

HOGARTY

by

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In 1947, when I graduated from Harvard College, my father bought 200 acres of cutover timberland between Three Lakes and Eagle River, Wisconsin, and gave me forty of those acres as a graduation present. He paid five dollars per acre, and considered the land worth the price even though the real estate dealer from whom he bought it had paid rather less than half of that a couple of years before when the land was sold for taxes. My father considered the investment a sound one, and his judgment was borne out when, in the next three years he and I received more than the original cost of the land from the sale of Christmas trees. We also enjoyed visiting the land, walking around on it, and fishing in the small lake in Nicolet National Forest within fifty yards of our line.

The worth of such an investment became even more apparent to me when I learned something about the federal income tax aspects of growing timber. If a person buys land with young trees on it, he will realize no taxable income from those trees until they are harvested, and the owner decides when to harvest them. Upon cutting the timber there is deducted from the sale price of the trees that portion of the purchase price for the land which is represented by the value of the trees when he bought the land. The remainder is capital gain. Thus, a person can enjoy a deduction for property taxes throughout the period of his business or professional career,

and, upon retirement, sell the trees which will have grown with little or no effort on his behalf to valuable lumber. In addition, trees, and the other plants that form the forest landscape, are far more beautiful and interesting than stock certificates, or even municipal bonds.

With this philosophy in mind, a couple of years after our marriage in 1961, I convinced my wife that we should look for a similar investment. I got a United Farm Agency catalogue and located a half a dozen real estate dealers in the area I considered to be the southern edge of the North Woods. Letters to them produced a number of answers which we ran down with three or four trips to various swamps, remote tracts in flood plains and real estate that was sold by the front foot. One response paid off, however, when we visited a parcel near a settlement called Hogarty, between Wausau and Antigo, Wisconsin, on the Eau Claire River, a tributary of the Wisconsin. The land comprised four forty-acre parcels, three in a line running east and west and the fourth lying to the south of the middle of the first three. The river runs through all of the three northerly lots, meandering so that its total distance through the land is about half a mile. Previously lumbered two or three times, the land was most recently valuable for deposits of granite gravel, but these deposits had run out, so the land was considered to have no economic value. Although I had stipulated that I didn't want to pay more than twenty-five dollars per acre, the real estate dealer thought I might be interested anyway, even though the price was higher, because of the beauty of the place. The river has several stretches of rapids and a small waterfall and

the land is covered with granite outcroppings. My wife and I advised the dealer, after returning to a nearby house from inspecting the premises, that we would like to think over the higher price of \$32.50 per acre. We retired to the car and thought it over for about thirty seconds, then returned and said we'd take it. I consider the investment a wise one.

During the first year that we owned this land we drove the 275 miles each way to camp there in a tent on several weekends. We learned that a tent can be pitched and struck in reasonable periods of time, but that if it happens to be raining when you return to Chicago, you have to take a wet tent back with you. The way to dry a wet tent, if you live in an apartment, is to set it up in your living room and let it stay there until dry. If you happen to live in a building designed by Mies van der Rohe, your neighbors can easily see the tent set up in your living room and may discretely inquire about the practice.

We learned that for cooking purposes it is wise to dig a hole in the ground and line it with rocks to prevent the dirt around the hole from caving in when the heat dries it out. The fire is built in a hole so that the wind will not blow the heat away from beneath whatever you're trying to cook, nor blow sparks from the fire into the dry forest. It also makes the fire relatively easy to extinguish with a single bucket of water.

A third experience was the digging of latrines. Having joined the navy rather than the army or marines, I had been denied that experience while many of my friends were gaining it.

We learned to dig the hole deep enough so that the contents could be well covered and narrow enough so that a portable toilet seat on folding legs could be set up over the hole without danger of falling in. The portable toilet has always been known, affectionately after the store that sold it to us, as the V.L. & A. We also learned to balance the interest in locating the latrine in or near heavy brush for privacy against the interest in avoiding the mosquitoes that infest heavy brush.

