NORTH DAKOTA
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Guest Column

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All of us have heard it said that "you don't get something for nothing." In reality the very opposite is true; almost everything we cherish and enjoy we have inherited from past generations.

Last Christmas Warren Whitman gave me a charming pictorial history of the University titled AC/SU. As I enjoyed its many photos and captions and once again saw the people and their accomplishments reviewed, I was impressed by how much we owe to those who have gone before us.

The list of our benefactors is a long one. The names of many are to be found in this delightful volume, and if all of them were to be named, a second volume larger than the first would be needed. Their labors have left us a great heritage.

There are some people, highly gifted, who make dramatic contributions which greatly benefit all future generations. With most of us our contribution is of necessity more humble, but it can be none the less real. Sometimes our best legacy is not tangible; it is not a piece of solid achievement that people can point to. Sometimes our finest bequest is in preparing the way, **clearing the ground** for constructive work that takes place only after we are gone.

We may not be eminent builders, we may not make any earth shaking contributions, but it lies within our power to prepare the way for constructive achievement.

This basic affirmation, that we have inherited the labor of others, can be symbolized by what has happened many times in Alaska. Many an Alaskan trapper owes his life to a snug cabin into which he stumbled, starved and half frozen, after having been caught in an Arctic blizzard. In the cabin he found food, and most important of all he has found wood and kindling carefully laid in the fireplace, so that only a spark would set it ablaze. Someone who was there ahead of him had left everything in readiness, and to this unknown benefactor he owes his life. But it is also a part of the code of the Alaskan trail that anyone who makes use of a cabin must leave it so it can serve the next to come after him. Food must be put there, and the makings of a fire carefully laid, so that the next traveller - perhaps too weak and cold to do much for himself - can quickly get nourishment and warmth.

A similar obligation is laid upon all of us. We who are the debtors of past generations are duty bound to make things better for generations yet to come.

It can be said of us, as the author of the 105th Psalm said of his own countrymen, "They have inherited the labor of the people." But, we are also reminded in Proverbs 13:22 that, "The good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children."

On the Cover: The livestock unit at the Carrington Irrigation Station is one of the four branch stations in North Dakota conducting livestock research. The others are Dickinson, Hettinger and Streeter. Photo by Vern Anderson.

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the cost of constant operation. A self-draining feature prevents freezing of the water in the bowl when the pump is not running. The Mirafount's manufacturer recommends a minimum of four head to keep the waterer operational. However, in periods of subzero cold and cold winds, the authors recommend no fewer than 10 to 15 animals drinking out of this unit. A few animals found it difficult to learn to depress the drinker float to the water in the Mirafount. Manufacturer redesign on later models has reduced this problem. Specific installation instructions and supplies are provided with all waterers and should be followed closely, especially with energy free waterers. Close observation is needed to see that all cattle drink.

Increasing the energy efficiency of currently installed waterers is possible. Extra insulation on the outside can save several dollars in electrical costs each year. Likewise, extra inside insulation and sealing of air leaks can reduce energy loss. Some producers have rotated the waterers 90 degrees to recommended fenceline installation and covered one side to reduce heat loss from air movement under the valve cover. Pride of the Farm offers a thermal blanket, a ¼-inch thick sheet of closed cell foam cut to fit over the water surface to reduce heat loss from surface exposure. Cattle drink by pressing this thermal blanket down. Manually covering fountains with fitted covers or tarps during periods of extreme cold or at night is another energy saving technique.

Several new models of waterers have been introduced recently that are not represented in this trial. Energy saving is the main emphasis of these new designs. New materials and technology offer cattlemen more choices than ever for handling the winter watering chores. Initial cost, energy efficiency, parts availability, presently used waterers and number and kind of animals serviced will all effect what type or brand of waterer is best for each producer. No system is foolproof. All require some attention to insure proper function in the frigid northern plains winters.

This field trial will continue to evaluate new designs in livestock waterers for energy efficiency and reliability under the extreme winter conditions experienced in North Dakota.