

Africa Calling

A REPORT FROM THE NEAR EAST
By ESTHER ANDERSON

Niamey, Oct. 22

Time flies in Africa as it does in Oregon, nearly November 1st already. I've been meaning to write to you of my marketing experiences and thought perhaps your feminine readers would be interested in how shopping is done in the African way.

As most housewives know it is a chore to keep the cupboards stocked and the family well nourished and contented, even in "The Land of Plenty." Here it is a major enterprise, involving much time and strategy. There are no "super markets" as you know them, only open markets and three small French stores, carrying food. There are various dry goods and hardware stores and a pharmacy which carry expensive items of unfamiliar brands.

Every day is a "Sidewalk Bazaar" in Niamey. (Bob Henry, take note) Stalls are set up on every street, residential districts included, a table every few feet with items of every description from pomade to tea, even saw bottles of "Sloans" liniment on one display.

There is a petit Marche, little market, covering about half a block which is food stuffs, vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and poultry. These are native products, grown by natives brought into town each morning on their heads. They walk in from villages for miles around carrying their produce in double and triple decks atop their heads, in baskets, pans, bundles and on top of all a chicken crate for two chickens or ducks.

The meat is trundled in on wooden carts or across bicycles—all exposed to the heat, air and bugs. These goods are spread out on the hot, bare ground or put on makeshift tables and stalls for sale—the ground so covered with vegetables and fruits of all sorts that one must step over and around. Each vendor sits by his wares in a solid row and each one clamors loudly for you to buy his, along with those who stroll constantly and thrust bunches of radishes, onions and lettuce under one's nose and insists it is the best buy.

Little boys come running to meet the purchaser with old dirty boxes and beg that their box be bought and they be allowed to carry it, for a price, while the shopping is done. Wise shoppers carry their own basket into which everything is "dumped" as it is.

The fish are spread in long rows on the bare ground, just as they came from the river, complete from head to tail, the beef is also spread on the ground, also complete from head to tail, including the offal, which should be spelled awful, as with the heat and unsanitary handling it has quite an odor by ten or eleven a.m. The cuts are unrecognizable, mostly flabby strips, which they call filet, the grade is canner grade by U. S. Standards, no fat marbled in and very little on the outside, thus the flavor is just barely a beef flavor. No pork in this market as this is Moslem country. It may be bought in the French stores at a premium price.

Poultry are sold alive, are carried by their necks. You lift one to judge if it's weighty enough, all are feather weight, then it's yours to kill, pluck and clean. This the houseboys do.

Eggs are guinea or banty eggs and are whatever they have been able to track down in the brush and maybe more guinea than egg by the time they reach market. To prove their freshness they place them in large pans of water, supposedly good if they do not float, not necessarily so as they quite often are so heavy with chicks they can't float. We buy ours at the French market, are flown in from poultry farms along the coast and cost 35 francs apiece. 100 francs is equal to 40c or so in our money—changes from time to time.

The fruits in the open market are oranges, grapefruit, bananas and pineapples trucked in from Nigeria, to the south of us, and are good in flavor, rather seedy, but are cheap and one of the best buys. Must all be scrubbed in soap and water and peeled, as the vegetables must be, too. Their vegetables are very puny and flavorless, they seem to pluck them from the ground as soon as they thrust forth a leaf. Have to beat the bugs to them, I guess.

The soil is poor so not much nutrients to make good vegetables. Their big crop is millet and then peanuts. They sell millet as meal and flour in large dish pans, a handful or whatever quantity is desired. Use it cooked as rice and as cereal cooked to a paste and solidified, then sliced.

They also make a millet milk which is fermented millet and water, a milky white thick drink with an alcoholic content. They sell peanut oil and raw peanuts, small and not much flavor. Milk is brought in by the natives fresh from the udder of goats or their best type cows, without benefit of straining, cooling or pasteurizing, sold in ginger ale type bottles with no caps and flies swarming in and out. Flies have a heyday on all the open market produce and the stores are not much better as far as sanitation.

Saran wrap and foil could do a big business here but their theory seems to be, you can see the produce and feel it better if it is all uncovered, and bugs mean nothing to them. This about covers the food situation except for bread, it is sold all over. Native baked French style of course, grey, crusty texture and also never wrapped—just carry it as is. There are two French bakeries who have a little more variety, theirs too, are all unwrapped and exposed to air and flies. I bake my own.

Then there is the grande marche, another block long open market of dry goods, pottery, enamel ware pans, brooms, buckets, native soap which looks like long strands of excelsior, sundry items of combs, brushes, leather goods and some I haven't figured out, as yet. The yardage is a picturesque sight, colorful as a hundred rainbows and there is certainly no shortage of it. One may buy it and a tailor is available right there to sew it up, in his own fashion, on a treadle machine.

There is a fabric for every need and some beautiful hand woven materials which we see them weave, up and down the streets, sometimes stretching their yarn, cotton yarn, from one light post to another. Ready made native garments are available in the grand marche, long kimonos, large baggy pants made of at least 5 yards of material, wrapped to fit the waist and having pockets inside. There are stores of imported modern clothing, also, all of which is very expensive and not good material.