About the time our first child was born we decided that a more stable structure than a tent would serve our purposes better, and we got a local carpenter to erect a concrete block garage with two overhead doors so that we could, in effect, open up the entire south wall of the building when the weather was good. A small cast iron stove was installed for space heating as well as cooking. So we would not lose all touch with the camping experience, we did not get beds or cots, but slept in sleeping bags on a sheet of green plastic spread on the gravel floor. A folding aluminum picnic table served as counter space, and an infant seat suspended from one of the rafters a couple of feet above the floor kept our daughter from crawling over the gravel to the hot stove. She soon developed a strong antipathy for that chair, and also for the folding crib, covered with mosquito netting on all sides; so we had to travel with a playpen which held her until she fell asleep. Then into the crib she went.

The garage was built with a closet in which we could store things like saws, fishing rods and the V.L. & A. Other things got in there too, especially field mice. Each year we could count on

at least one mouse's nest. Twice I found large snakes in the closet, too, drawn by the promise of fresh mouse-meat. The snakes were non-poisonous, but even so we did not really want them there. A groundhog managed to dig his way under the foundation and greeted us rather sulkily when we showed up on one occasion.

The garage had the advantage of being close to the river, so getting water was easy. Although we did not drink the river water, we did use it for washing and for filling a small plastic bathtub for Shaw to play in. The stove tried mightily to heat the garage in cool or cold weather, but even though the sides occasionally grew slightly red from the maple fire, the uninsulated wooden roof and leaky joints between concrete blocks prevented any significant difference between the outside temperature and the inside temperature. A nearby sawmill sold log ends at a reasonable price: these consisted of maple slices, from three inches to two feet in length, which usually split readily, and provided me with the fun of chopping wood without the work of sawing.

On one occasion, Nat Apter and I spent a couple of days at Hogarty on a fishing trip. My wife, who did not join us, recalls the incident readily and frequently because of the fact that, under Nat's guidance, I determined that putting the used dinner plates in water to be heated to nearly boiling on the stove would sterilize them, and further washing would be unnecessary. Next time she saw them, my wife advised me that she thought that plates should be clean, whether sterile or not.

Even though we got a couple of chairs and a footstool, made out of canvass and wood from a design developed by Lord Kitchener, we eventually felt that living in a garage was less comfortable than we really wanted to be. Crumbs are difficult to sweep from a gravel floor, and mosquitoes have no trouble flying under garage doors. Also my son, born three years after his sister, objected even more to the suspended chair and the folding crib. After looking at various types of trailers, I eventually bought a Holiday Traveler, a travel trailer equipped with hot and cold running water and a storage tank for it, a gas stove and refrigerator and even a furnace. We had it delivered not to the site near the river, where the garage stood, but on the higher land several hundred yards away, where the floods don't reach and the extremes of heat and cold are more moderate. Of course, with running water we had to carry water from the nearby farmhouse to the trailer in milk cans and syphon it into the water inlet. The local hardware store was glad to provide us with a septic tank, and even to install it for us. But the matter had to be approved by the county officials in Wausau, and they seemed in no hurry. Finally, at the suggestion of the operator of the Aniwa Hardware, I wrote the responsible county official requesting prompt action because our holding tank was getting full of sewage. That worked, and the tank was in place by the next time we turned up.

For several months I tried to locate a well driller, but none seemed interested in drilling on my land. Eventually a neighbor told me that another neighbor was having a well drilled and that I might prevail upon the same driller to come to my place next.

