CHAPTER XII
THE PART PLAYED BY DAYLIGHT SAVING
How "City Farmers" Were Enabled to Take Time by the Forelock

BECAUSE of the Daylight Saving Law war gardens added far more to the nation's food supply in the season of 1918 than would have been possible otherwise. This law was in operation during seven months of the year, from the last Sunday in March until the last Sunday in October. The impetus which this gave to the movement and the material gain resulting therefrom were almost inestimable. That the measure increased by many millions of dollars the value of the food grown is undoubted.

An idea of what this extra hour of daylight meant to the war gardeners of the country may be gathered from the actual amount of working time it presented as a free gift to the home food producers. This extra hour given each afternoon to the war gardener meant a total of 182 hours during seven months of twenty-six working days each. Multiplying this figure by the number of war gardeners in the United States—5,285,000—it gives the stupendous aggregate of 961,870,000 hours of time, or 329,407 years of eight-hour days.

More than 300,000 years were thus added to this one industry alone by a single piece of legislation, laws similar to which had been adopted by fifteen other
countries before the United States followed their example in the spring of 1918.

To secure the passage of the Daylight Saving Law the National War Garden Commission used its influence, and many of the leaders in the war-garden movement throughout the country urged upon Congress the vital need and the value of this statute. The congressional committee which had the measure in charge showed its realization of the effect the law would have on gardening by mentioning it most prominently in its report. This document said in part:

In view of the increased food production which will be brought about under the bill, the comfort and the convenience which it will bring to laborers and the public generally, and the saving of expenses, especially relating to light and fuel, it is believed by our committee that the measure should be enacted.

That the measure accomplished all that was expected of it, and was of inestimable value in helping the United States in its gigantic war preparations, is the testimony of the nation. In a statement on the subject at the conclusion of the first year's operation of the law, Senator Calder of New York, author of the bill, called particular attention to its benefit to war gardeners. He said:

The Daylight Saving Law which became effective on the last Sunday in March has more than fulfilled the prophecies of its advocates. It has really turned one hour of night into day. People live by custom. They rise in the morning by the clock; they eat their meals
NO AGE LIMIT ON PATRIOTISM

Although more than ninety years of age, Mrs. Thomas L. Edwards, of Oberlin, Ohio, looked after her own war garden and did all the work except the initial plowing. Then when canning time came she put up a lot of vegetables for herself and sent some as a Thanksgiving present to relatives. She was born in Wales and had a number of nephews and grand-nephews at the front.
by the clock, and go to bed by the clock, so that during the time this law has been in operation a vast majority of the people of this country have been awake one hour more of daylight and asleep one hour more of dark than they were formerly. This additional hour of daylight has been most helpful to the men, women, and children of the nation who have taken advantage of it to plant war gardens, thereby not only relieving the strain upon the farm but to a very considerable degree tending toward economy in family expenditures. It has also saved in gas and electric bills not less than ten per cent. of the money formerly spent for this purpose. In addition, it has saved during its seven months of operation this year at least one million tons of coal. It has afforded in the construction of cantonments for our army, in the manufacture of munitions and war supplies of every character, and in the building of ships one hour more of daylight for the men engaged in these industries.

It is a universal practice for working men and women to begin their day’s labor at eight o’clock and in some industries at seven o’clock in the morning. They cannot be induced to work before seven o’clock, but, with the long evening produced by this law, those who labor have been induced to work additional hours at night where the exigencies of the occasion demanded it. Without question this bill has been most helpful in the great war work in which this nation was engaged.

The Daylight Saving Law will be in effect again in 1919 and each succeeding year unless it is revoked by further legislation, for the bill as passed provided that “at two o’clock antemeridian of the last Sunday in March of each year the standard time of each zone
shall be advanced one hour, and at two o'clock ante-
meridian of the last Sunday in October in each year
the standard time of the zone shall, by the retarding
of one hour, be returned to the mean astronomical time
of the degree of longitude governing said zone." Its
benefits, therefore, will continue, and as the number of
home food producers increases the resulting gain will
be greater.