

# Africa Calling

A REPORT FROM THE NEAR EAST

By N. C. ANDERSON

By KIT ANDERSON

Yesterday the Commissary plane arrived and among many items we received were loads of Christmas cards from home as well as Christmas presents, and Valentines, so last night we celebrated several holidays in one. Also arriving were a bunch of Gazette-Times, so now we are up to February 3, so you see we aren't too far behind with the news of Morrow county. But what prompted me to think about this item was the many comments we had in our Christmas notes about "Africa Calling." So here I go again.

Since the last "Africa Calling" I have seen a lot of Niger and finally have some extension projects underway that promise to be challenging, as well as worthwhile, I hope. The opportunity to see much of the agriculture of Niger came after receiving my new Land Rover pickup in December. At that time I began planning a trip to take me into most of the important farming areas of the country so I could become, first hand, acquainted with the crops grown, cultural practices, opportunities for introducing new crops and practices, etc. My greatest concern was just what is being accomplished under the present extension program, and how I could contribute to it. Part of the answer was found, but part of it may be a long way off. Anyway, I saw a lot of agriculture, some quite primitive, some amazingly advanced for this part of the world. My Peace Corps assistant and I covered 4500 kilometers in 12 days as well as visiting several dozen agricultural centers. Peace Corps volunteers working in agricultural endeavors, nurseries and experiment stations, missionaries, chiefs of villages, commandantes, and others. A special mission was also made for the Embassy here, too, as the French would say, "Jeter un coup d'oeil" (have a look at) the far eastern edge of Niger in contemplating opportunities for development of this vast expansion of grassland, well watered with oases and evident shallow water resources.

So with food, water (boiled and filtered), mosquito netting, canvas cots and other camping equipment, plus a 55 gallon drum and five jerry cans of gas to carry us between gas refill stations, we set out early the morning of January 27, returning to Niamey February 7. We made the entire trip without a flat tire or any trouble, other than having to clean out the carburetor three or four times, evidently from water and rust in the barrel we took with us. We slept out on the ground beside the road part of the time, stayed in villages with Peace Corps volunteers, one night in a new school house that aid funds has helped build, and one night in a village encampment. We ate two meals in restaurants during the trip, mainly because there were none to be found in the area we were traveling in. We had a very profitable trip with no bad incidents like getting bit by a cobra or cornered by a lion, but there were a few mosquitoes that liked the taste of our blood and we furnished them with a lot of it during the voyage.

The economy of Niger is almost entirely based on traditional agriculture and livestock. An estimated 95% of all the people are engaged in these two principal activities which account for about 75% of the domestic output. The main crops are millet, sorghum, cassava, peanuts, pulses and onions. Some cotton is being grown fairly successfully, and rice is coming into the picture quite rapidly as it is a desired food of the people. Livestock is the second principle occupation of the country. It is virtually the only occupation for the country's 600,000 nomads who account for some 60% of the livestock production. Goats are the most numerous of the livestock classes, with sheep next then cattle. There are camel and donkey raisers that contribute quite a substantial amount to the economy in the draft business. One of the real opportunities for exports is livestock for meat, as there is much demand for it from the countries to the south where livestock production problems are many. While we aren't particularly crazy about the beef, some people who don't like choice or high grade beef would be in their glory over here. There is little fat or even a trace of marbling in most of the meat that can be bought during most of the season at all. (Students of the Washington State Livestock Short Course who bumped into Dr. "Bull" Durham from Lubbock, Texas,

would appreciate what a business he would have with his little pump and peanut oil to artificially marbled several hundred thousand head of cattle each year!)

Because of this important contribution agriculture makes to the economy of Niger, the possibilities for extension which is almost non-existent, are many. I returned with a whole bagful of ideas and am now trying to get some of them off the ground. I can't give a blow by blow account of the trip but would like to just comment on a few observations. First, I was surprised to see the huge quantities of peanuts being produced throughout the country. Being a crop that is generally in world surplus, I didn't feel too bad about our wheat situation, as there are peanuts stacked up in Niger and neighboring Nigeria in piles that would put pyramids of Egypt to shame. I guess they will be processed sooner or later. Most of our production, I understand, goes into refineries for oil, a subsidy is given by France and this really gets production. Acreage has increased by leaps and bounds, and some areas we visited were planning to increase production next year by ten times. One of the real interesting sidelights of this increased production was the need for fuel to furnish power for a newly constructed cement factory out in the peanut country. Evidently much of the production was based on the demand for the shells for this power. We visited one peanut receiving station where peanuts are shelled, cleaned and sacked, then piled for eventual shipment to the seaport about 1000 kilometers to the south. At this plant 150 tons were being processed each 20 hour work day. The plant reminds me a lot of Gribbles pelleting process where there were several stages to progress through, ending up by coming out in 150 pound sacks of shelled peanuts that a virtual "bucket brigade" proceeded to carry via the head several thousand feet to the stacking crew. I know some of the sacks weighed more than the carrier, but they trotted off with the load on their heads like it was a sack of feathers!

