



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins

Ants Store, Husk and Grind Their Own Grain

Two days previously it had rained. The welcome moisture triggered growth in tiny seeds. Willing plants drank the moisture and responded. The water seeped into the galleries of the harvester ants, alerting the colony and setting in motion a strange chain of events.

The water-seepage triggered growth and mildew in the hullless grass seeds so carefully stored in the underground granaries of the ant-hill. In the close, still air, the damp seeds started to mold—some to sprout.

The ants gathered the dampened seeds and one by one carried them along the passageway to the earth's surface. Seemingly the insects knew that the rain was over and the sun was shining. In the warm rays the seeds were laid out to dry.

Had Been Gathered

Those same seeds had been gathered one by one from the grasses that grew a few yards from the ant-hill. Each seed carried by a hard working ant had been de-hulled and, if necessary, de-sprouted before it was stored in the ants' granary.

The student of ant-behavior denies that some instinctive foresight on the part of the ants prompted them actually to plant the grass seeds out there in the first place.

He insists that the grass just naturally grew there and

the ants built their home close by it. Sometimes, well-kept roads are built by the ants from the nest to the grass-forest; roads over which many generations of ants have made their way to and from the harvest-fields.

The human observer does admit, however, that the chaff that is always removed from the seeds by the ants is carried away from the ant-hill and deposited in the grass. Whether this is for the fertilization of the growing plants is a debatable question.

The student and the scientist believe the smell of the mildewed grain prompts some nervous response in the ant-mind to remove the dampened grain. The dry seeds, having no odor of mold, are returned to the granary. Also admitted is the ant's attention to the removal of the embryo part of the seed to prevent it from germinating.

'Millers' Crush Seeds

Inside the colony ants with large heads and large chewing mouth parts, called "millers," crush the seeds, making them edible for worker ants who have weaker jaws.

It is supposed that these heavy-jawed "millers" are destroyed by other members of the ant colony after the "fall grinding is completed," thereby saving what food they would eat during the period when no grain is available.

Observers have found the miller ants heads have been sawed off and the extra food saved. In the economy of the colony, it would be pointless to feed extra and non-productive citizens.

The collecting, storing, husking and grinding of grain for food sounds fantastic when applied to insects; and so, too, is the peculiar habit of the harvester ants in removing wet grain to dry in the sun. Reporting the actions of these highly organized insects is easier than explaining why or how they do it.

(Revised by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1960)

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Missouri is bounded by eight states: Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Illinois.

Union Uses California To Launch Bid For Higher Wages for Farm Laborers

Stockton, Calif.—Organized labor is making California the springboard for a nationwide campaign to boost wages of farm workers.

State Department Seeks Workers

Washington, D. C. — The state department is looking for young men and women to employ as clerical workers both in the United States and abroad.

Persons interested in employment in Washington, D.C. as stenographers, typists, and clerks must be at least 18 years of age, and must qualify by passing a civil service examination, a physical examination and a background investigation.

Young people interested in "Foreign Service" employment as secretaries, stenographers, communications, mail and pouch clerks must be at least 21; American citizens for at least five years; single with no dependents; high school graduates in excellent health, and available to go to any one of 286 embassies, legations or consulates located in 90 countries throughout the world.

They must be able to pass performance tests, and meet a minimum work experience requirement of three years.

College training may be substituted for a maximum of 18 months of experience. Starting salaries range from \$3,730 to \$4,180 plus travel expenses and housing allowances.

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the employment division, department of state, Washington 25, D.C.

Mrs. Neuberger's Funds Criticized

Portland — Mrs. Collis P. Moore, Republican national committee woman from Oregon, today criticized campaign contributions to Mrs. Maurice Neuberger, Democratic candidate for her late husband's Senate seat, saying most of them have come from sources outside of Oregon.

Mrs. Moore said the election report filed with the secretary of state's office showed backers of Mrs. Neuberger put up \$24,875 before the May 20 primary. She said more than \$21,000 of this amount came from "non-Oregon sources—most of it from New York, Chicago and Washington, D. C."

Farmers in the nation's richest agricultural state have served notice they will fight any wage increases. They charged that wage hikes will send food prices soaring.

An opening signal of the campaign came a fortnight ago when the AFL-CIO gave official sanction to the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee—a group with which California ranchers are already familiar.

Norman Smith, the man chosen to direct the organizing drive, told farmers last year how he was going to force farm wages up.

He said he would first try to negotiate a price, before the harvest of a given crop. His aim is to get an average minimum of \$1.25 an hour in all fruit and vegetable picking.

