

Where a Milker Replaces a Man

A Visit with G. D. Mode of Bonny Brae Farm, Vankeek Hill, Ont.

S. R. H. Hodgins, Associate Editor, Farm and Dairy.

A 250-acre farm with 50 head of pure bred Ayrshires and but one hired man? The answer is a mechanical milker. For many years Mr. G. D. Mode, of Vankeek Hill, was prejudiced against milking machines. He was afraid that such a machine would work havoc in his pure bred herd. But avers which he has grouped together in his power house, it would be impossible for himself and his hired man to run his farm and keep up his large herd of pure breeds.

Bonny Brae Farm is the home of such well known Ayrshires as Eileen, who produced in one year 12,825 lbs. milk, giving 685.48 lbs. butter fat, and Hazel of Bonny Brae, a Canadian champion three-year-old Ayrshire, who produced 22,129 lbs. milk and 861 lbs. of butter fat in her first two years milking. The farm is beautifully situated on a hill about a mile and a half distant from the village of Vankeek. The present owner, G. D. Mode, received the farm from his father, who in return had handed down to him.

The former owner of the farm, G. D. Mode's father, was well known among his neighbors as belonging to the hard working school of old-time farmers. The push which characterized him had been handed down to the present owner, G. D. Mode, who is recognized as an exceptionally good farmer and an enthusiastic breeder of Ayrshires. To him belongs the credit of building up the splendid herd of Ayrshires which has made his farm famous. His father had tried out several different breeds of cattle, but it was for Drummond to start in persistently building towards his ideal of a good Ayrshire herd. And that he has gone far toward realizing this ideal is well known to those acquainted with Ayrshire breeding in Canada.

The visitor to Bonny Brae Farm gets a good impression of the place on his arrival. The farm "looks well from the road." The present owner established a fine lawn between the house and the road in the space that was formerly taken up by some unproductive fruit trees. Along one side of the driveway is a fine perennial border. The house is one of the big comfortable houses to be found only on farms a couple of generations removed from the settler's cabin. It is equipped with electric lights and running water, as are the barns which, although not new, are comfortable, and with their two silos give a good substantial look to the farm.

The Power House.

The outstanding feature of Bonny Brae Farm is the efficient power house which stands between the house and the barn, and cuts down labor in both. Were it not for the labor saving devices which are to be found in this house, much more help would be required in the running of this large dairy farm, and life would not be so sweet for Mr. and Mrs. Mode.

The power house is 10x30 feet and is divided into three compartments. In one compartment stands a 6 h.p. engine and an electric dynamo. The engine turns an overhead line shaft, which runs the length of the building, working the machinery in the different compartments and projecting from the south end of the building far enough to hold a pulley which is used when wood is to be sawed or when other similar jobs need doing. The compartment holding the engine and the dynamo is the width of the building, and eight feet long.

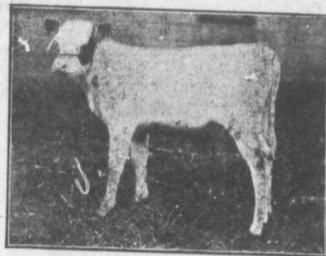
Next room contains the pump and vacuum tank of the milking machine, a pipe running out from here to the barn and along in front of the cattle. This room is also the width of the building and 10 feet in length. A stove has been installed for heating the water used in washing the milker, cream separator and the churn. Mr. Mode has had two taps put on the vacuum pipe close up to the tank in this room. He is therefore able to attach the milking

apparatus here and wash up his milker in this room instead of being compelled to carry the hot water out to the barn.

The next room (which is the one entered first) has a cream separator, a pump from which water is pumped to the barns and to the cream house, a churn and a washer. The engine runs at the same time the milking machine, the cream separator, the pump and the electric dynamo regularly twice a day. It also runs the washing machine on wash days and the churn whenever it is required to do so, but butter is not usually made on the farm, the cream being shipped to Montreal.

The Farm Lighting System.

