

Africa Calling

A REPORT FROM THE NEAR EAST
By ESTHER ANDERSON

A Report From the
Dark Continent
By NELS ANDERSON

Things are beginning to happen in my line of work and while I thought a few weeks ago there was no hope it looks like I might eventually get some kind of a program on the road. In the meantime there are many wonders of Africa to keep one aghast. As an example, I have now seen the ultimate in the uses for a wheelbarrow—I just came in from the yard and saw a whole procession of local tramps with rubber-wheeled wheelbarrows on their heads! Not the little kind—those big contractor type wheelbarrows that when loaded weigh a good many hundred pounds. I couldn't see up into them to see if they were full of cement, but I would not doubt it. They were with the street department crew so maybe they were just going the empty way the easy way!

Talking about the street department, we have been getting a real cleanup in town in the last few days—crews with shovels, rakes, picks and last, but not least, good old street brooms. If you want to see a street cleaning crew work up some perspiration just set them to cleaning up an African red dust street with these tools. Oddly enough they do seem to improve the situation. The crew came yesterday to our street and was quite set back when they found I had been filling the mud hole in front of my gate with some concrete refuse that the contractors left after they punched holes in the side of the house to install air conditioners, repair our patio, etc.

This was different than the usual practice of filling your mud holes with the garbage from that street. Our night watchman did this once and we suddenly put a stop to it as it was a little difficult to get near the gate long enough to open and close it. Anyway the Street Dept. picked around a while in the concrete then came to the gate to see if they could get me to move my pickup so they could sweep under it. I finally got them convinced that "il ne marche pas" as it had been laid up the past month with a shot wheel bearing waiting for the wheels of progress to turn enough to find out what fund to use to purchase a new one from the States. They could not pass up the spot so I finally made them understand to push it back about 10 feet and clean under it. So goes the city life in the Capital of Niger.

Today is Veterans Day and France is very much in evidence even though Niger was granted their independence in 1960. The French Army was out in force yesterday practicing for the

memorial services which they held today. While one sees signs of the French armed force every day it is hard to imagine there are so many around as were in town today. Trucks loaded with Armed forces, Mercedes-Benz with the top brass, and Frenchmen of every description were on the streets early today. They were dedicating a monument to the Nigeriens who lost their lives in each of the two wars. The memorial sets in the town square near the one stop-go light that the city supports. The French army club has a private swimming pool, with a terrace for dance parties, and other sports equipment. This is the only swimming pool in town other than some private pools, so it is quite popular. Since the French Army is being decreased each year they are encouraging others (not natives) to become members to share the expenses. We have been to the pool quite frequently and will become members as soon as possible.

Early this week I spent three days out in the country in an attempt to acquaint myself with some of the problems and opportunities for Extension here. This is what I had been looking forward to and really enjoyed it. It made me feel like for the first time since arriving that maybe there was some hope of getting something done. I have been grounded for most of the time with a pickup that I did not feel safe in leaving town in and when the front wheel bearing went out last week this was my chance to start on the project of renting a Land Rover 4-wheel drive which I finally got done. With the agricultural experts outlining a trip that would take me into an area that was quite average for Niger I set out with a French extension man that would have the equivalent title of a district supervisor in Oregon and one of the agents of that area who by the way was necessary because of language of the various villages. So we had one interpreter for Djermma to French, then the French into broken American, etc., till it got through to me.

We visited an area where I will set up a series of demonstrations to teach the agents the techniques of result and method demonstrations and to also prove some modern farming techniques and the value of using seed treatments, fertilizer, insecticides, etc. The area has many possibilities and I was impressed with the enormous untapped agricultural resources of the country we traveled in. The only thing that seems to be lacking is initiative to have a higher standard of living and then the cost of digging water wells in the area to attract new villages. Because of the heavy rainfall that comes in a relatively short time, the sandy soil with no organic matter returned to the soil and constant cropping, using no fertilizer, the soil is exhausted after 5 to 10 years and is abandoned for 2 to 7 years and new land broken out of brush. And brush it is for any land that is not farmed for a year is a regular jungle of 10 foot high grass, shrubby trees, and a variety of vegetation.