The pottery and enamel ware is all very gay and colorful with much of it having mottoes on it. Some in French and some in English. We saw a pot go by on a head the other day with "Human Vanity Is Confidence" printed on it in English. A Nigerian product, no doubt, as Nigeria is English speaking. This is Niger, remember, a French country.

Everything is carried on the head, including bundles of wood and stacks of yardage, except their babies. They get to ride "piggy back" wrapped tightly to the mother with a strip of material with only the head and two feet exposed and the head quite often covered with a wool stocking cap—in this heat!—100 degrees ever since we arrived. Their wool comes from the goats and a type of sheep that is hard to tell from the goats.

Some wear sweaters and we are told they quite often suffer from malaria and its chills. All wear long costumes to their ankles with many overrobes on the men and their heads swathed in turbans, Arabian style. Many are Arabs. The ladies wear long tight skirts, sleeveless ruffled blouses and some extra yardage wrapped around them willy, nilly and most wear head coverings of bright kerchiefs done up in different fashions. Their hair is either done pixie fashion, sticking out like nine pins all over the head or braided tightly to the scalp. Children wear nothing unless they are about school age, then wear shorts or a skirt. Quite a few do go to school.

This is getting away from the shopping experiences, and the way of life is another story. We are taking many pictures.

We are allowed to order American brand foods from a commissary in Lagos—are brought in once a month by plane. Not a great variety, but helps.

My typing is terrible. Wes, worse than my writing even, so hope you don't mind the written letter. We have received only the one Gazette, suppose they are on their way, though. Our best wishes to everyone.

Sincerely,
Esther

Herbicide Meeting Set in Pendleton

A special one-day conference on agricultural herbicides will be held in Pendleton on Monday, November 22, it was announced this week by the Oregon Wheat Growers League, sponsor of the meet.

Discussion will center around the use of herbicides in crop disease prevention and the related problems of chemical volatility and control. The meeting, which opens at 10 a.m. at the Tapadera Motel, is open to representatives of chemical firms, forestry officials, herbicide applicators, growers and other interested parties.

Lexington 4-H Clubs Join for Meetings

The 4-H sewing and knitting clubs of Lexington joined together for a meeting at Chris Munkers' home on November 2. We elected officers. They are Jill Padberg, president; June Ledbetter, vice president; Jeanne Hunt, secretary; Glenda Van Winkle, news reporter; Kay Huson, game leader; Chris Munkers, special event chairman, and Mona Lisa Marshall, song leader.

We decided to have our meetings at the city hall in Lexington. Our next meeting is December 4. The meeting was adjourned and refreshments were served.

Glenda Van Winkle, reporter



RANCH HOME of the Dick Wilkinsons nestles below rolling hills up Willow Creek from Heppner. The home was moved from another place up the creek years ago and was enlarged to make more comfortable living quarters. This is center of operations for the 1965 Cattleman of the Year. Award was presented at Farm-City banquet Saturday night. (See story, page 1). (G-T Photo).



"HAY, THERE, DICK," a person might greet Morrow county's Cattleman of the Year for 1965, Dick Wilkinson, as he stands by one stack of hay near his home place. The dog, Mator, is a constant companion. Dick puts up an average of 1000 tons of hay per year. (G-T Photo).

Kinzua Women Elect Officers; Set Club Events

By VIRGINIA KESLO
(Held Over From Last Week)

KINZUA—The regular meeting of the Camp 5 Womens club was held last Wednesday with President Barbara Mortimore in charge. Twelve members were present and hostess for the evening was Jean Medlock.

During the business meeting it was decided to have their annual dinner at the Round Up cafe in Condon on November 18. They also voted to buy white damask table cloths for the tables in the club hall.

New officers for 1966 were elected as follows: president, Helen Troxell; vice-president, Marie Rhoton; secretary, Nancy Hawk; treasurer, Judy Norris; sergeants-at-arms, Betty Murdock and Joannie Howell. These officers will assume their duties in January and also will be the hostesses for the January meeting. Joannie Howell and Betty Murdock will hostess the December meeting which will be their Christmas party. Decorations are to be put up by Marie Rhoton, Marie Hulett, Betty Murdock, and Helen Troxell.

The Community Christmas card party and gift exchange will be December 4, and hostesses for this will be Betty Murdock, Etta Ferrel, and Linda Warner. The door prize for the evening was won by Carol Norris and bingo prizes by Etta Ferrel, Eva DeMerritt, and Nancy Hawk.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ferrel were in John Day last Wednesday for a medical checkup for Bob.

Mrs. Richard Mortimore and son Roger and Mrs. Bob Troxell and children Evan and Marie were in Heppner Saturday for business and shopping and dental care for Roger, and to visit with Mrs. Harriet Evans.

Mrs. Frank Ferrel and Mrs. May James were business visitors to Heppner on Friday.

