

Sentinel

COQUILLE, OREGON.

JULY 7, 1949.



OUT OF THE WOODS

By Jim Stevens

BRUSH FOR SALE

"The evergreen huckleberry has a fine future in my eyes," said George Herkimer, Jr. "So has the salal, for that matter. These wonderful little native shrubs were looked on as brush for so many years that it is hard to get the old folks to see their promise. The Western hemlock was called a weed tree and was usually left by the loggers. Now in many places cutovers are being re-logged to harvest the old leftover hemlock for the pulp mills.

"Times change," said George Junior. Every time a big evergreen in town blows over on a house it's a sales argument for huckleberry, salal, sword ferns and other Northwest natives that are the best of shrubs for Northwest gardens."

We had stopped over at the Herkimer farm, up in the Lemolo hills. A creek canyon opened on a pasture and hayfield. On up the creek was a rare show of what my companion, Bill Denny, a forester, called "an Elysian field of minor forest products." This is a general term used by the profession for small species in the society of plants commonly found on the forest lands in Western Washington and Oregon.

The Greatest Garden Country

"During the war I was in England," young George went on to

tell us. "There I learned what an art of living can be. And I was amazed to find in some of the finest gardens native plants of our Northwest — evergreen huckleberry, salal and tall Oregon grape."

"I talked to an English gardener who had lived here and in British Columbia. He was a sarcastic customer, and some of his jabs about how little we appreciated our own native shrubs set me to thinking. I remembered that the back forties of the Herkimer farm had loads of such natural growth that was never noticed except as brush and weeds in the stumps."

"The gardener made cracks and slams about the big evergreens that were so favored for home hedges in our country. 'Tortured trees,' he called them. But this man's argument was that the Northwest was the greatest natural garden spot on earth and that the first and greatest need was for the people here to learn what was right use and wrong use of native plants and what would grow best in imported plants."

"I came home with many more ideas," said young Herkimer. "Most of them on how to sell what we have on land that is of no use to us except for woodland crops. Not many have been put to work as yet. The markets for tiny timber crops have grown by itself except with Christmas trees. There a great marketing job has been done. And I am also selling all the huckleberry brush I can harvest and take to Green Home."

Salal in June...

We went up into the woods on the benches and slopes. There were seedling trees in sight among stumps and greening ground cover. We came upon a handsome spread of salal that was yet in bloom. The shrubs were loaded with flowers like little pink pitchers. The rich, dark-green foliage had a depth of texture that was reminiscent of waxed leather in the growth by the creek and the cool, moist shade of the canyon wall. There it was chest high. Up in the sun we saw salal on a dry bank that was a low mat of bronze-hued leaves on short branches.

Salal grows just about everywhere west of the Cascades — except in the fanciest gardens. George kept talking about boosting its home use as the use of Christmas trees had been promoted. He had the same hopes, of course, for the evergreen blackberry.

Already he was harvesting and selling huckleberry and salal foliage the year round, except for the

spring period in which the new leaves are easily crushed. The market is with florists who use the foliage as fillers in floral decorations.

The evergreen huckleberry is not as widespread as salal in Western Washington but it is important in the farm woodland wherever it does grow well. At present it is preferred over salal by florists for fillers. When the new growth comes in it is harvested and packed in bunches, 50 to a case. The growing stock is being managed on the Herkimer woodland for permanence.

Georg Herkimer, Jr., and his younger brothers, Fred and Nels, demonstrating that "brush" has money in it.

Mainly About People

Return From California — Mr. and Mrs. Everett Fox and three children, Dick, Pamela and Carol, of Fourth of July week-end at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Batty.

On Week-End Trip — Mr. and Mrs. George Brooks and Bobby spent the week-end with relatives in Medford. En route they visited Crater Lake where there is still snow. The snow was so dry it was impossible to make snowballs, much to Bobby's disappointment.

Return From Vacation — Dr. and Mrs. E. C. Hamilton have returned from a vacation trip through towns and beauty spots in Eastern Oregon.

Here From Lebanon — Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Collins and two children of Lebanon are visiting Mr. Collins' parents, Mr. and Mrs. William F. Collins. Another son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Collins of Lebanon are also visiting here and plan to stay in Coos county.

On Vacation — Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Purdy left on Saturday on a vacation trip. They planned to visit Mr. Purdy's son and daughter-in-law in Roseburg and from there drive up to the McKenzie river, where they had reservations at Wishing Well court. They will be away for two weeks.

Vacationing in California — Mr. and Mrs. Hal Pierce are vacationing in California. They plan to visit their daughter in San Carlos.

On Week-End Trip — Mr. and Mrs. Bud Menning and family made a week-end trip to Grants Pass, Crater Lake, and Crescent City.

Leave On Vacation Trip — Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Bissett have left on a vacation trip to Yellowstone Park, Glacier National park and the Calgary Stampede. The expect to be away two or three weeks.

Back From Convention — Rev. and Mrs. Earl Soward returned on Monday from the Christian church state convention held at Turner.

In Clatskanie — Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Beeson were called this week to Clatskanie, Oregon, on account of the illness of Mr. Beeson's father.

Returns From Vacation — Mrs. Ella Winkels, Coos county home demonstration agent, returned on Monday after being away for a month. She visited relatives in Pelican Rapids, Minnesota, and attended the National Home Economics convention in San Francisco.

In Pullman, Washington — Miss Elaine Trull left last week for Pullman, Washington, where she will holiday with friends. During her absence Miss Leah Rover is acting as part-time assistant at the county treasurer's office.

Spend Week-End Here — Mr. and Mrs. Edward Neufeldt had as their guests at the week-end the former's brother, Bill Neufeldt, and Miss Eleanor Francisco, of Salem.

Week-End At Bandon Beach — Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Osika and daughter spent the 4th of July holidays at the Bandon beaches and reported the weather fine. The fireworks were enjoyed by all down there.

Guests From Eugene — Mr. and Mrs. Robert Holvey and two daughters, of Eugene spent the holiday week-end visiting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Screen. The Screen's took their visitors on several trips to coast beauty spots while they were in the county.

To Visit In Albany — Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Ice and family left this week for Albany where they will spend several days visiting at the home of Mrs. Ice's sister, Mrs. M. K. Ray.

Attend Games In Portland — Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hansen have returned after spending a week in Portland and Willamette Valley points. In Portland they attended the baseball games.

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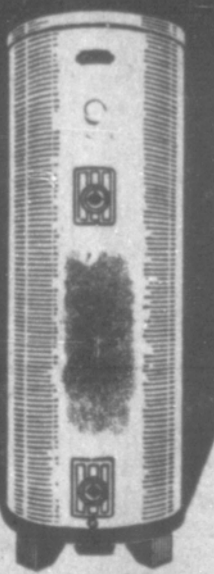
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