The man's name was Ben Tork -- a proper name for a man who applies rotary force to a drill, though he spells it with a "k" rather than a "que" at the end. The well went down 300 feet before water of adequate volume was found, Mr. Tork told me, although other wells in the vicinity were far more shallow. Since I was not there to observe the process he had me at his mercy, and I'm glad that he was willing to stop where he did, at ten dollars per foot. I was there a week or so later when the Aniwa Hardware installed the pump with three hundred feet of plastic pipe, so I could ascertain that the well really was that deep. Before the pump was installed, I measured the distance between the top of the well (a cast iron pipe six inches in diameter) and the surface of the water in it. . . the distance was eighteen feet.

Of course, to get the well pump to work one needs electricity; electricity is also necessary to charge the trailer battery to provide current for the compressor that forces air into the water tank to make the running water run. So I bought a 1000 watt motor alternator from the Aniwa Hardware. That firm also built a small enameled steel shed to house the head of the new well and the motor alternator. Then it turned out that the pump required about 1700 watts, so I had to buy a second motor alternator of 3000 watts capacity to charge the battery and to pump water at the same time. It takes far longer to charge a battery, however, than it does to pump 20 gallons of water, so I found I was using both motor alternators; first I'd pump the water and partially charge the battery with the large motor alternator, then I'd use the small one to finish the charging. A couple of years ago, I

found a better way of dealing with the battery: I bought a solar panel, about a foot square, which is secured to a concrete block on the roof of the trailer, and it constantly provides a trickle charge to the battery. It is very easy indeed to use electricity faster than a solar panel will produce it, but the panel keeps on working whether anyone is there or not, so it will eventually catch up. Also, a solar panel does not require anyone to start it with a rope, or to change its sparkplugs, or to fill it with gasoline or replace the oil after every so many hours of operation, and it doesn't make any noise. A major virtue of Hogarty is the quiet, which is destroyed by an ill-muffled gasoline engine.

During the winter of 1979 the snow load exceeded the strength of the roof of the garage and it collapsed. The son of the neighboring farmer has agreed to clean up the site in exchange for the concrete blocks, a trade I consider mutually advantageous.

On originally buying the land I had a timber survey made by an organization called "Trees for Tomorrow," a non-profit corporation organized by the lumber companies to encourage small landowners to grow trees. The survey provided the best map I have of the place, and a brief description of the kind of trees growing in each of various places. Most of these descriptions use such phrases as "5" aspen, poor stocking" or "northern hardwoods, fair stocking." What these laconic phrases don't disclose is that a recently logged forest permits sunlight to reach the forest floor where the variety of plants with which nature equipped Wisconsin can find a place to grow. The trees are bigger now, and in some areas shade out the

undergrowth, but there is still plenty of open woodland. The numerically predominant tree is the aspen which is subject to having its relatively brief life being further shortened by beavers. There are some white pines which a man about my own age planted as a boy for a 4-H project, a few old white pines which the loggers did not take because of misshapen trunks, and large numbers of spruce and balsam, with a little hemlock and a number of tamarack trees in the swampy area. Hogarty is in one of the largest maple syrup producing areas of Wisconsin (or the world, for that matter) and we also have many sugar maples, yellow birch, hornbeam, wild cherry and some paper birch.

Early in my tenure I decided to plant various flowers and shrubs which I thought would do well and would please me. Most of my attempts were failures, partly, I suspect, because cultivated plants have difficulty competing with wild ones in the forest. A few I planted, however, turned out not to have been necessary. I spent considerable time and a little money planting hazel nut bushes, only to learn the next fall that among the pre-existing shrubs about one bush out of three was a hazel nut bush. I had a similar experience with pussy willows. In time, I learned that it is easier to enjoy the plants that are there than to change things in the time I have available. Instead of trying to persuade an apple tree to grow, it is better to buy apples on the way to Hogarty (the route passes through Appleton, Wisconsin) and to eat the wild raspberries, blackberries, juneberries and, especially, wild strawberries. I can think of few more pleasant and harmless

ways to spend one's leisure than lying down in the July sunshine and picking and eating wild strawberries. Sometimes my conscience bothers me enough to make me save a few, but those pangs rarely last long enough to permit the strawberries to reach the trailer. It is also fun to photograph wild strawberries before eating them. Few photographers are blessed with models which they can later consume with such satisfaction.