The electric lighting plant used on the farm of Mr. Mode has been in use for five years and has given excellent satisfaction. Twenty-eight lamps supply the necessary light in barns and in the house. The current is generated by a small electric dynamo. Sixteen jars upstairs store the current, and light is always on tap. Outside of the cost of installing the system, which was about \$500 altogether, Mr. Mode considers his cost of lighting as practically negligible. The extra work of running the dynamo does not appear to make any difference with the engine when it is running. One-half horse power is enough to



A Promising Youngster.

This is a young son of Eileen, Mr. Mode's famous old cow. As long as such type young stuff is coming on prospects for the future of the herd are bright.

and after an inspection of this machine Mr. Mode decided to install one.

"Milking those 32 cows twice a day in addition to the farm work was too much," said Mr. Mode, looking back on those dark days. "It used to take Mrs. Mode and me until eight o'clock every night to get done with the milking. Now we start in milking at a quarter to five and at six o'clock we are all through and are able to jump in the car and go off for the evening. Mrs. Mode never has to come out to the dairy barn now."

"If dairymen realized for one moment what a milker will do," continued Mr. Mode, "everyone with over a dozen cows would have one."

"Do any of your cows object to being milked by the milker?" I asked.

"Not in the slightest," replied Mr. Mode. "We have only one cow in the stable that was at all difficult to milk. When we used to milk her by hand we never attempted to do so without first tying her feet. Since we have got the milker, however, we have had no trouble with her."

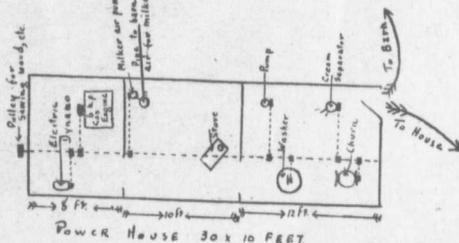
Thirty-eight cows are now milked at Bonny Brae Farm with the milker. It is a four unit machine and milks 26 to 28 cows in an hour. Mr. Mode handles the milker entirely himself. He looks after the machine and carries the milk to the separator. The hired man strips the cows, assisted by Mr. Mode's two boys of seven and eight years, the oldest of which can strip 10 cows. "It is not a big task to strip the cows after the milker," states Mr. Mode, "if the milker is used during the whole of their lactation period. This is especially true with young heifers that have never known any other method of milking. They let their milk right down."

"Five gallons of gasoline runs the engine a week. It therefore costs me \$2 a week to milk 36 to 40 cows, separate the milk, pump the water to the barns and house, generate electricity and run the washer."

A concrete cream house stands next to the separating room. This has a tank in which running water is provided to cool the cream, and another compartment in which the cooled cream is placed in ice.

Farm Practice.

Mr. Mode is a dairy farmer. His herd of 80 pure bred Ayrshires is the main thing on the farm. All (Continued on page 7.)



operate the dynamo. It certainly seems to bring farm life closer to what it should be when one is able, by turning a switch, to light up the house or stable instantly.

Enthusiastic Advocate of Milker.

"The greatest labor saver on the farm," said Mr. Mode, as we inspected his power house, "is the milking machine. No one could be more prejudiced against milkers than I was until I had given one a trial. I was always afraid that it would ruin my pure breeds. A year ago last June, however, I found myself up against it for farm help and installed a milker. The 30 cows on which I used the milker last year have all freshened since, and none of them shows the slightest ill effects from being milked in that manner."

A year ago in June, Mr. Mode's hired man and wife left him just as haymaking was coming on. Mr. and Mrs. Mode were left with 32 cows to milk morning and evening in addition to the ordinary farm work. They did this for two weeks and by that time were pretty well disgusted with dairy farming. Mr. Archibald, from the Experimental Farm, Ottawa, happened along and recommended that they get a mechanical milker. He invited Mr. Mode to come out to the Experimental Farm and see their work.

The barns and silos on Bonny Brae Farm as they look from the road.

Photograph taken on a dull rainy day.