



The Malabar Farm News

A publication of the Malabar Farm Foundation
Winter
February
2023



Christmas 2022 at Malabar Far

The annual Christmas Candlelight Tours of Louis Bromfield’s Big House were a grand success, with nearly 700 guests enjoying the fully decorated home and live music during the first two weekends in December. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this event possible.

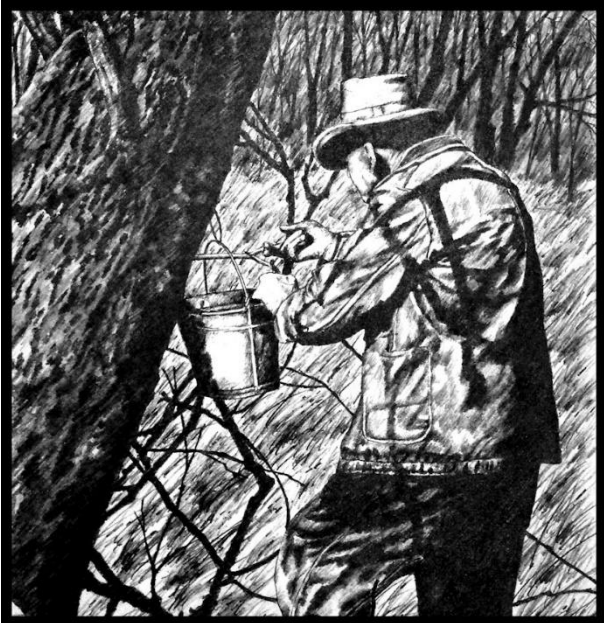


Louis Bromfield and friends enjoying a Christmas party in the Big House in the 1950s.

2023 Malabar Farm Maple Syrup Festival

The tornado of June 2022, ripped through Malabar Farm’s maple sugar bush, destroying or damaging many of the sugar maple trees traditionally tapped to make maple syrup, placing the 2023 Maple Syrup Festival in jeopardy. However, the festival will continue — with an estimated 500 trees being tapped.

Dates for this year’s Maple Syrup Festival are Saturday and Sunday, March 4 & 5, from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, March 11 & 12, from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Call Malabar Farm State Park, 419-892-2784, or check the official Ohio State Park website www.ohiodnr.gov (Ohio State Parks & Watercraft), for additional information.



February Tapping
A drawing by Thomas Bachelder

A Mystery Solved

The recently published book, *Soldier Boy: Louis Bromfield, Letters From World War I, 1917-1919*, reproduces a series of letters home to family and friends that Louis Bromfield wrote while driving an ambulance in France during the First World War. Many of the letters that Louis sent to his parents were subsequently published in the Mansfield newspapers of the day. In all of these letters, dating from 1917 through 1918, the home of his parents is given as Mansfield.

However a letter published by the *Mansfield News* on January 21, 1919, titled "Mansfield Boy 'On Permission' Spends Grand Time In Lyons," identifies Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brumfield [Brumfield being Louis's birth name] as "now living in Washington D. C." This has always been a puzzle, as nowhere else are the Brumfield's identified as living in the nation's capital. That conundrum has now been solved, thanks to information provided by Mary McKinney, Adult Reference Librarian for the Mansfield-Richland Country Public library.

On September 3, 1918 the *Mansfield News* printed the following article.

ENTERS WAR SERVICE
Charles Brumfield Takes Civilian Position in Washington

Charles Brumfield has accepted a position in the expert business administration department of the war department at Washington D. C., and accompanied by Mrs. Brumfield will leave next Sunday for the capital to assume the duties of his new position. Business experience gained through association with local banks, service as county treasurer and more recent employment with the Mansfield Sheet and Tin Plate company has fitted Mr. Brumfield for the duties of the position which he will fill and for which he is very qualified.

Two sons of Mr. Brumfield are now in the service. Louis Bromfield is with the U. S. Army Ambulance corps and now in France, while Charles Brumfield [Jr.] is in the U. S. naval reserves.

At the end of the war Louis Bromfield went directly to New York City to find work as a writer. His parents followed him there, with Charles finding work in the New York customs house. After their son became the famous novelist Louis Bromfield, Charles and Annette changed

the spelling of their name to match his. Charles Bromfield died in New York in 1943. After her husband's death, Annette Bromfield moved to Malabar Farm, dying there in 1947. Both Charles and Annette are buried in Olivet Cemetery at Malabar Farm.