For those who refuse to pay his rates, Smith said he would wait until the fruit is ripe—then picket the ranch.

The California Department

of Employment has ruled that when a farm is thus involved in a labor dispute, it cannot recruit domestic workers or resort to the use of Mexican nationals until the dispute is settled.

The farmer has little choice but to give in to the union or let the fruit rot on the tree. Two cherry farmers chose the latter course two weeks ago and lost an estimated \$100,000.

The union's reason for choosing California to start the nation-wide campaign is obvious: If it can do it here, it can probably do it anywhere.

"California has the greatest concentration of both farm workers and corporate farms, as well as year-round harvesting," Smith said.

Central Valley Target He has centered his operations in the state's richest agricultural areas in the world with over 200 crops, many grown nowhere else in the country.

During the peak harvest month of September last year, the Department of Employment reported 544,000 farm workers in the fields. Of that total, 84,000 were Mexican "Braceros."

The Braceros are Smith's second target. He wants to get rid of the "foreign army" which he says depresses the wages for the domestic laborers.

Most of the harvest "strikes" this year have lasted only a few minutes, mainly because the smaller growers can't afford to lose what they've already put into their crops. It's the big corporate farms that are the union's special targets.

Farmers and farm groups have banded together to build up a defense against the union committee. So far their main efforts have been to build up comparatively small pools of non-union workers as insurance against losing their crops.

Farmers also have asked

Director Irving Perless of the Employment Department to reinterpret his definition of a farm labor dispute to allow the department to recruit workers in struck fields.

Attorneys for the farmers argue that Perless's definition of a labor dispute should not include agriculture. Perless has asked them to take a case to court in order to decide it one way or the other.

Farm wages already have risen considerably in California in the past 10 years. For instance, 10 years ago pickers of early apricots were getting 70 to 90 cents an hour in the Central Valley.

This year, after union ne-

gotiators talked to framers in the early opening Solano-Yolo county area, the average rose from 80 cents to \$1.25.

Eventually, Smith said, the union hopes to get a national minimum wage based on California's, which is the highest.

Smith is not moved by accusations from farmers that his efforts to raise farm wages will drive up the price of food.

"A difference of 10 cents in a bucket of cherries in the field is a difference of one-half to one cent a pound in the stores," he said. "That's not going to break anybody."

Quotes From the News

BY UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL New York—Floyd Patterson, after regaining the world heavyweight boxing crown with a fifth round knockout over Ingemar Johansson:

"I was waiting for him to come to me. When he didn't, well, I had to go to him. I guess I did, huh?"

New York—Edwin Ahlquist, Johansson's advisor, telling reporters the former champ would have no statement just now:

"Ingemar doesn't feel like talking to anyone right now... The best man won."

Hollywood—Robert Stack, on receiving an Emmy award as best actor for his TV role in "The Untouchables":

"I always laughed at people when they got things like the Emmy. But I'm not laughing now."

Springfield, Ohio — Dr. Barbara Moore, still trudging across the country in the wake of two British sergeants who completed the San Francisco-New York hike Friday, repeated her charge that the men got rid:

"They just had a good hitchhiking holiday across America. But if they try to claim a record, I will subpoena them."

Edith Green's Election Hailed

Washington — The woman's division of the Democratic National Convention has hailed the election of Rep. Edith Green (D-Ore) to head the state Democratic delegation to the convention in Los Angeles in July.

Katie Louchheim, vice chairman of the committee, said Mrs. Green is apparently the first woman to be the chairman of a state delegation.

The 17-man delegation will cast its vote for Sen. John F. Kennedy (D-Mass.) for the nomination.

Rep. Green also is chairman of the Kennedy campaign committee in Oregon.

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Jehovah Witnesses Slate Convention

Portland — The District Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses will hold its annual convention July 28-31 at Multnomah Stadium with 14,000 to 18,000 persons expected to attend, according to Maurice O'Callaghan, rooming director.

O'Callaghan said some 3,000 housing accommodations had been obtained so far.

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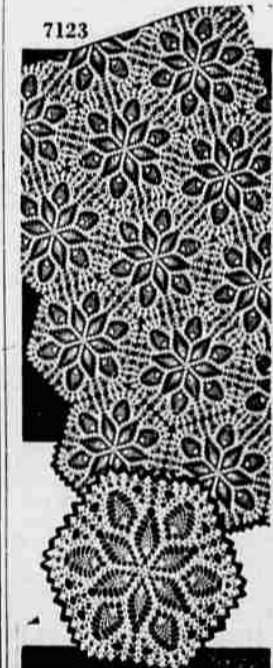
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