We visited also, some primitive irrigation systems used for vegetable and wheat production where a white man hardly ever set foot. The small fields that employ the flood system using borders, were producing tons of tomatoes, plement, eggplant onions (by the acres!) gombo and other African vegetables, mainly ones used for flavoring sauce, which they are very fond of. At these irrigation areas which were located wherever there may be a wet spot of accumulation of runoff, and some along the Komo dougou river, a "chadouf" or balanced arm on a forked pole in the ground furnished the lifting device for getting the water into the ditches. A large gourd (calabas) with a string net around it to carry the water from the hole was the dipping receptacle. I saw some working these devices, and I swear they were putting as much water into the ditch as good small electric pump. At these same fields there was wheat being produced that looked real good to me. It looked a lot like Gaines, a big loose bearded head, they said it was hard and no one knows where it ever came from. It had been grown for generations. From figures they gave me I figured it to be producing about 50 bushels per acre which I didn't think bad at all for Africa. (No fertilization!)

On the scenic side I saw a lot of gazelle, much like our antelope, many small foxes, monkeys running all over the place, jackals, a multitude of the brightest and largest birds I had ever seen, and last but not least, ostriches. This was the first time I had seen an ostrich in the wild and when I came up on them I thought I would see how fast they could run. They might be clumsy looking birds but they sure have the speed. I chased them all over the country, but got one on the road and clocked him 50 kilometers per hour. He got to throwing so much sand into my radiator I had to drop back and he got away. Another interesting sight is the Lake Chad cattle. These are predominant in the eastern Niger area along Lake Chad and into that coun-

try too. There were literally hundreds of thousands of these smaller than regular cattle, along the shores of Lake Chad, with their ball shaped horns that looks much like a basketball coming out of the base of the cows head. Crossed with the other cattle of the country they have the big round horn, then a regular two foot horn on the end of that, about as big around as a mans arm. I have some excellent pictures of them that I was proud to get. I also was much impressed with the nomads and their camel caravans with the largest being 85 loaded camels, but a lot more young camels going along for the walk, as well as dozens of donkeys. It is quite picturesque to see some of the Bororo's in their black dresses sitting on the rumps of their donkeys heading for somewhere miles and miles from the closest visible sign of civilization. A visit to Agades which is on the edge of the Sahara, was real interesting with the Tuaregs and their Sunday markets, which includes every thing from dried dates to camels and camel hair braided rugs of which I ended up with two, a camel blanket to go with my camel saddle, and a few other odds and ends.

After returning to Niamey and getting caught up with the everyday chores, I began planning for some extension demonstrations. A recent trip to several villages out in the bush where the Chief of Canton accompanied me, we induced five villages to go along with plots of about one acre in size where I will plow their field with oxen or donkey, prepare for planting, seed with a one row seeder in straight rows with the recommended variety of the area using the amount of seed per square foot as found best suited to the area, then cultivate the millet or sorghum for weed control, as needed. The other half of the field will be farmed by the farmer in his traditional way, then we will see who is the best farmer. If Allah is with me, and my field yields more, that I might impress someone and pass on the method if the farmer can find the money to buy a donkey (\$800-2000) an implement (on time) at \$75 find feed for the donkey, and otherwise think that the whole procedure is worth the trouble. If he beats me in yield, then I pay him the difference in millet between his and my yield. Just keep thinking how much wheat I would owe people like Frank Anderson, Louis Carlson, Raymond Lundell, etc. if this kind of an arrangement had been in effect with some of our fertilization plots in the past 15 years.

Right now, and for the next 45 days, I will be involved at least part time with a five man agricultural team who have been sent here to study the possibilities for agricultural development in Niger. They are from USDA Washington, D. C., and are specialists in agricultural economics, soil conservation, forestry, credit and cooperatives, extension, and livestock. They are involved in a complete review of all segments of agricultural development, both from the government level, into the field. They are supposed to come up with a long range program that will insure a production geared to the need for food to feed and exploding population. I have a number of pet projects that I would like to promote, but don't know how I will fare with all the competition I have. Last Tuesday we had the group out for a tour of some of the projects underway, including my demonstration plots. It was only 110 in the shade that day and we never found any shade, but we gave them a real good ride in the back end of the Land Rover, over some of the roughest terrain in Niger. They were ready to go to bed that evening. We became lost in the brush which was higher than the pickup, and wandered around for hours, but saw a lot of new country. I think they might have suspected we didn't know where we were going. Next week we take them out a little longer, then the next week into the grasslands of eastern Niger. Some of the good livestock growers of Morrow county would love to get their cattle into this grassland. It is thick, as it comes with water everywhere.