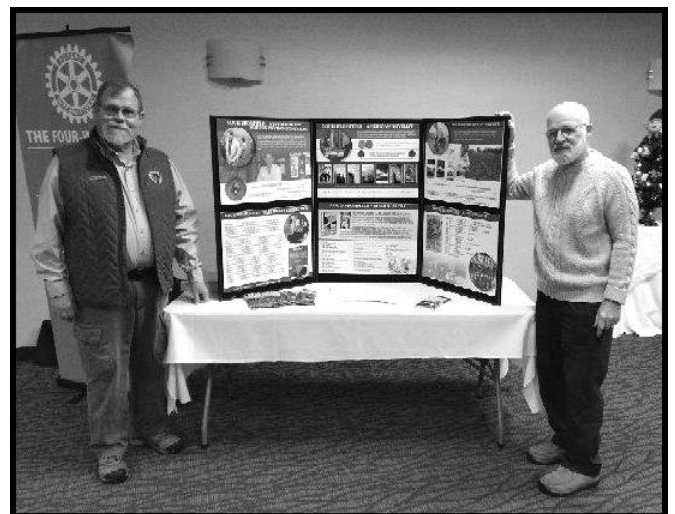


Charles Brumfield, ca. 1915



Malabar Farm On The Road

On December 20, Malabar Farm State Park naturalist aide Mark Sommer and Malabar Farm Foundation president Tom Bachelder gave a talk about Louis Bromfield and Malabar Farm to the Mansfield Rotary Club luncheon at the Park Hospitality and Conference Center on Park Avenue. A question and answer session followed the presentation.





Listening to the Past and Seeing the Future: Louis Bromfield and The Newest New World Order

By Paul Sukys, Professor Emeritus
North Central State College

Sometimes it is comforting to see that even Louis Bromfield can get it wrong. Let me explain. Recently, I read a novel titled *Bombs Away* written by Harry Turtledove. In *Bombs Away*, Turtledove imagines what would have happened during the Korean War, had President Truman followed General MacArthur's advice to use atomic weapons against Chinese Communist troops.

In the novel, Both Truman and MacArthur are confident they can take this step because China and North Korea have yet to develop atomic weapons. Moreover, neither Truman nor MacArthur believe that Joseph Stalin will drop atomic bombs on the United States.

Truman and MacArthur are wrong. Not only does Stalin use atomic bombs, but he does so repeatedly, until much of the United States and, in retaliation, much of Russia are destroyed.

What does this have to do with Louis Bromfield? Well, in 1954, in *A New Pattern for a Tired World (New Pattern)*, Bromfield labels the threat of atomic war as "the mightiest problem with which the world has ever been faced." Bromfield goes on to complain that Eisenhower has supported "vast expenditures for atomic warfare in the form of new atomic and guided missiles" despite being fully aware that, stockpiling such weapons, could lead to "the end of civilization." (*New Pattern*, pp. 254).

In order to prevent such a catastrophe Bromfield demands that the United States and the Soviet Union join forces, open trade barriers, and permit the transfer of resources, food, and goods, among the nations in each bloc. This move will stabilize the economies of each member nation and the overall economy of each bloc. Once that is done each bloc can work on raising the economic status of the undeveloped nations outside the two consortiums.

The problem is that many small nations and former colonial states were, at that time, impatiently pushing for

immediate independence and autonomy, something which the United States and the Soviet Union, Bromfield says, cannot support until their own houses are in order. Meanwhile, the ambitions of the former colonial states and newly minted independent nations must be put on hold because their actions threaten to destabilize the entire global community.

At this point certain contradictions become apparent in Bromfield's strategy. On the one hand, he offers his plan to avoid the threat of warfare, including the possibility of atomic war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Yet, on the other hand, he offers a solution which he admits will not work without discouraging the undeveloped nations which demand immediate autonomy.

Moreover, should those nations persist in pushing for instant autonomy, they will have to be forced to stand down. Ironically, the only two nations that have the power to force the undeveloped states to stand down are the United States and the Soviet Union. Bromfield says it this way:

"Since order cannot be maintained without power, in any world in which there is peace, the responsibility for keeping it in order and peace must rely upon the great nations possessing power. It is therefore necessary to concentrate upon agreement, understanding and peace among the great nations without troubling ourselves too much for the moment about . . . disorders among all the small and undeveloped nations whose very existence, economic or otherwise, is dependent upon the great nations." (*New Pattern*, p. 265).

If this sounds like Bromfield is promoting aggression to eliminate violence, it is only because he is. Bromfield admits this when he writes, "Aggression may be morally wrong in theory, but in practice it can in the long run provide the greatest possible security and benefits for the world, for the smaller nations an opportunity for lasting peace." (*New Pattern*, p. 266.)

This brings us full circle. The flaw in Bromfield's plan is that he wants to eliminate violence by using a different kind of violence. Inevitably, one of the two major powers will find that it cannot hold back the ambitions of one or more of the undeveloped nations in its bloc, without resorting to violence up to and including atomic weapon. So, you see, if you read Bromfield long enough, you find that, even he can get it wrong.



In 1952 Louis Bromfield hosted the New York City Ballet Company at Malabar Farm. In this photo the group is posed on Mt. Jeez. Louis and daughter Ellen are on the left.



In 1955, Louis Bromfield collaborated (as librettist) with George Balanchine, co-founder and choreographer of the New York City Ballet Company, on a ballet about Johnny Appleseed. Following Louis Bromfield's death in March of 1956, the Johnny Appleseed work became part of a ballet titled *Audubon*, which itself was later absorbed into a new ballet titled *Birds of America*. Unfortunately, *Birds of America* was never finished.

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The Malabar Farm Foundation

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