



There was a lot of opportunity for learning at the Brenneman household last week with visitors from Wisconsin and an IFYE visitor from England. Peter Lee, center front, points out his hometown on an English map while Fay Mehls, left and Alice Rose, Au Claire County, Wisconsin look on. Looking over his shoulder are hosts, Roger, 11, and JoAnn, 16

## Homestead Notes

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their independence from England. He laughed and said he considered spending the day in bed, but said actual American history was not studied so carefully there.

"We lost," he said casually, and added that the date July 4 has little meaning back home.

He explained that the British probably have more knowledge of the United States than Americans do of the United Kingdom.

"We have more in our newspapers and have more world news than there seems to be here. I scour the newspapers for world news to see what's going on at home. I do miss the world news. The British like to know what's going on in the world."

Of course, Peter does not have to bridge the language gap as he speaks with a very understandable British accent. But he notes, "You do have to be careful. Some words we use back home very innocently we must be careful with here."

For instance, to call a girl homely in Britain is a com-

pliment, meaning that she likes to care for her home. Here, it takes on another meaning.

There are also common English words that are not known in ordinary conversation in this country. Peter says that a lorry is a truck, a fortnight is two weeks and petrol is gasoline.

There are many advantages to speaking the same languages, including, Peter says, "I can understand the play on word jokes."

The Young Farmers differ considerably from 4-H, with the age ranging from 10 to 26. There are three natural groupings, with juniors being from 10-16, intermediates from 16-21 and seniors from 21-26.

"Most clubs tend to be a combination of more than one group," Peter says, "In our group we have all three."

Young Farmers, Peter notes, are "totally democratic, self-financing. We pay for everything, with just educational grants from the government. We are an educational group, non-formal."

"We have a lot of discussions where someone comes in. We meet once a week year-round, although some do meet every two weeks. We don't just stay in the farming community. We may visit a brewery or a bakery."

There are some individual projects, but they also do community service including carol singing and other traditional Christmas services. Last year Peter's group

cleared three acres of bushland that had been neglected and made it possible to return sheep to grazing on the hillsides and hopefully will encourage the return of natural vegetation.

Young farmers also have exchange visits between clubs, and have sports activities. "You could be involved in Young Farmers every night of the week if you wanted," Peter says. "When I was an officer it was a two-three year commitment."

In addition to the very active Young Farmers, there are many other youth organizations. "In our town there are between 15 and 20 youth organizations," Peter says. Dorking, his hometown, has a population of 22,000 people.

Since Young Farmers literally pay their own way, he has some reservations about 4-H and those youngsters who choose to take 13 or 14 projects.

He suggested that if there were a small charge for the project books children might think harder about whether they really wanted a specific project. In that way, too, he feels they might work harder.

The United Kingdom is about the size of Pennsylvania and New York, with 95,000 square miles and 55 million people. Therefore, he does not feel a sense of having a lot of people in this area.

Nevertheless, he understands the problems of land preservation which is a recognized problem in Britain.

Peter relates, "Keeping land in agriculture is very difficult. There is a green belt about London designated for farming and no one is allowed to build on it or construct on it. It takes the pressure off the farmer."

But not all areas are protected by legislation and losing land continues to be a problem.

Peter observed, "The pace of life is faster than I expected. There doesn't seem to be enough hours in the day. American people need to be on the go all the time."

Another observation he made is that family life appears to be more important here than at home. "Family life is terrific here. Mom, Dad and the kids play together and work together. I would say in England the kids are more independent than here."

Peter has a deep sense of the opportunity the IFYE program is affording him.

"It is an educational opportunity which is unavailable anywhere else. You get to know yourself, a side of yourself you've never known. You meet new people and exchange new ideas. You learn so much so quickly you must absorb it. It becomes a stimulus. It is a tremendous learning experience and a teaching experience as well," he says.

He says he sometimes finds it difficult to find time alone to think and to keep up with the correspondence to his family and friends, which he feels is just one more link in the learning experience. He has brought many slides with him, and gave 15 presentations to interested groups in Lycoming county.

Peter is anxious to learn all he can and to experience family life in this country. When he returns to England he is unsure of his future, but would like to get into an industry allied with agriculture.

Whatever he does he will carry with him an understanding of our culture and a deep appreciation for the IFYE program and the host families which gave him the opportunity to spend six months in the land of his dreams.

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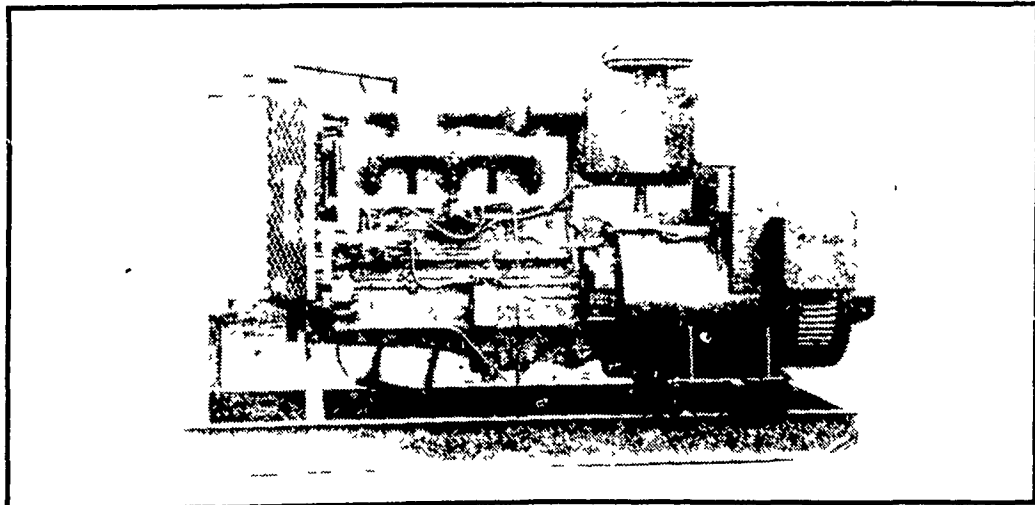
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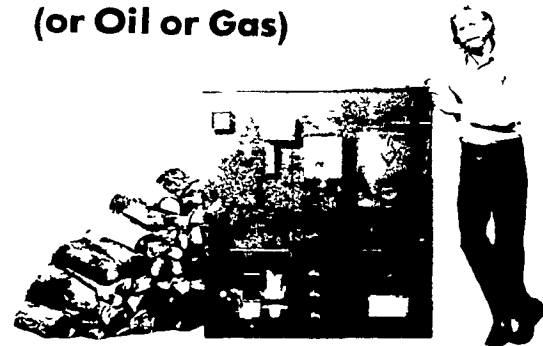
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