Juneberries, or serviceberries as they are often called, were unknown to me until Mrs. Weden (wife of the farmer at the head of the road) mentioned them and showed me where to find them. Somewhat resembling maroon or crimson blueberries, they grow on trees, usually in the shade, and are often out of reach. They remind me of the song, thirty years or so ago that went "The higher up the berry tree the sweeter grows the berry. The more you hug and kiss a girl the more she wants to marry." The Indians used to regard juneberries as an important source of food, and I have often wondered why the white man has not brought them under cultivation as he has the blueberry.

What we pick the most of is the wild cherry. There are two varieties, pin cherries and chokecherries. The former make good jelly, though we don't often use them for that purpose. Both are good eaten raw, but only when ripe and then only in moderation because of the sour or bitter taste. The chokecherries we have do not live up to their name when ripe; when that time comes, around Labor Day in odd numbered years, the trees are weighted down with them, sometimes to the point of breaking limbs. Although the stone

occupies half the volume of the cherry, the rest is delicious -- sweet and flavorful with enough of the astringency for which it is named so that one's mouth puckers slightly when eating it. A couple of gallons can be picked by one person in two or three hours, and they can be turned into the best cordial I know of: cherry bounce. Layers of wild cherries (either pin cherries or chokecherries) are interspersed with layers of sugar in a mason jar, and the remaining interstices are filled with brandy or vodka. The jar is covered tightly and stored upside down until Christmas when the dark red liquor is decanted and served only to close friends or when we feel particular deserving.

Armed with copies of Ewell Gibbons' books and one or two more technical ones, I have also learned to enjoy the young bracken, while still in the fiddlehead form, young milkweed pods boiled and buttered like asparagus, and green cat-tails, boiled, buttered and eaten like corn on the cob.

Marsh marigolds, sometimes colloquially called cowslips, are members of the ranunculus, or buttercup family. They grow in the water that runs slowly through the woods when they become warm in May: in a spring in the spring, you might say. Blooming before the leaves are fully out on the trees, they sometimes grow in such profusion that the ambient light in that part of the forest is noticeably yellowed. Each spring I try to have at least one dish of marsh marigold leaves, picked before the flowers bloom and boiled in three changes of water to dispel the poison. Dogtooth violets, which bloom about the same time and are often called trout lillies,

are found in great numbers in the better drained parts of the woods; they spring from a small bulb about six inches under the top of the soil which I have read is good to eat, but I have not tried any, partly because I enjoy the flowers so much. Every year I discover new species of wildflowers growing in places where I either had not previously looked, or where they had not previously been. Before we bought the place, cattle were not effectively prevented from grazing there; now that they are kept out, the wild flowers are not eaten so mercilessly. Spring beauties, anemones, bloodroot, dutchmen's breeches, Canadian Mayflowers, bunchberries, yellow, white and purple violets, starflowers and my favorite of all, the trillium appear in the spring, followed later by columbine, jewelweed, devil's paintcup, butter-and-eggs, midland lillies, white daisies, wild bergamot, and eventually blackeyed susans and goldenrod and purple asters. In the marshy areas I sometimes find purple fringed orchids and wild flags. On the fourth of July I try to pick wild flags, remembering the story in the Peterkin Papers of the children who believed it was these flowers, rather than our national ensign, that should be displayed on that holiday. Most of the flags have finished blooming by then, but I can usually find a few. My picking habits are limited by the fact that most wildflowers close up or wilt or otherwise sulk when picked, and by my unwillingness to pick any flower unless there are several others of the same species surviving in the same area. Flowers that I have planted and which are not harmed by picking, such as narcissus, daffodil and daylilly, I am willing to pick with less restraint, but there is still no need to pick more than will grace our small living quarters in the

trailer. Besides, my wife dislikes my bringing in the ants that wander around many flowers.

