

Best Clover Hay Made by Curing in Coils

Editor, "The Farmer's Advocate":

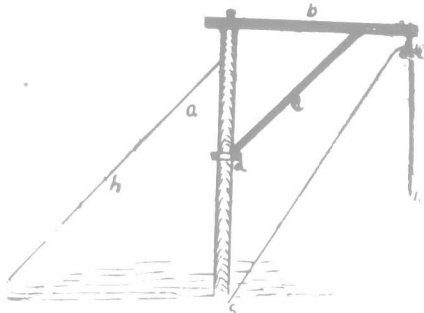
In reply to your enquiry re our method of handling the hay crop, I would like to state, at the outset, that I feel I am by no means an expert in haymaking, but am anxious to get a deeper knowledge of this very important part of farming. I shall be glad if, while getting this knowledge, I am able to give others some little help.

Our hay is mostly clover. There are at least two reasons why clover is grown: It fertilizes the soil, and makes excellent fodder. We have found that, on our soil (clay loam), we get best results from a seeding of 8 lbs. red clover, 3 to 4 lbs. alsike, and 1 to 3 lbs. of timothy per acre. This gives a thick growth, prevents timothy getting woody, and keeps the clover from becoming stalky. It can be readily seen that, except when the clover fails, the percent. of timothy is very small.

We try to begin cutting early, from the twentieth of June to first of July, depending on the season and the urgency of other work being done at the time. If a start can be made when the heads are all in full bloom, by the time the haying is done the clover is beginning to get too mature. Early cutting has at least two advantages: It allows a crop of clover seed to mature after the hay has been taken off, when the clover is in full bloom or a little past full bloom the crop contains its greatest amount of digestible food nutrients. If allowed to get much past this stage, the leaves begin to break off. In this way the most valuable part of the hay is lost—the leaves being very rich in nitrogen.

We are, perhaps, a little old-fashioned in our

method of haymaking. We follow a modified method of green curing. As we coil the hay, we cannot conveniently use the loader. But the scarcity of labor is making us think seriously of practicing some more rapid method—the use of side-delivery rake and loader. Although I have never seen a whole field of hay handled in this way where at least a part of it was not either burnt with the sun, blighted with dew, or washed out



with rain, yet I believe, with care, a good quality of hay can be made.

Early in each day we cut what hay we can take up that day. The tedder is started and kept going whenever it will hasten the curing process. As soon as the hay is fit, it is raked and coiled up, and, in most cases, allowed to stand till the next day before being hauled in. It is unwise to allow the hay to get too dry before raking. Under no consideration should it be allowed to lie till the leaves break off. We prefer to leave the hay in the windrows a few hours, or open the

coils out before drawing. But it is surprising how green clover hay can be taken up without danger of spoiling, providing it has not got wet.

One year a neighbor helped haul the hay. When it was in the barn, the heads were nearly as crimson as when cut. He was certain it would spoil. We put about 36 tons in two bays, 24 x 30. The following spring, our neighbor helped us a few days in seeding, and his horses left their oats to eat the hay.

We use hay fork for unloading, and consider it handier and more rapid, and, consequently, more economical than slings. Our fork is the large size, and what is true of the hay fork is true of all farm machinery. It pays to put more horses on larger implements. One man can handle four horses as easily as he can one.

STACKING HAY.

We seldom, if ever, stack hay. To move the hay from stack to barn in winter means a loss of the most valuable part of the hay. When the barn will not hold all the crop, it pays better to put up the hay in the barn, stack the grain and thresh early. But where it is imperative that the hay crop be stacked, the horse fork can be used as well as it can in the barn. This is done by means of using a crane.

In the diagram, a represents a strong pole, set four or five feet in the ground, supported by rope or wire; b is a stick of timber, 5 x 5 inches, supported by brace; c, at d, the brace swings on a strong hinge. The rope passes over block at e, and is drawn by the horse in such a manner that when the fork rises and strikes the stop-block, it is swung over the stack. The load may be dropped on any part of the stack desired. Elgin, Ont. J. P. JOHNSON.

FARMING IN THE TEMISKAMING CLAY BELT.

The recent Legislative tour into the Temiskaming District awakened a great deal of interest, particularly among agricultural M. P.'s, as to the character of the soil in the "Clay Belt," and how it wears under cultivation. It has a peculiar whitish subsoil and a black, loamy surface soil of varying depths, and the somewhat hurried run on the T. & N. O. R. train through what was perhaps not the most advanced portion of the district from a farming standpoint, did not contribute materially to a proper comprehension of the subject. We have therefore submitted the following questions to a number of men living in the country, who, by observation and experience, are in a position to give first-hand information on the points raised:

1. How many years have you spent in the district?
2. What crop or crops have you grown or seen grown in succession?
3. What rotation of crops and manuring do you advise?
4. How does the land appear to wear under cultivation, judged by the quality and quantity of the crops produced? Give instances.
5. Is it improved in most localities by drainage?
6. What do you consider a fair estimate of the cost per acre of taking off the bush, and preparing for the first crop, deducting the value of the timber?
7. What problems in the clay belts would an experimental farm be useful in helping to solve?

"HAILEYBURY" writes:

1. Nine years.
2. Four or five crops of clover, with fair success.
3. Yes, drainage improves the land.
4. In parts of the district the timber is sufficiently valuable to pay the cost of clearing; in others the timber is of little or no value, and the cost of preparing for crop will range from \$15 to \$25 per acre.

JOHN McLELLAN.—1. Four years here this fall.

