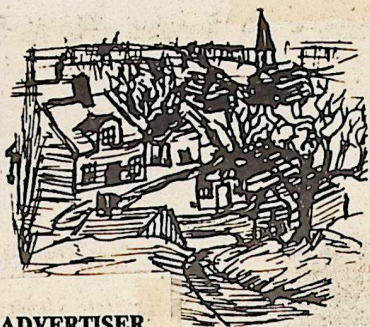


Village View by Andrea Leonard



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Life is ironic. Here we are just getting people in the habit of recycling newspapers -- and we have to shut down the project.

Why? Why can't the program continue? What's happening? First there's all this hoo-rah about saving and recycling. Now, all of a sudden, it's over.

In October the IRS announces it'll print 2.5 million tax forms on 100 percent recycled paper and save taxpayers \$25,000.

And President Ford comes out in support of recycling as one of ten recommendations to combat inflation and conserve energy. The National Association of Recycling Industries (NARI) hails his stand.

"This is recognition at the highest level of government of the very real and specific attributes of recycling in combatting inflation and solving such environmental urgencies as energy and resource conservation and the mountainous solid waste problems" Here, hear!

Anyone who's tired to buy a good quality bond paper recently discovered it's simply not available. Paper products are in short supply.

Yet now there's nothing to do with our old newspapers but throw them in the dump.

Something's wrong. Well, yes, a lot of things are wrong, we all know that. If we could but tackle one problem at a time, and solve it, and then go on to the next, perhaps we'd accomplish something.

Not a month after the President's boost to recycling, the market dropped out from under, like salt-water-ice in a January Thaw. Whoosh!

This month the paper recycling industry announced it's highly unlikely that present waste paper recycling levels could be "maintained under current recessive economic conditions, and the Federal government's failure to initiate policy incentives for recycling."

Perhaps here lies the crux of the problem. Executive vice president of NARI, M.J. Mighdoll, has stated, "the basic and long-term restrictions to recycling at the governmental level have predestined limited attainable levels under present national policies.

"As far back as December, 1973, the Association warned that government policies providing proper market incentives for recyclables must be instituted before successful and sustained collection programs can become a reality."

What is the man trying to say? Just one example of government policy which is throwing used paper into the waste basket (and thence into the Dump) is the higher freight rates assessed for shipping re-useable materials than for virgin materials.

In a country where waste is finally beginning to be seen, once again, as immoral -- does that make any sense?

More study of the situation reveals economic pressures are also affecting the market. The appeal to recycle waste paper brought a deluge of consumer, municipal and industrial response throughout the country.

Then interest rates took off, mortgage money dired up, the building industry nose-dived, and the demand for building supplies such as wall board processed from waste paper simply disappeared.

Members of the NARI put it this way: "The serious curtailment in market demand for paper and paperboard is adversely affected in the recessive economy." That's one way of saying the same thing.

Maybe a possible solution is to ship our waste paper across the Atlantic -- at least people over there seem to want it. Is this really as silly a proposition as it may at first appear? Remember, the British were shipping us tea two hundred years ago. Think about that.

And think about this: Britons were making War on Want and Waste. Londoners have built a waste paper mountain in the carpark of the Greater London Council, parading, pulling wagons, pushing prams,

carrying armloads of old newspapers and magazines.

Hundreds of marchers, led by a bouncy band and accompanied by clowns cavorting along the pavement, have launched the "Great Paper Chase", in an effort to persuade government and local authorities to take a new interest in paper salvage.

The Greater London Council, unlike the powers-that-be in Washington, responded "Welcome!" for paper-hungry Britain realizes salvation may lie in salvage.

Britain's paper shortage is especially acute, for there are comparatively few trees on the crowded Isles, and land to grow more is already under cultivation for food production.

The United Kingdom uses seven million tons of paper annually, with demand increasing about 8 percent a year. Finished paper products, vergin pulp, even waste paper, is imported. Costs of wood pulp are soaring; but even at record prices, there's no guarantee supplies will be adequate. Londoners are scrounging stationery from each other to carry on ordinary business.

Although the British paper industry is fully aware its outstanding potential source of raw material is domestic waste paper, the salvage operations aren't entirely successful.

Nearly three million tons is going unreclaimed, winding up in dumps. Just like us. The difference is their determination to change matters; prices for clean domestic waste paper have been deliberately forced up more than 100 percent within a year.

(There's a tenacity about the British, as you may know if you've ever been in close association with the breed. Cartoonists didn't pick the bulldog for no reason.)

Printing and publishing industries are hard-hit. The Scottish Daily Express had to close down its Scottish printing operation in 1974, in part because of skyrocketing paper costs.

Newspapers and magazines -- with considerable personal interest in the matter -- are full of articles encouraging school and church groups to improve their finances by collecting waste paper.

And -- heed this -- there's a steady fusillade of parliamentary questions from MPs urging more government support for paper recycling.

Right now, in Barnstable, we're out of the paper-collecting business at the Dump. We're searching for someplace to store it; does anyone have a vacant barn where paper could be laid up for future need?

To keep things moving at the Dump, the Reclamation Center for glass bottles and jars and metal cans is opening on Saturday, December 7, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., and daily thereafter (except Sundays) during regular Dump hours.

RULES: EVERYTHING MUST BE CLEAN! Metal caps and rings must be removed from all jars and bottles, and glass separated by color. Paper labels must be removed from cans, both ends removed, cans squashed.

Finally, we're to have a "Bizarre" (whatever that is!) at the Dump. If you've got something almost good enough to keep but not quite, and you take it to the Dump, turn it in at the Gate House for addition to the "Put-n-Take Department".

Here's the situation: We need to conserve space at the Dump. Waste is wrong. There was, and there'll be again, a market for waste paper. There's a market for reclaimable glass and metal. What you no longer want may be just the thing your neighbor needs.

Now -- all we need is a clever mechanic to come up with a safe way to crush glass and squash cans -- and a place to store waste paper until the government and the economy do an about-face, and start working with the people instead of against them.

The people are responding, as they always do when the need arises. Ironic, isn't it?