Mrs. Rusty Medlock and John and Mrs. Earl Norris were business visitors to Heppner Monday where John had medical care.

Mr. and Mrs. R. O. Stephens of Wier, Idaho, arrived Saturday to spend several days visiting their children here.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Parton and son James have moved into the ranch home owned by Mrs. Bert Hoover.

Mrs. Wayland Hyatt and daughter Theresa went to Portland Friday to spend the week-end visiting with relatives.

In The Dalles Friday on business were Mrs. Jiggs Bowman and daughter Cindy, Mrs. Robert Kelso, and Mrs. Verne Edwards of Pine Creek.

Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Flack left Monday morning for Utah, after receiving word of the death of Mr. Flack's sister, Mrs. Elmer Larson of Vernon, Utah.

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Woods and son Max went to The Dalles Monday where Max was to see an oculist.

The Doubledeck card club was entertained Thursday eve-

Girls Enter Fashions In Make-With-Wool Contest in Pendleton

Morrow county was well represented at the Umatilla-Morrow County Make-It-Yourself-With-Wool contest held Saturday at the Tapadera in Pendleton, but none were judged first place division winners, according to Mrs. Robert Hoskins, lone, in charge of the contest.

Honor came to Miss Linda Heath, 16-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Heath, Heppner, when her blue and turquoise checked dress was judged second place winner in the junior contest, and she will be an alternate to the Oregon State contest.

There were 12 entries in the sub-deb division, with first prize going to Miss Valerie Madison, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Madison, Echo, and granddaughter of Gaylord Madison, vice-president of Oregon Wool Growers. She received a lamb's wool rug donated by Mrs. Henry Krebs, Sr., of Cecil.

Local contestants in the sub-deb division were June Ledbetter, Carley Bergstrom, Molly Becket, Sandra Carlson, Linda Pettyjohn, Mary Katherine Camel and Shauna Bergstrom. All received wool skirt length yardage, and Shauna received the fashion award, a Vogue School catalogue.

Winner in the junior division, in a class of 14 entries, was Cheryl Lynn Steadman, 14-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Steadman of Milton, Freewater. Second place prize to Linda Heath was the lamb's wool rug donated by Mrs. Wavel Wilkinson, Heppner. Fashion award went to Carol Rawlins, and she received a pair of electric shears. Nonda Clark received honorable mention and received wool yardage.

Representing the senior division at the state contest will be Miss Paula Bissinger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley Bissinger of Stanfield. Alternate Betty Gilbert of Pilot Rock was awarded the lamb's wool rug donated by Mrs. Shirley Rugg, Heppner. There were no local entries in the senior division.

About 74 persons attended the dinner for the contestants and over 100 were in the audience to enjoy the style review in the evening.

Gas Company Pays \$60,660 in Taxes

Pacific Gas Transmission has paid Morrow County \$60,660.86 in ad valorem property taxes for 1965-66. Vice President and General Manager Charles Penrypacker Smith said today.

The Morrow County payment is part of \$728,839.14 the pipeline company is paying in property taxes in nine eastern Oregon counties.

Following are PGT's 1965-66 property tax payments by county: Crook—\$32,735.29; Deschutes—\$153,870.84; Gilliam—\$42,518.92; Jefferson—\$57,646.90; Klamath—\$227,905.58; Morrow—\$60,660.86; Sherman—\$20,973.47; Umatilla—\$90,689.28; Wasco—\$51,738.09.

In Morrow county, PGT owns 34.6 miles of 36-inch-diameter pipeline and a communications station on Gleason Peak. These are part of the 1,400-mile Alberta-California natural gas pipeline system.

ning with Mrs. Bonnie Campbell as hostess. High was won by Helen Wright, low by Ada Schell, and floating by Marge Asher and Virginia Sifton. Others playing were Kathryn Flack, Rita Conley, Virginia Kelso, Vi Slinkard, Lily May Nistad, Marj Borling, and Irene Samples.

Visiting during the week-end with Mr. and Mrs. Louis Rhodes were Mrs. Roy Irons, Mrs. Pauline Crawford and Mrs. Ellen Anderson, all of Pasco, Wash., and Mr. and Mrs. Loyal McDermott.

Miss Joan Browning spent the week-end here with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Browning. She was accompanied from Pendleton by Miss Pat Martin of Ukiah who shares an apartment with Joan. Both girls are students at Blue Mountain College.

Mrs. Peter Bible of Portland arrived Saturday to spend some time visiting with her daughter and family, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Wall and John.

Mrs. Herschel Murdock, Mrs. Frank DeMerritt, and Mrs. Ralph James were in Heppner last Tuesday for business, shopping, and medical care for Mrs. James.

Mrs. Harold Mangum came home Saturday from the hospital at Heppner where she had major surgery.

Mrs. Frank Ferrel attended the first tailoring class in Fossil last Tuesday. Instructore in the class is Mrs. Henry Dahill and it is under the home extension service.

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