

Mapping the Farm

The Chronicle of a Family

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"It manages to be both a personal testament and an absorbing chronicle of agrarian history... There's a rhythm and balance to each seasonal task and pleasure and Mr. Hildebrand is brilliant at detailing them."

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"A must read...beautifully paced, even-handed... [Hildebrand's] rhythm is as sure and steady as a two-step."

—(*Minneapolis*) *Star Tribune*



Earlier in the morning Ed brought the cattle up from the orchard by spreading hay in the corral and calling "COME BOSS! COME BOSS!" from the cab of his pickup until twenty-five white-faced Hereford cows, each with a calf in tow, were strung out in a long line behind him. They moved slowly up the lane and around the barn to the corral. That they came so willingly says something of the relationship between farmer and cattle, an implied contract, biblical in nature, that says, "I'll fatten you and then you'll return the favor." Rounding up calves is the one event for which Ed requires more manpower and not just another machine. It's also my only chance to play cowboy, although this is Minnesota and nobody rides a horse."