Our travels took us into a number of villages the names of which will mean nothing to you but the sounds are so musical and weird that I can't help but mention a few such as Seber, Sekoukou, Gongzou gou (two parts of this one—one for the Peuls and one for the Djermma), Dagari, Windekork oye, Gomebwa, Doudo, Tolo, Boula, Gusselbodi, and Koure. The village of Seber impressed me being the good farmers of the bunch but Koure and Tolo farmers were pretty sharp if there is such a thing as a sharp village here. I am sure there is. Seber is next to the Niger river and there are some flood plains that I would like to get a Cat and plow into and see how much wheat I could raise per acre, or correctly per hectare as is used here.

These farmers raise mostly millet which is raised like wheat in Morrow county—by

this I mean it is the main stand-by—dryland or irrigated. Some rice is raised but I want to get out some demonstrations on potatoes (pomme de terre), sugar cane (cane sucre), onions, corn, and some fruit if they will wait for them to come into bearing. We were welcomed by the chief of each of the villages and one would think that a Martian space ship had settled in the main street of Heppner for the commotion we created. I was driving and if you want a grand ride just go riding with me through the millet fields of Africa where the road is nothing but a goat track. I was given directions by one in Djermma, from another in French, and by the time I figured which trail to turn on we were ready to go a gauche then a droite, etc. Anyway it was quite a thrill to ease up through a village following a path with banco walls on one side and a grassy area on the other with a hundred chickens running in front of the jeep, dozens of little naked boys and girls running behind and goats and sheep going in all directions.

After the formalities of shaking everyone's hand, with a touch to the heart after each hand shake (a social Djermma practice), we discussed the peanut crop and if they were ready to pay back the seed they were advanced for the crop by the Co-op. At Koupe we had to have broadcast chicken, gravy with rice with the chief. (I thought I liked red peppers but my stomach is burning yet—nothing there could be no bacteria survive this). The pimlento sauce they use is hotter than the Tabasco sauce my elk hunter friends(?) doped me up on one occasion, but as we say in these cases, "this is just the way we like it."

The chief got out a group of the native boys and the chickens were running every way as they ran down enough to barbecue for the occasion and to send three along as a gift. They have a mound of coals in a barbecue pit arrangement and just sit the chicken on its feet, rubbing it occasionally with saim oil and the red pepper sauce. They split the chicken open using the wings, neck and odd pieces for a thick gravy to go over the rice: GOOD.

At Seber the fishing had been good so we had to have some of their smoked fish, the specialty of that village. The fish are at their prime now on the Niger and the fishermen have flocked to the river by the thousands. The fish are bony but good, much like the Northern Pike and pickerel of the Minnesota Lakes and the kind I was raised on but nothing to compare to trout and its relatives. At Boula the Chief showed us his small orchard near a wet spot in a draw where he was growing lemon, papaya, guava, and some native fruits of little value. Here again the village boys had to run down chickens to send along as gifts. The chickens of this country look like the bantams of our country. If they ever do get larger they don't give them a chance, as I have had lots of the chicken here which is always served at big events, and none of it is ever large enough to really get by without eating two or three. Chickens are the most popular poultry followed by guineas, then ducks with a few turkeys here and there. I have not seen a goose yet. The ducks are like our Muscovys, large. They are the popular poultry in Niamey and can be found right on main street any time of the day.

On the way back into these villages through the millet fields and "bush," as any back country is called here, we saw a lot of rock hens, wild guineas, partridge, outarde, a kind of heron-looking big bird which is supposed to be real good eating, and some other small wild game birds. There was an area of rocky buttes covered with brush where there were hundreds of "dog monkeys" so called because of a nose or face like a dog. I didn't like the looks of the things. What really thrilled me was a herd of 20 to 30 wild pigs. There were huge ones, small ones and medium-sized. The farouche cochon (wild pig) is one of the sporting animals to hunt during hunting season which is suspended for two years because of the depletion of game from so many people coming in to hunt here. While I haven't seen any yet, there are supposed to be many elephants, giraffes, lions, antelope, etc.

