, but it was rather fun, too, after they were all done, to look them over and not see a single smudge. However, it's a fun one can easily forego for the much better lights we have now.

One thought leads to another, and the other in this case, was our niece at Corvallis where she's a sophomore.

"What'd you do today?" we asked recently.

"Well, believe it or not, I looked for the brain in a fish-worm," was the answer, with a disgusted, "And right before lunch, too. What good would it do us if we found a brain in a fish worm?"

We didn't go into that. Instead we went on to think of a news release we had from the state college.

Why a fish in a large group consumes less oxygen than the same-size fish in a smaller group will be investigated this year by Dr. Austin Pritchard, zoologist, the release said.

We go on to learn that in earlier work, Dr. Pritchard found that tuna baitfish in groups of 70 to 80 consume less oxygen per unit weight than fish in groups of 20 to 30, and "while that finding has been noted earlier in other fishes, the OSC zoologist hopes to learn new information about the strange phenomenon."

The work is supported by a research grant-in-aid from the OSC Graduate School.

It all seems sort of odd to those of us with unscientific inclinations. But it's from just such things that advances are made—the fish study, we understand, has something to do with the study of metabolisms—but the brains of a fishworm? Well, it could be—

The USDA economists are telling us that the farmer's share of the consumer's dollar this year will amount to 45 cents—2 cents less than in 1952 and the lowest since 1941. What we women are paying for now isn't the thing as it comes from the farmer, it's the product as it comes from the distributor—scrubbed, mixed, precooked, colored and wrapped in fancy packages. And it seems it's the way we want it. Store keepers tell us that the women reach for the "pretty package" almost every time.

Was chatting a bit a brief time ago with Malno Reichert in Dallas. She says she's envying the Marion County prisoners who will be moved this coming year from the pen to the pent house. Says she: "They are going to have the best living accommodations in Salem. Downtown, and on the top floor of the new Marion County court house. In fact, the pent house jail takes all the top floor with all the view windows, and the county offices have the windows that look out on other buildings... that's what you call planning!" She adds: "I can imagine some pris-

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H. Ahrens Heads Planning Group For Salem Meet

Salem vicinity stockmen are making detailed plans for the Western Oregon Livestock Association which will hold its annual convention in Salem, Jan. 25-27.

Henry Ahrens, Turner, is president of the Marion County Stockmen and over all chairman in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Lyle McKinley, Woodburn, is chairman of the women's program and Melvin Hartley, Silverton, is chairman of banquet arrangements.

Karl Wipper, Turner, will take charge of plans for a meat cutting demonstration, and Charles A. Evans, Independence, is arranging the financing.

Also aiding in the convention plans are Kurt Lamb, Monmouth; Glen Martin, McCoy, and Eric Fisher and Nat Etzel, Canby.

The convention is open to all stockmen in the 13 western Oregon counties.

oner saying, "Oh, Judge, No, only 30 days? I was hoping you'd give me a year."

And now that the Christmas season is upon us—let's take time out to see some of the sights really worth seeing. Have you driven over to Silverton to the East Oak street home of Mr. and Mrs. George Anderson? Hundreds of people have already this year. The hillside garden is alive with Christmas lights and moving figures. Last year thousands of people drove by and stopped, as well, to see the Christmas scenes depicted in light. That was during the brown-out when most folk didn't have Christmas lights. But the Andersons had their own motors generating the power for the lights and figures. There's a sign out near the sidewalk that says "Visitors Welcome" and there's a book for registering right inside the garden. It's even fun to look over the registry—they come from all over.

This Christmas lighting has been a hobby of George's for some years—and each year something new is added... No, it's free.

Then you might drive out on the Dallas road and view the home of Mrs. B. O. Schucking. It's one of the prettiest sights I've seen. That's twice I've viewed it this year and I know I can't resist another... Beautiful lighting of homes and gardens is springing up all around us now, but not many are so elaborate as these two.

Foreign born people were about 13.4 per cent of the U.S. population in 1900 but only 6.7 per cent of the population in 1950.

Radio Program Turns Interracial in Scope

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tak Shindo, columnist for the Japanese-English language newspaper Rafu Shimpo, quoted this radio announcement as an international event:

"This is your friend Tennessee Jim," broadcasting from the Santa Monica Ballroom. We next bring you Latin music written by a Japanese-American on your western program with your Indian friend Spade Cooley."

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