One plant I definitely avoid picking is poison ivy. It is happy in a few isolated spots, and I leave it there, though I have tried once or twice to eradicate it. Spraying with a poison may have diminished it a little, temporarily, but I dislike using poisons. One year I tried sprinkling salt near the poison ivy, but saw no particular results. Perhaps I could fertilize the area with the hope that some other plant would move in and crowd the poison ivy out. I understand that goats eat poison ivy, but I think I'd prefer the latter.

An item that I do pick a lot of is wild mushrooms. I have attended a night school class on the identification of mushrooms and have bought several books and a microscope. Early on I realized that these fungi are not divided, as many might believe, between edible and poisonous. There are four categories listed in inverse order of frequency: edible, poisonous, non-poisonous but inedible, and unidentified. My criterion for identification is positive confirmation in each of two books, and often the books disagree as to the characteristics of any given species. It seems to me that collecting and eating wild mushrooms is a good pastime for a bond lawyer; you are allowed and expected to do all necessary research and to say no in case of doubt. If you make a mistake, there is a fair chance of not getting caught. But if you make a mistake and do get caught, the results are serious. The most common mushrooms at Hogarty are the spectacular *Amanita Muscaria*--a large handsome species having a yellow or orange cap sprinkled with

flakes of white. It is highly poisonous, and supposedly provides a good way to diminish the housefly population. According to one book, bits of this mushroom soaked in water make the water irresistible yet deadly to flies. I have occasionally put such a concoction on the roof of the trailer, just above the door, but I've no reliable way of knowing whether flies that otherwise would have entered the trailer were thereby prevented.

The identification of mushrooms is sometimes easy and sometimes not. Puffballs, for example are easy to identify and safe--provided of course that they are really puffballs and not another mushroom that hasn't opened up yet. Some species of amanita are edible and highly regarded, but they can be confused with other species that are deadly. It often happens that you can determine the genus but not the species, and a test for edibility in that genus is the taste. However, you'd better know that there is no poisonous mushroom that has the characteristics of the specimen you've got before using the taste test. Tasting mushrooms eliminates only the evil tasting ones, not the good tasting poisonous ones. Because individual specimens within a species vary so with respect to size, color and sometimes shape, a positive identification is sometimes difficult. One characteristic that does not vary is the spores. If you take a spore print by putting the mushroom, gills down, on a piece of paper for an hour or two, you will see a dusting of millions of spores. The color of these spores is one clue to identity; another is the size and shape of the spores. However, the spores are likely to be about 20 microns long and 10 wide.

A micron is the millionth part of a meter, so the size and shape of the spores of a mushroom can be determined only with a microscope.

Typically, I spend an hour or two gathering mushrooms and come back with various kinds to identify and, if edible, to eat. Mostly I photograph them, take slides of the spores, and throw them away as inedible or because by the time I've done everything necessary to identify a specimen it is no longer fresh. However, I have now learned to recognize several edible species promptly, such as the honey-mushroom, the clavaria and certain members of the boletus family. I have yet to find any morels or chanterelles, though I keep hoping. Fried in butter or cooked with scrambled eggs, the few mushrooms that do make it through the identification process prove delicious.

The microscope not only helps in the identification of mushrooms, but it also provides hours of recreation examining the little creatures that inhabit water from the nearby swamps, ponds and river. I have not tried to identify any, or if I have, I haven't kept records, and don't particularly intend to unless I discover some use for the knowledge. Nevertheless, it is fascinating to observe the many shapes, sizes and motions of the scores of tiny animals in one drop of water.