2. I have grown timothy, clover, potatoes, oats and peas, all of which do well on cultivated land.
3. Did not have enough of cultivated ground to pay much attention to rotation. First get the land cleaned, then seed down to hay, and in a few years the stumps will pull out.
4. The land is greatly improved by cultivating and manuring, which warms it up.
5. Very little underdrainage is done yet.
6. In my opinion it does not pay to clear land and pay mining wages, when there is so much land in the Canadian West. As for the timber, it has been practically skimmed off by the jobber.

D. M. FERGUSON.—1. Three and a half years.

2. I have grown only garden produce myself, but I have seen all crops grown to perfection that are grown in Eastern Ontario, and clover and hay that I have never seen equaled.

3. Ordinary rotation.

4. The longer under crop and cultivated, the better. I have meadows that have been cropped from seven to nine years, and the last crop was the best. I have seen the finest samples of wheat in the field and after being threshed, and the pea crop is excellent, and oats on sod between four and five feet in height, and yielding in a case I know of between 75 and 80 bushels per acre.

5. Yes, but it is easy to drain.

6. This is harder to answer, as so much depends on circumstances. If a man is in a great hurry he can make it cost him \$50 an acre, if he goes at taking out green stumps, but if he gives fire, nature and time (say three years) a chance, I should say \$15 or \$20 would do the work.

7. I should say everything in farming. I mean by that all the grain and root crops, fruit-culture, stock-raising and dairying. This is an excellent grass country. I have the notion that the clover (of which I have seen three crops in one season) is the natural fertilizer, and if plowed under in the fall will give a seed-bed like a garden.

W. BENNET.—1. Two years.

2. On new land, fall wheat, followed by oats and seeded down.
3. Fall wheat seeded with clover, followed by oats with clover, followed by peas, then oats again with clover and timothy, and left for three crops of hay.
4. The more it is worked the better it gets, even without manuring. One field in this section has been cropped for 11 years, with no manure, and produced a good crop every year; also several others nearly as long.

5. Yes.

6. In the green bush, about \$20, valuing timber at \$20; in burnt district, somewhat cheaper.
7. An experimental farm would be valuable (a) in ascertaining if fruit trees can be grown successfully; (b) determining the best rotation of crops; (c) in trying different varieties of roots and grains to suit the soil and climate.

GEO. S. ROYCE.—1. Over 4½ years.

2. Potatoes, turnips, oats, peas; and I have seen wheat and barley grown and good crops reaped.
3. Potatoes or turnips first, then wheat or peas, then barley or oats, then seed down with timothy and red clover and little alsike.

4. It wears well, excepting when the top soil gets burnt all off; even then it will produce good hay crops. I have seen three crops grown in succession of potatoes, and good crops vary: Potatoes, 100 to 200 bags and over per acre; peas, 30 to 40 bushels per acre; oats, 40 to 100 bushels; wheat, 25 to 45 bushels; hay, 1 to 2½ tons per acre.

5. Yes, some of it is improved, and some does not need drainage.

6. From \$10 to \$75 per acre.

7. It would be of great benefit, as there are hundreds of men coming here who want to farm, and know nothing about it. If this country is to prosper, the farming must be looked after better than it has ever been done yet.

"NEW LISKEARD."—1. Five years.

2. Peas, oats, wheat, barley.

3. After clearing up land, sow oats, wheat or barley, and seed down with 5 pounds timothy and 10 pounds red clover. Cut two seasons, then break up, sow peas first year, then with one of the others, then seed again (or hoe crop). This keeps a sod in the land which will keep it open and friable.

4. It wears well, but it must not be cultivated or tramped when wet, or it will bake so hard one can do nothing with it. I have about a quarter of an acre for a gradon which I have worked well and manured every year for five years. It was hard and white when I started, now it is very dark and loamy, with fish-worms in it about the size of one's finger. But what the land wants is manuring or a grain crop, plowing in or keeping a sod in it, as I said before.

5. I don't think there is any drainage done in the district, unless it is out of a cellar, then the growth is wonderful. I think the one thing needed is drainage.

6. Fifty dollars an acre; that will clear it off clean. One can't count anything on the timber, as it costs, in most cases, the full value to get it to market.

7. The best kind of fruit of all kinds for the district, also grains and grasses, drainage, and the best system, if it will pay to use fertilizers, and the best way to get rid of many weeds.

NEIL A. EDWARDS.—1. Five years.

2. On the new-cleared land, generally we just take off one grain crop, and seed down to timothy and clover; succession of hay in most new parts, good crops each year, and if the present pace continues, this year's growth promises to be the best. But in sections that are cultivated, a succession of grain crops, including fall wheat, spring wheat, barley, peas, oats and potatoes.

3. First year, potatoes or oats; second year, peas; third year, fall or spring wheat. I would advise top-dressing the wheat with all available manure, and seeding down to common red clover. Fourth year, cut clover twice for hay, or I would strongly advise the raising of clover seed, if we could procure a clover-huller, as the bumblebees are very numerous on the heads of clover while in bloom. All the clover seed I have seen grown here was in the first crop grown, the seed being glossy and very plump. This rotation I would consider sufficient to keep the land up to the highest state of fertility.

4. As I travel, when going down to New Liskeard, about fifteen miles of this district, I have a favorable chance of witnessing the several farms under cultivation from year to year. On those farms, especially taking into consideration the style of cultivation pursued, it must be very rich land to produce such good results.

5. The highest lands here are self-drained, there being ravines or watercourses occurring generally eighty or one hundred rods apart. This will be sufficient drainage in those places, with the exception of a plow furrow in some places when the land is cleared. But we have also the flat, rich bottom land; this land will need a system of drainage. Larger tile for main watercourses, with smaller tile to intersect with main