

NATURE NOW

By LYDIA KING FREHSE

The Blackberry Patch lies high above the lake beyond the orchard, at a comfortable walk's length from the cottage. Here the wild berries grow and spread their tangled bushes over enough space that one can roam and pick at will. After filling my pail with apples, I skirt the edge of the nearby woods, pass three vase-like elms, and there I am, at the edge of the Blackberry Patch.

This hilltop is the remnant of a homesteader's dream. The neglected fields with their desolate buildings are reverting to nature's ways. Lured here by the offer of cheap land came many a family from neighboring states. The money they brought with them was spent for buildings, machinery and the first year's seed. Thereafter each season took toll of their courage, their endurance and their dwindling supply of cash, until they returned, haggard and wiser, to the richer lands from whence they came.

But the white pine which marked the gate, the deserted orchard where the children played and the three elms which sheltered the cattle from the noonday sun; those things remain.

WILD STRAWBERRIES cover the sunny open ground between the orchard and the Blackberry Patch. Their basal leaves have already turned a bright scarlet but their runners are reaching out in all directions and rooting themselves to make next year's new growth of plants. The raspberries at the edge of the patch are broad of leaf and bushy of stalk and the birds have eaten what fruit the summer people left.

Hardy ferns like the braken and the more sensitive varieties vie for living space with the tall grasses of the meadow. A few clumps of the lovely and delicate maidenhair, which have somehow persisted although now deprived of the deep shade which was their natural home, also remain.

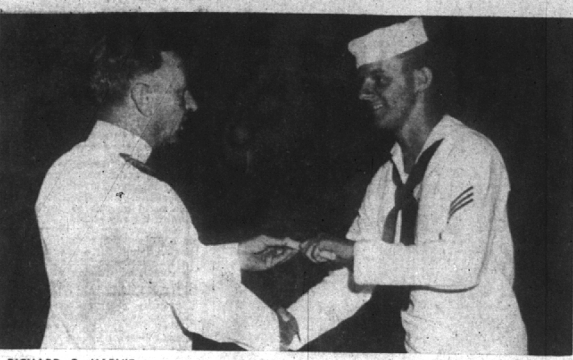
As I begin filling my pail, I cannot pause long, for I have jelly to make.

On some festive winter's night, a mold of clear burgundy will stand proudly on my best old Chelsea plate. It will reflect the candlelight and the flowers of my chooly. But I shall care less for the taste of its tangy sweetness than for the memories it will evoke of the sights and sounds of the Blackberry Patch on a late summer morning.

As I begin filling my pail when I bear a soft rustle around the bush to which I advance cautiously, Peter, the large snowshoe rabbit whose private domain I am invading, hops quickly on to the next bush and continues his nibbling on the lowest branches. So unaccustomed is he to man's intrusive ways, that he pays little heed to my movements and goes quietly about his business, sharing the berries with me. He is a big fellow with long ears and large spreading feet which enable him to walk with ease in the deep northern snows. His presence here brings with it a kind of completeness for what would the Briar Patch be without Br'er Rabbit?

Just as my pail is full to overflowing, I come to the very juiciest berries on the fullest stalks and I am sweet as the softest loaf. But both hands will be filled when I pick up the pail of fruit I have parked under the tallest of the pine trees, so I say to myself, "I will come again tomorrow to find this same spot and continue my picking."

I AM STAINED of hand and mouth as I cross the open sunny space of the orchard. A peewee calls from the nearby woods and a flock of crows are circling overhead reminding me that summer can't last forever. I reach the road at the spot marked by the tall white pine and I am on my way home. Before I begin the de-way of the long hill I pause a moment to see Wildwood Bay



RICHARD G. HARVIE, sonarman seaman, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Harvie, 28450 Santa Barbara, Southfield township, receives a diploma from Capt. W. H. Truesdell, USN, upon completion of a sonarman course at the Fleet Sonar School at Key West, Fla. (Official U. S. Navy Photo)

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AS I MAKE my way from bush to bush a bevy of cedar waxwings precedes me. I zig-zag from one bush to the next following the lure of the largest berries and the fullest branches, eating only the sweetest and the softest (so I have promised myself), for after all these are too ripe to make good jelly.

I have almost filled my pail when I bear a soft rustle around the bush to which I advance cautiously, Peter, the large snowshoe rabbit whose private domain I am invading, hops quickly on to the next bush and continues his nibbling on the lowest branches. So unaccustomed is he to man's intrusive ways, that he pays little heed to my movements and goes quietly about his business, sharing the berries with me. He is a big fellow with long ears and large spreading feet which enable him to walk with ease in the deep northern snows. His presence here brings with it a kind of completeness for what would the Briar Patch be without Br'er Rabbit?

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- FICTION
- Brooks—The Producer
 - Cook—Home to Tennessee
 - Dyer—Bride of Heaven
 - Eisenberg—There's One in Every Family
 - James—Death Wears Pink Shoes
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 - Lodge—Dead as a Dinosaur
 - Murray—Right Honorable Corpse
 - Payton—The Six Iron Soldiers
 - Payton—Bigve Interval
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- CRIME—FEDERAL TAXES
- Kreps—Federal Taxes
 - Polner—The Return to Morality
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 - Sutton—Stamps Collector's Encyclopedia
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 - Chaner—Nutrition
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 - Wanda—How to Waterproof Your Basement
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 - Bell—Tibet
 - Nichols—Tibet
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Trading Post's Owner Appoints New Manager

Mrs. Lon DeLoria, 534 East Lincoln, has become manager of the Birmingham Trading Post, located at 576 East Lincoln. Mrs. Joyce H. Packard, owner of the 'shop,' said the business would continue to operate under the same policy as in the past.

New copy submitted early necessarily is given preference over late items. So the 'Early Bird' usually gets the space.

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