



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins

One of Earliest Plants Was the Fern—and It's Still Here
 During the early formative period of the earth, nature had at her disposal only flowerless plants with which she carpeted the solid areas of the world. Vapor from the drying land that had so recently emerged from under the sea rose in hot, steamy clouds. It helped the growth of what plant life had raised its timid head above the ooze.

Bing Wants BB Or Gina For New 'Road' Show
 London—UPI—Bing Crosby breezed into town Wednesday and granted that as far as movie roles are concerned he's "too old to get the girl and too young to play the grandpappy."

But that didn't stop him from announcing his intention to try to get either Brigitte Bardot or Gina Lollobrigida to play in a forthcoming "road" film—the "Road to Hong Kong."
 "As far as the movie is concerned," said the 56-year-old crooner, "I made a picture now and then, but it's hard and hard to fit me in a role. I'm too old to get the girl and too young to play the grandpappy—although I'm one in real life."

Crosby, who stopped here with his 26-year-old actress-wife, Kathy Grant, on the way to the Olympics in Rome, said the "Road to Hong Kong" with Bob Hope calls for a foreign actress.
 "I'd like either Bardot or Lollobrigida... but it's hard to get down girls like that," he said.
 "Of course," Bing laughed, "they'd be too old for Hope."
 Crosby was mobbed at his hotel and a tailoring shop where he ordered five new suits.
 Before he retires, the Academy Award winner said, he hopes to play a serious dramatic role. Then he will sit down to write a novel.

Lawyers Ask Repeal Of Connally Law
 Washington—UPI—The American Bar association again has urged repeal of the Connally amendment which gives the United States a veto over what comes involving this country can be used in the World Court.

Surgery To Help Paralyzed Persons
 Washington—(Science Service)—Surgical reconstruction of the arms and hands of persons paralyzed in all four extremities can sometimes provide as much functional activity as mechanical devices.

Wife Uses Poem To Help Get Divorce
 Los Angeles—UPI—Mrs. George A. Johnson, 80, in court Wednesday to receive \$25 weekly alimony pending trial of her divorce suit, produced a poem she had written to her 59-year-old husband.

Nothing Goes Right; His Goose Is Cooked
 Rapid City, S.D.—UPI—Roy Knight, of Vernon, Tex., was serving a 10-day sentence in jail today and pondering over the fact he never seems to do anything right.

ROCKET SENDS MESSAGE
 Elgin Air Force Base, Fla.—UPI—An Aerobee research rocket fired 300 miles over the Gulf of Mexico Wednesday broadcast a message to points in Colorado, Ohio, Florida and to planes flying at 30,000 feet.

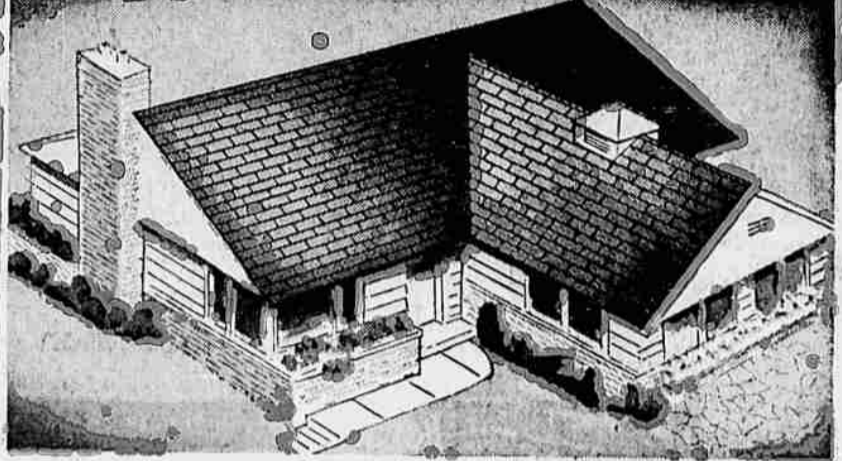
higher probably than today's trees. How long the age of the ferns lasted is unknown, but it must have been a long time.
 The spores from these tree-ferns fell like brown clouds. From the spores other, and vaster, forests sprang up, to cast more tons of spores. They were silent forests because birds had not yet appeared on the earthy scene.
Much Rain
 This must have been an era of torrential rains that exceed any occurring on the earth today. Rain probably fell in driving torrents for several hundred thousand years. During this time all the great depressions on earth were being filled up, and the steam and vapor must have ascended in heavy clouds. For millions of years the ferns grew, died, and reappeared themselves in this atmosphere.
 Nature began to accumulate unworldly amounts of debris which built up on top of ferns higher and higher. Underneath this, the ferns were compressed into coal. Actually, it is not so simple as this, as oxidation, decay and a host of other factors entered into the process. The result, however, is the coal deposits.
No Control
 It seems a little ridiculous to suppose that many millions of years ago a nature anticipated present day needs, and laid down the fern forests so that we could have coal. It was only a process of natural forces over which man would have had little control had he been on the scene to arrange it.
 Most present forms of ferns are relatively small. Some areas of the earth still have the tree-ferns but the temperate regions are favored with smaller varieties.
 These are still beautiful and endless, reproduced only by spores. Ferns usually remind one of cool, green forest glades, or the banks of a brook. Underneath the fertile fronds a brownish powder forms. This powdery brown coloration actually is the spore, each of which is smaller than a dust mote. Millions of spores could be put in a tablespoon. Each tiny spore is potentially a fern if it is given the proper amount of moisture, light and soil.
 Perhaps nature has some thing definite in mind by reproducing this species at about 115°. The experiments may still be going on, otherwise the plants would have died out, and would have been replaced by higher forms of plant life. In the ancient order of ferns, nature seems to have decided to abandon all progress.

Vote Retirement Pay
 Washington—UPI—Congress has voted to pay FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover his full salary after he retires. The 65-year-old Hoover, who has headed the FBI for 30 years, now earns \$22,000 a year. He has given no indication that he intends to retire.



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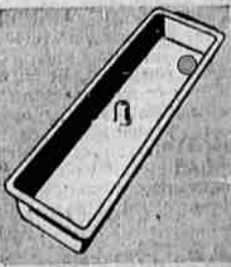
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