Other water-living animals interest me even more, particularly fish and crawfish. Let me pass on to you my favorite way of catching crawfish: you wear a bathing suit, canvas shoes, and a face mask and snorkel; and you carry an empty beer can with the top removed. Proceeding face down in the river, where there

are lots of rocks and not too much current, you look for the prey. When you see one, you put the beer can, open end down, near your quarry, holding it at an angle so there is about an inch between the lip of the can and the bottom of the river. From the opposite side you move your free hand toward the crawfish to alarm it and cause it to flee. Not having very good memories, the crawfish will not recall where he ought to flee, but will head for what appears to be a safe cranny--the opening between the lip of the beer can and the river bottom. Once the creature is in the can you invert it so that the sunlight enters the can from above. Then the crawfish will spend his energies trying to scoot backward through the bottom of the can. Next comes the question of what to do with the crawfish. If you have small children you can make a temporary pet of it, after warning them about the claws. Or you can use it for fish bait if the shell is soft, but it seldom is. The best thing is to get many crawfish and drop them into a pot of boiling water. After a few minutes, when they have turned lobster red, you take them out and eat the tail meat with melted butter. The taste, though not identical to that of a Maine lobster, is very good and more Maine-like than those crustaceans that are sold under the name of lobster in Florida, the Caribbean and California.

In addition to crawfish, the river holds all the mud turtles and terrapins we need and a modest population of fish. Early in our ownership I caught a few trout, but have not seen one for the last several years. Although the river is supposed to be good for bass, I have caught only one undersized one in it. There

are plenty of chubs, dace and shiners which are fun to catch, and edible if you've nothing better. I never buy bait, and seldom use artificial lures, except once in a while I use one of the many wet flies that I inherited from my mother's Uncle Harry, who died in 1942. It is almost always possible to find suitable live bait. In the spring, the caddis fly larvae can be seen walking about the bottom of the river, encased in their homemade shells of vegetation or tiny pebbles. Removed from these cases, the larvae are always successful in attracting fish. Under submerged logs and branches I sometimes find helgramites or other aquatic insect larvae. In the middle and latter part of the summer grasshoppers are plentiful. When none of these are available, I can usually find nameless little insects under rocks or logs on shore, or inside a rotten stump. Once in awhile I am reduced to getting a spade and digging for worms, but that doesn't happen often. After I have caught a fish, then the quest for bait ends, for I can use the flesh of the fish itself for bait. This usually works for about as long as I want to fish; then the remaining fish in the river get tired and stop biting. By that hour, there is always something else I should have been doing long ago.

The most common wildlife, alas, composes insects, particularly mosquitoes, wood ticks, horseflies and deerflies. Mosquito repellent keeps them pretty much away, but you've got to remember to apply it, and to take it with you if you are going to get wet. Every night during tick season we check thoroughly for these little pests, and have, next to the stove, a small jar which bears the label: "ALCOHOL FOR TICKS, DO NOT DRINK!"

The alcohol is used as a place of final repose since wood ticks are small and dense, and do not squash readily. I have not tried to count the corpses in the jar, but would guess that there are probably fifty or sixty. Other insects we view with more pleasure, such as the monarch butterfly which we captured as a caterpillar, and kept through the chrysalis stage until it emerged one afternoon into our kitchen in Chicago. We also enjoy the blackwinged damselfly which flits through the woods looking baleful but behaving harmlessly. Yellow jackets we do not like, for reasons I'll mention later.

There are plenty of mammals, though we seldom see them. Occasionally, when being particularly quiet, I come upon a deer. Once, while fishing, I was approached by a wild mink, which appeared interested in some fish I had recently caught and laid on the bank nearby. Beaver are plentiful, and sometimes I see the head of one as he swims along on his business. Usually, though, I only hear the loud splashing "thwunk" they make when they've seen you and dive quickly out of sight. Once while hunting grouse I managed to shoot a red fox, whose pelt I had tanned and turned into a hat. One November morning, while hunting near the river, I chanced to look across it and saw an otter enjoying the weak sunlight, rolling around in the dry sand. Better than any human facial expression, the animal's motions expressed the kind of relaxed, luxuriant, simple comfort which I associate with the time when, in the Caribbean, I half sat and half lay on an air mattress in the clear warm water near our chartered boat and a pretty girl handed me a drink.