I visited recently an area in the eastern part where the United Nations are making a survey on the possibilities of livestock development in this area. Under their study is a 10 million acre area that is being thoroughly scrutinized with the hopes of setting up a one million acre ranch where about 40,000 1-2 year olds will be run for a year or two until they are out enough to put into a "warming-up" feed lot, slaughtered, then shipped by refrigerated

truck to Nigeria and other southern African countries. A contract was let this month as a part of the survey to explore for water possibilities. Ten to 12 holes up to 600 feet deep will be dug to see just what the underground water supply is. If the project sounds feasible at the end of the two year study, the plan calls for a plant costing up to \$5 million to develop fence, stock and build necessary headquarters for the million acre ranch, as well as develop a feed lot, slaughter plant and refrigerated trucks to take the meat to the consuming countries. Of course, it will be necessary to find some country to finance the project.

Well, I have gone on for some time now. Better close with Allah klee, the good bye of the Kanuri tribe of eastern Niger.

By KIT ANDERSON

It has been a while since I last wrote so I thought I'd better sit down and write a few lines.

I'm here in Niamey now, having arrived on Saturday, March 26. I'm enjoying my vacation with my folks and Rick, but I only have two weeks and I'm leaving next Saturday.

My trip from Nigeria was all right. I left Lagos on Friday, 25, and flew to Abidjan. I stayed overnight there with a family from the American Embassy and then came here Saturday afternoon. I enjoyed Abidjan a lot more as it was my second visit and I knew a little bit about it. The family I stayed with had a swimming pool so I had a lot of fun.

Today in Niger is a national holiday called Tabaski. It is a feast for the Moslems and there is a big religious gathering. This morning at about 8:30 all the Moslems gathered at a cemetery for prayers. There were about 20,000 all together. The President, Hamani Diori, led the people in prayers. Just a year ago when the Nigerienues were having this "fete" an attempt was made on Diori's life. As he was leading them in prayer, a man threw a grenade at him. As he threw it, his hand brushed against his robe and the grenade landed 20 feet or so from the President. It didn't hurt him, but it tore up the chest of a small boy and killed him. This morning we went to visit the missionaries who are in charge of the Protestant church here. The wife of the minister had obtained permission from the President to take pictures of the praying for a film they are making of Niger. She wanted to show that the country was Moslem. She was about 12 feet from the President with her movie camera and a slide camera. Before the praying actually began, she took a wide-angle shot of the crowd. Later when the movie was shown, the police picked out the man who had thrown the grenade. She got some excellent pictures and there are copies with the American Embassy and the President himself.

Today, I thought, would be a good day for a coup if Niger is headed for one. Although the military is out in full force, there won't be any trouble. Everyone is reasonably secure and happy despite what TIME of March 11 says.

Since today is a feast day, preparations are being made throughout Niamey for the grand meal at sunset this evening. All morning sheep have been killed and dressed out for roasting. The price of sheep in town is up to 5,000 CFA, or \$20 but the natives say that 20,000 sheep are being killed here. Every family has one or two stretched on wooden racks roasting by the fire. At some fires we saw this morning while driving through the city there were six and seven sheep roasting. If the family is too poor to kill a sheep, then a goat is roasted. However, I didn't see one goat. The sheep are skinned and a man opens a small hole in the leg to blow air into the animal. This makes it much easier to save as they bring a good price at the market.

This evening should be excellent picture-taking time. The drummers will be out in full force and there should be some dancing. I'd like to get out and see things.

School's okay with me. I did all right on my term grades—B in geometry, B in PE, A in Eng-

## KINZUA NEWS

By VIRGINIA KELSO

(Held over from last week)

KINZUA — The Doubled e c k card club was entertained Wednesday evening at the grade school with Virginia Kelso as hostess. High and floating were won by Helen Wright, low by Pat McMinn and second floating by Lily May Nistad. Others playing were Marj Borring, Marje Asher, Margie Ball, Kathryn Flack, Vonnie Browning, Rita Conlee, Vi Slinkard, and Virginia Sitton.

Mr. and Mrs. Jiggs Bowman and daughters Sara and Cindy went to Stanfield Saturday where they visited with relatives and played golf at McNary on Sunday.

Spending the week-end in Portland where the men bowled on Saturday night were Mr. and Mrs. Don Slinkard, Mr. and Mrs. James Hullett, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Bailey, and Mr. and Mrs. Mark Jellick.

Miss Florence Ball of Pendleton spent from Friday until Sunday visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Ball. When she returned to Pendleton Sunday she took her mother with her and Mrs. Bell entered St. Anthony hospital where she was placed in traction.

Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Flack were in Heppner Wednesday and again Monday for medical care. Mrs. Wayland Hvatt and daughter Theresa spent the week-end in Portland visiting with relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Murdoch left Friday on a short trip which took them to Portland, Newberg, Pacific City, Eugene, Albany and Salem. On their way home they visited with Mrs. Carol Norris in Prineville. Frank DeMerritt went to Arlington Saturday to meet Mrs. DeMerritt who had come from Portland by bus. She had been in a Portland hospital for treatment.

Earl Norris went to Prineville Saturday to bring home Mrs. Norris who had been a patient in the Pioneer Memorial hospital for ten days.

Mr. and Mrs. Scott Reed and family of Bend spent the week-end visiting with Mr. and Mrs. Rusty Medlock and Mr. and Mrs. Frank DeMerritt.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Schell went to Prineville during the week-end to bring home their children Pete and Brenda who had spent the past week visiting with their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ray O'Neal.

Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Sharp and Dick Frank were business visitors to Maupin on Saturday. Mr. and Mrs. Sam Howell returned to Camp 5 Friday after spending the shut down at Monument.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ferrel returned home Sunday from Portland where Bob had been in the hospital. They went to Monument first to visit with relatives before coming to Camp 5.

Forrest Logan and daughters Vicki and Terri came Sunday to spend some time with Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Woods.

Mrs. Jack Sitton went to Arlington Thursday to meet her sister, Mrs. Mary Taffey of New Orleans, La. Mrs. Taffey went to Spear, Friday to spend a few days with her mother Mrs. Cora Burnside and then went to The Dalles Saturday with Mrs. Sitton. Mrs. Sitton went back to

lish, A in French, A in history. Our House won the Inter-House Sports Competition in track but I only did one race, the 890. Of course, I did real good, 6th out of 6! I'll stick to baseball.

I got my house Stripe the last week of term. It's a position in responsibility but I can't explain it too well. You get more privileges or something. Anyway I was a good boy so I got one. The highest a student can go is School Stripe, which comes after House Stripe. Only 4 kids in my class have their HS so I guess I'm pretty lucky. I suppose you would call it a perfect system.

How's the weather there? It's been plenty hot here but last night it rained a little and cooled down some. The rainy season will be starting again soon.

Well, I suppose I had better finish this up for this time. If you find time to write, send it to Nigeria as I'm going back to school on the 9th.

## Over The Tee Cup

By DEE GRIBBLE

(Held over from last week)

Golfing news is scarce these days. The strong wind makes weak golfers out of many that do turn out.

Sunday men's play is in the very capable hands of Don Turner and Lowell Gribble. Sunday, the 17th, found 20 men out, and a real good time was had by all. Harry O'Donnell made coffee and served juice and hot rolls, too. (Didn't know he could cook.)

The day's low went to Don Turner. Ed Bennett was closest to the pin on No. 4. Maurice

The Dalles Tuesday taking Mrs. Burnside with her so that Mrs. Burnside could fly to New Orleans with Mrs. Taffey for a visit.

The Needle Knocking Knitting club held a mobile food sale last Saturday realizing \$12.50. Those participating in the bake sale were Deloris Shelton, Darla Brock, Judy, Sharon and Lorell Hubbell and their leader, Mrs. Helen Shelton.

The Busy Bee Bakers held their ninth meeting at the home of their leader, Mrs. Wanita Hubbell recently. The president Joyce Hatter appointed Linda Rice as secretary for the remainder of the year. A discussion was held on the muffins made at the last meeting. The new business was plans for a bake sale to be held at the Kinzua Mercantile on April 30.

Nancy Benson, reporter Mr. and Mrs. Lee Bailey returned home Thursday from a three weeks trip to visit relatives in North Carolina. They had good traveling going east but returning home they were ahead of tornadoes in Kansas and had ice and snow in Nebraska and Wyoming, and were glad to get home.

Groves had par on No. 9, for hidden hole honors. Long drive honors went to Don Turner. Since the committee had previously decided that awards are won on a basis of one time only, it was "be kind to Don" week.

On Sunday, the 24th, 13 men played. After the play, a drawing for partners and matching scores found Van Marter, Sr. and Ray Massey partners and low scorers. Joe Balle and Lowell Gribble were second low. Ray Massey had closest to the pin.

Willow Creek Ladies played both Tuesdays, and the number out both times was eight. Dee Gribble put the coffee on for April 19th, and Cora Mae Ferguson planned the day's play for the 26th. Carol and Cheryl Gribble were in charge.

Two ball foresomes will be held on one Sunday each month for May, June and July. Only eligible winners will be the gals—how about that!

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