

## A Venture in Hogs.

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gate was left ajar. The funny part was those two sows never seemed able to find the open hole through which they had gained entrance. First they were in the oat field, then the corn field, and they even ventured into the garden.

Several young sows were selected from the two litters to increase the herd of breeding stock. Some were sold to other breeders, and a few were put in a pen to fatten for the market. Of all the farm operations, the pigs interested me the most. Was there not a possibility of securing thousands of dollars for a single pig? Pigs increase in number so fast that in spite of our various setbacks the future looked bright. Shorts, oats, a little barley, and some tankage and skim-milk formed the ration of the growing pigs. They had all the green feed they cared for. Corn was purchased to mix with oats for fattening the hogs, but after feeding those winter pigs for nigh on to a year we found that we were contributing a good deal towards the keep of the pigs instead of the pigs helping to keep us.

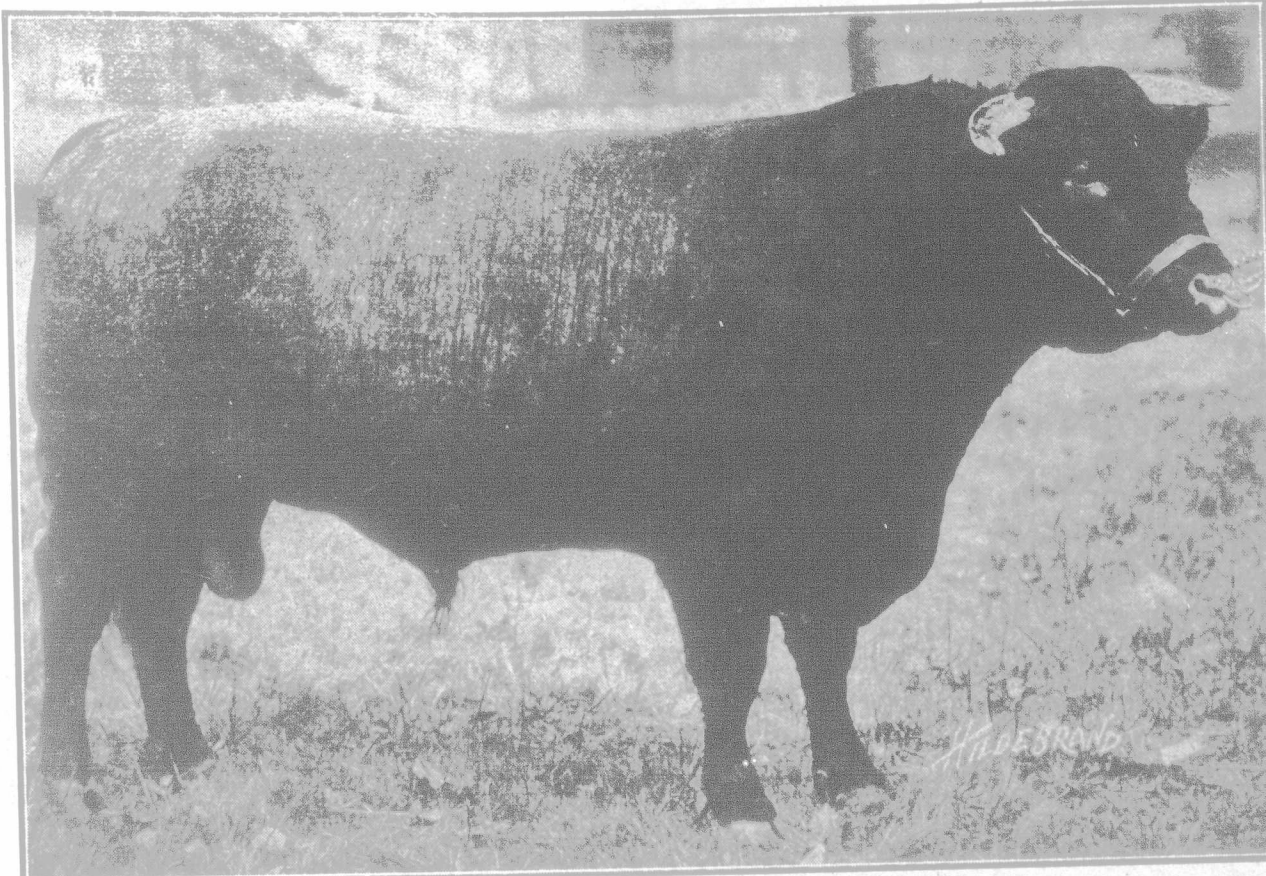
There were two of the spring litter that we were particularly proud of. If ever pigs were worth ten thousand dollars then these surely were. As fair time approached we conceived the idea of exhibiting, and showing our neighbors that we could raise pigs. Consequently with this aim in view, a little extra feed and care were given. But, alas! we evidently overdid it, as one sickened and died, although the other continued to thrive. Either its skin was more elastic than the other, or else it had greater control over its appetite and knew when it had enough. Thus our ardent spirits were again dampened. At the end of the year our hog inventory showed stock on hand, two brood sows, four sows, one fat pig, and the books had total receipts from sale of pigs \$580, plus experience; cost of feed, \$610.

The question now was how to save our fall litters. The previous winter's experience made it clear that our piggery was unfit for a farrowing pen or for rearing young pigs. After conversing with other breeders and reading all literature available on hogs, we decided to put a loft in the pig pen, space the boards on the floor at least four inches apart, and use it for storing straw. This would at least absorb some of the dampness and leave less space to heat. The next move was to put a plank floor in part of each pen for the pigs to sleep on. Guard rails were put around the farrowing pens, and the windows were hinged to open inward at the top to give ventilation, while two foul-air ducts were run to the roof. Needless to say, we had better fortune with the litters than we had a year previous, but yet there was some mortality, a few runts, cripples, etc.

The following spring we had six sows farrow and the problem of securing a market arose. Advertisements were placed in farm papers and there were many inquiries but we found that from twenty to twenty-five dollars was the limit most would pay for weanlings, but at that they paid. A few out-standing individuals were selected to be kept to maturity, and we did get over one hundred dollars for a six-months-old male, and nearly two hundred for a sow about due to farrow. But this is nowhere near the high figure which stood out a year and a half previous like a powerful magnet drawing us into the pig business.

As time went on and we learned more about rearing and feeding, we increased our herd and met with a fair degree of success. There is nearly always a fair demand for choice breeding stock, both sexes, but all pigs farrowed are by no means choice; in fact, less than twenty-five per cent. go into that class, and the majority of the remainder are fattened for the market.

During the past few years when feeds were high, one had to move carefully in order to make wages at feeding hogs. Our books show that while we lost on some litters we made well on others. The thriftiness of the pigs and the amount of green feed they would consume were determining factors in making a profit. We soon discovered that free range in summer on clover, rape, vetches, etc., and a yard to run in during the winter with a liberal quantity of roots in the ration, were the means of placing the balance on the right side of the ledger. Cows and hogs make a good combination, the latter utilizing the skim-milk to advantage. Without pasture and roots,



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