Birds are more often seen and much more often heard, especially at 5:00 in the morning during the latter part of May. A family of Baltimore Orioles spends its summers in the trees near the trailer; I have never located their nest until the leaves drop. Woodpeckers, bluejays and crows, of course, are common, and wild ducks, great blue herons, kingfishers, flycatchers, chickadees and warblers are often seen. On one occasion I managed to stalk a wild goose and shoot him just as he took flight. There are also great horned owls, and one of them frightened my wife by nearly attacking her at dusk one evening. Our favorite was Oscar the grouse, who befriended us one summer. Whenever we walked down the old road from the trailer to the garage, Oscar would appear from the woods along side and walk with us. We did not encourage this practice, knowing that it would be fatal during the hunting season, but we didn't discourage it either, because we enjoyed his company. None of us tried to catch him, or pet him, or feed him; he stayed out of reach of our hands, though not of my camera. He appeared only that one summer, and I suspect that his friendliness cost him his life in the hunting season. I did not go hunting that fall.

Various places have acquired names: two boulders near the frog pond are known as Shaw's Rock and Dodge's Rock, our children having claimed them as their private property. A rock formation that looks almost as if it might have been hewn is the Old Inca Ruin. The Raspberry Patch is where raspberries used to grow in great profusion; the name remains even though now most

raspberries are gathered elsewhere. "Old Beaver House" accurately reflected an abandoned beaver lodge when it was named. Since then, however, the beavers have moved back in and rehabilitated the place. This was the scene of an unpleasantly memorable occasion when my son Dodge, who was then seven years old, decided it would be fun to jump up and down on the pile of mud and sticks. Although the beavers were not then in residence, a family of yellow jackets were, and let us know it by stinging his right ear and both hands and my left ear.

As you may have guessed, my own pleasures at Hogarty are related to its semblance of wilderness. Our children, though they were suitably attracted to frogs and toads, are easily swayed by other aspects, particularly the opportunity to enjoy Wisconsin's relatively relaxed attitude toward fireworks. The firecrackers and cherry bombs that I enjoyed as a boy are banned, but pyrotechnics that do not explode or transport fire over long distances are permitted. A child's first sparkler is a very special event. To be allowed to build and tend fires is a treat that can keep a young person enthralled for hours. When kept within allowable limits the experience serves admirably to teach the young that fire really does burn your fingers when you get them too close or pick up a smoldering twig.

Perhaps the most singular event we experienced at Hogarty occurred when I decided I might like to make a fishing pond by damming a small ravine which had been cut by an intermittent stream that drains a swamp. Since the swamp, the entire length of the

stream and a quarter mile of river below the stream's mouth are all on our land, I hoped that the legal restrictions, if any, would not be onerous. I wrote to the Department of Natural Resources in Madison to find out what those restrictions might be and received in return a sheaf of forms three-quarters of an inch thick and requests for an engineer's hydrolysis report and a drawing of a cross section of the dam. My decision was prompt. I would take the matter to higher authority and pray for beavers. To my great satisfaction, the next time I went to Hogarty I examined the stream and found that beavers had built nine dams across it. Not only were we spared the trouble of filling out all those forms, but all labor and materials cost nothing but some mud and aspen that we had no intention of using anyway. Furthermore, future maintenance will be free except for equally inexpensive materials. To be sure, none of those dams impounds enough water to make a decent fishing pond, and the dam at the entrance to the stream backs up the water in the swamp to a depth that is too shallow to prevent its freezing solid in the winter, so fish won't live there. However, there are still fish in the river, and last time I passed by the flooded swamp, I saw one or two families of wild mallards. And I enjoy wild duck even more than fresh fish.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, I think we made a wise investment.