After returning from the visit to the villages I am now in the process of running down all I can find out about the agriculture production to put in my work plan and as a basis for developing a program for the country. I have met with the Director of Agriculture on several occasions and find him to be real receptive to any suggestions I have to offer which have been few until I get a little bit better oriented. I am in the process now of establishing an extensive garden plot to compare vegetables from here with some of the recommended varieties of the southern U. S., as well as seedling time, etc.

We are eating some delicious watermelons grown by the Chinese at the president's palace farm and I can't wait to get some cantaloupe started as they don't know what they are here. This should be melon "heaven" with the light soil, heat, etc.

Esther planted some nasturtiums a few days ago and they are six inches high. Stuff comes up almost over night but a lot of the vegetables and flowers just can't stand the heat as they grow to death. During the rainy

season, June through September, much of the vegetable crops just have no taste or don't develop, so we are trying to find the best dates to seed for the best production which can be limited by the amount of water available during the dry season.

There is much land near the river that will grow anything but is limited by the amount of effort the people want to put in to carrying water in sprinkling cans from the river to keep it growing. Many are doing this in small vegetable gardens near town that supply the vegetables for the Niamey market. In my travels through the villages and the bush I was interested in a few plantings of wheat which are by necessity, I find, limited to irrigation. I found for instance that the flour mill here run by the Lebanese would like more good quality wheat to mill rather than to ship in flour from France. The wheat grown here is a hard wheat and yields rather good, about 25 bushels per acre and sells when there is a market, for about \$3.50 per bushel. When I found that there was hundreds of thousands of acres of land with rainfall enough during the rainy season to grow wheat I thought of some of our good North Morrow farmers that could get a Cat and Graham plow in and do big business here. I was about to write Van Hubbard to come over until I found there was only one little problem, that being that wheat will not grow during the rainy season and set grain.

So it has to be grown under irrigation and irrigation is a long ways off here for anything but the real "specialty crops." I was interested in seeing my first sesame seed crop, the first manioc (tapioca) as well as some things I haven't figured out yet. Oh yes, anybody interested in some good cotton can get all they want here. It grows wild.

One day while browsing through some of the AID grants I found among some interesting things which could be a story in themselves, a P. L. shipment of 134 metric tons of bulgur wheat that went to the schools, hospitals, etc. here. In doing some checking I found this had been very well liked and they would like more. I have some bulletins with new bulgur recipes developed in Niger if any of the good housewives of Morrow county can't get anything to their liking from the home agent. I would be happy to send some recipes such as NNI-FOO FOO, AQWA, PARTAS, STEAMED GROUND-NUD PUDDING, etc. In my village technology handbook also I could provide plans for such items as a hand operated washing machine, a fireless cooker, solar water heater, hand powered grain mill, a lantern operated chicken brooder, and sundry other items.

A few days ago in reading a fairly recent copy of the Agriculture Research magazine, published by USDA, I discovered that Africa was way ahead of the world. In the item "Does BULL Beef Have A Future," it pointed out that in recent trials "bulls gained an average of 2.10 pounds and their steer twins 1.72 pounds per day. They ate just a little over 1% more feed than the steers but produced 21% more daily gain. The bulls reached the slaughter weight of 900 pounds at 15 months of age, the steers at about 17 months. The bulls required 7.97 pounds of feed and the steers 9.50 pounds to produce 1 pound of gain. This was a saving in feed of 16 to 17 percent. The bulls were particularly effective in putting on lean beef; they had 10% more lean in the rib section than the steers, etc." I am convinced that the Africans have known this all the time because they do not know how to castrate an animal! Or at least I haven't run across one yet.

Well I have gone on for considerable time, so Bonjour, Ca Va, Fo-Fo, or whatever your tribe uses as a greeting, for now to all my friends in Morrow county.

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Cub Den Mothers Attend Meeting

By MARTHA MATETSON

MONUMENT—A group of Cub Scout den mothers drove to Mt. Vernon Monday evening for their first meeting. Robert J. Gertson signed the application form as Cub Master and Mrs. Jessie Scott was enrolled as den mother, with three others as assistant den mothers.

After the organization phase, District Commissioner Jerry Myers, with the assistance of the Monument neighborhood commissioner, Willie Baldwin, conducted a short training session for the new leaders. Assistants are Mrs. Janet Lewis and Mrs. Mary Lippert.

Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Cork and children of Prineville spent the week-end here, taking in the dance Saturday night after the Columbia Power annual meeting.

Gracie Matteson entered the John Day hospital last Tuesday afternoon, then returned home on Thursday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ellingson and three children, and Ernie guests Saturday night at the Ellingsons, all of Long Creek, the Ronnie Harris family home and attended the dance.

Jessie Scott and Beeta Hinton drove to John Day last Wednesday afternoon with L. J. Matteson to visit Gracie Matteson.

Janet Lewis took her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred McWillis to John Day last Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Martin of Prineville were here for the week-end on business and visiting with friends.

Mrs. Elmer Matteson and daughter, Mrs. Jessie Scott, drove to Pendleton last Thursday on business.

Wayne Leathers, Sr., was reported ill last Saturday morning.

The family of Mord Stubblefield has been spending much time staying with him while he has been ill at John Day.

Bill Chance made a trip to Portland the past week to get a new set of tracks for his cat.

Mrs. Bob Kilby and children spent last Thursday at Dale, visiting the Bob Kilby family.

Miss Doherty Home Because of Illness

Martha Doherty, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Doherty, was unable to return to her work at the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Wn., following Thanksgiving vacation because of illness. She entered there as a junior this fall.

Martha became ill with a virus infection two weeks prior to Thanksgiving and stayed with relatives there until the holiday. She now expects to remain home and enter either Eastern Oregon College at La Grande or University of Oregon at Eugene in the winter term, starting following the Christmas and New Year vacation.

WATCH OUT AT CORNERS

Heavy traffic at intersections will turn ice and snow into a hard, slippery glaze. Be ready for a controlled stop by slowing down well ahead of every intersection. This sensible season's greeting is from the Traffic Safety & Education Division of the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles.



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Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.
M.Y.F., Sunday, 7:00 p.m.
Choir Rehearsal, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.
Bible Study, Thursday, 8:00 p.m.
W.S.C., 1st Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
Rev. Don McCarty
Ph. 676-5529
Sunday School, 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.
Evening Service, 7:00 p.m.
Prayer Meeting, Wed. 7:30 p.m.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH
Rev. Billie Alsop, Ph. 676-5581
Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Evening Service, 7:00 p.m.
Mid-week Service, Tues., 7:00 p.m.

HOPE AND VALBY LUTHERAN
Rev. Kenneth J. Robinson
Ph. 676-9940
VALBY: Worship, 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School, 10:20 a.m.
HOPE: Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Evening Service, 7:30 p.m.

ST. PATRICK'S and ST. WILLIAMS CATHOLIC
Father Raymond H. Beard
Ph. 676-9462
ST. PATRICK'S (Heppner) Sunday Masses, 7:30 and 11:00 a.m.
ST. WILLIAMS (Ione): Sunday Masses, 9:15 a.m.
Confessions, St. Patrick's Sat. 7-8 p.m.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH Heppner
Al Boschee, minister, Ph. 676-9209
Sunday School, 10:00 a.m.
Morning worship, 11:00 a.m.
Christian Youth Fellowship, Heppner and Lexington Youth, Sunday, 7:00 p.m.
Family night services, Sunday, 7:30 p.m.
Choir Practice, Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL
Sunday Services, 10:00 a.m.; Church School, 10:00 a.m.; Women's Guild, 1st Wednesday.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
American Legion Hall
Glen T. Mechem, Jr. President
Priesthood meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.
Sacrament Service, 11:30 a.m.

IONE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Rev. Walter Crowell, pastor
Ph. 422-7530
Church School classes for youth and adult, 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
Elder Elwood Boyd, Ph. 676-9682
Sabbath School, 9:30 a.m.
Church Worship, 11:00 a.m.
"Quiet Hour" radio broadcast, KGO, Sundays, 2 p.m.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH Lexington
Al Boschee, minister, 676-9209
Worship Service, 9:00 a.m.
Bible School, 10:00 a.m.
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Choir Practice, Thurs., 7:00 p.m., at Heppner.
Christian Women's Fellowship, third Tuesday.

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