

C. C. BEALL, OUR ARTIST-CORRESPONDENT, VISITS ALBANY, LOUISIANA, WHERE A GROUP OF HUNGARIAN-AMERICANS HAVE CREATED A GREAT STRAWBERRY-GROWING CENTER

ÁRPÁDHON La 0

"WOMAN'S DAY"

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# The Cream of the Strawberryers

"Wanted, men of Hungarian descent, to work in sawmill, Maxwell, La." This advertisement appeared in an Ohio, Hungarian-American newspaper fifty years ago. Many Hungarians who saw it promptly left the mines where they were working, packed their bags and with their pockets very little filled with life savings moved to Maxwell. Maxwell today is called Albany.

It was a small mill and the usable trees were about gone so only a few of the very first arrivals got the sawmill jobs. This left a balance of about fifty

families with nothing to do. These people bought as many cleared acres as they could afford and settled down to grow whatever grew on land that up to that time had never deliberately grown anything. Trial and error, trial and error, and years of both, finally revealed that no matter how bad it was for everything else it was just wonderful for strawberries.

Who planted the first strawberry must remain as mysterious as the man who ate the first oyster but whoever it was, *he* was the reason Hungarian Albany became a great strawberry-growing center.

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ALL-HUNGARIAN MENU — A part of the seventy-five celebrants, who cooked and cooked and ate and ate stuffed cabbage, goulash and just everything that a Hungarian menu ever boasted. This was the meal to celebrate the first Spring Harvest Festival. The huge bowl of strawberries was the symbol of their peak and the community livelihood.





**ALEXANDER BARTUS—PREACHER, AND . . .** After he finishes waking up his flock—by ringing the church bell—he preaches to the oldsters in Hungarian, then he wakes up the younger parishioners and preaches to them in English. This is his day of rest. The remainder of the week he teaches mathematics in the high school, keeps the books and writes the checks for the farmers association, is a leader in both the Boy Scouts and the 4-H club, and . . .



**PREMIUM BERRIES—PREMIUM PRICES—**After the berries are picked, Albany's own Hungarian Association crates and sells them to the brokers at Hammond, Louisiana. This is a premium spot for premium berries and premium prices, so the Hungarian is doing very nicely, thank you.



**IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR** — There are no hired hands in the berry business at Albany. Here, three generations grab the day at its very beginning because the berries all seem to ripen at once and have to be picked and picked now. Neither strawberries nor strawberry prices improve with age. The smaller children get sent to school but they pitch in before and after when there is light for picking.



**PINE NEEDLE BLANKETS** — Pine needles, from what's left of the pine woods, are used to blanket the soil around the strawberry plants. This keeps the berries from touching the ground, which is bad for them, and it also makes the weeds so mad that they never happen.



THE FIRST SPRING HARVEST FESTIVAL—Albany had always held the Harvest Festival in the fall because that was the time it had been held in the "Old Country." But why? Strawberries were their harvest and they came in

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April. Someone thought, let's hold our Harvest Festival in April, and so began a new folklore. The background shows the community house. Here, the social side, for both young and old, has its being.



PROUD MAN—He takes pride in the happy accident of just being a Hungarian.

SZANYI BACSI





**PRIZE WINNERS ALL**—Every housewife in the community has earned the right, through performance, to cook the dish she does the best, and the kitchen is filled with performers, working almost independently of each other. Seventy-five guests will be served for a cash outlay of seven dollars and sixty-four cents. This does not include home-grown products.



**LITTLE WHITE CHURCH**—Sunday is over and the Hungarian Presbyterian church can rest again.