

# FARM AND DAIRY

&  
RURAL HOME

## INNER SECRETS OF THE SUCCESS OF A TOP NOTCH HOLSTEIN BREEDER\*

**A Young Man, without Previous Farm Experience and Knowing Nothing of Live Stock, Broken in Health and Requiring a Means of Making a Living, Started Breeding Holstein Cattle—Information Gathered First-hand by an Editor of Farm and Dairy from Mr. John Arfmann.**

"**A**LM at nothing and you'll hit it!" Jno. Arfmann, of Middletown, N. Y., aimed high with his Holstein cattle, and he has hit it rich. It was that bought the \$10,000 bull at public auction at the Syracuse sale two years ago. Last July one of the editors of Farm and Dairy, while over in New York State visiting Holstein breeders, went to see Jno. Arfmann, and gathered some information and facts about his work for the benefit of readers of Farm and Dairy.

Mr. Arfmann is a young man. He is 38, yet looks five years less. Ten years ago he was in a grocery business in New York city, broken in health, and ordered by his doctor to a different life and an atmosphere away from the city. He had been in New York city since coming over from Germany as a boy 14 years of age.

In order that he might recover his health and gain his necessary livelihood, Mr. Arfmann decided to take to farming. He commenced on a small farm of 56 acres, owned by his uncle, Mr. John W. Arfmann, of New York city. The farm was exceedingly stony. It is located outside the city limits of Middletown, N. Y. The cattle on it were of ordinary scrub breeding. Mr. Arfmann knew nothing whatever about farming; in fact, he says, "When I came out here I knew nothing about cows. I might have gone up the road and have seen on one side a cow and on the other a horse. I could tell which was which, but that was about all.

### FARM PAPERS HELPED HIM

"I had to learn. I read farm papers with great interest, and I noted in them from time to time some mention of pure-bred cattle and what other people were doing with them. I read of cows selling for \$400 and \$500 a head and even higher. I thought to myself that these must be great cows. Why my uncle's cows would not bring over \$40.00 a head. I saw some cows advertised at \$200 and \$300 and more a head. At the fair I saw some of these pure-bred cattle. They interested me greatly.

"My uncle's farm was not making me any money and the cattle, scrubs as they were, did not make me any particularly profitable returns. I was paying out—paying out money all the time it seemed, and I was making very little money."

### MAKES HIS START IN HOLSTEINS

After concluding that there was something better than scrub cattle for him Mr. Arfmann bought

ed to hear of the Woodcrest Farm, owned by Mr. Dimeck, at Rifton, Ulster Co., N. Y. He went up to see the Woodcrest cattle, and while there he was so favorably impressed with them that he bought four females, and brought there home to his farm. He paid a price of \$200 a head. Folks at home and his neighbors thought him crazy. They talked of him going out of his mind, but Mr. Arfmann did not allow this to bother him. He was at once anxious to get rid of his scrubs, so anxious in fact that he sold five of them for \$75 in order to get them off his farm.

Excellent luck attended Mr. Arfmann on his



**Bought for \$60, Later Developed a Value over \$3,000**

This Holstein cow, Dichten Calamity, is the cow which Mr. John Arfmann, of Orange Co., N. Y., bought for \$60 and after giving her an official test and making a \$20th record, refused \$5,000 for her, and accepted \$1,000 for her bull calf. It always pays to test good cows and to know what they are capable of doing. The article beginning on this page tells an interesting story of the success of Mr. John Arfmann, who was a grocer in New York City, and later turned Holstein breeder. He was visited last summer by one of the editors of Farm and Dairy.

first purchase. The cows he bought when they came in gave him three heifer calves, and he was then fairly started in the pure-bred Holstein business. For two or three years he did not do anything particularly with his pure-bred cattle. He had only a few individuals until after he got started in official test work. He had started dealing a little in pure-bred Holsteins, and he soon found out that what the people wanted were cows with records. Incidentally he also learned the type of cows that people wanted, and through his dealing experience, which, although only in a small way, he gained a deal of information; this now stands him in good stead.

Not knowing anything about how to test cows, he read all he could in his farm papers about the work. He also wrote to Mr. Gardner, the Superintendent of Advanced Registry. This was after

his first attempt at record making. Mr. Gardner gave him much information and encouraged him. At this time he went to see some of the breeders who were making a success of record work. After coming home from these visits, having seen the shape other breeders' cows were in— they being in a very fleshy condition, and quite fat—he went at the record work as best he knew how on his cattle, putting into practice what he had seen and heard.

### REWARD FOR WORK AT RECORD MAKING

In his second year of testing he made one \$2-b. record. Speaking of his experience in this regard Mr. Arfmann said, "This record put new life into the game. After I got that record I sold the bull calf from that cow for \$1,000. This made things look a little different. I had bought this cow at a public auction sale, paying \$60 for her. Afterwards I refused \$3,000 for this cow."

(A picture of this cow we have reproduced in connection with this article).

Mr. Arfmann is now one of the most successful Holstein record makers in the United States. Last winter he had four bows that made records of 32 lbs., 33 lbs., 34 lbs. and 35 lbs. butter respectively. There is not another breeder, it is said, in the States with a small herd that has made as many big records as Mr. Jno. Arfmann. This past year he drew \$197.30 prize money from the Holstein-Friesian Association. He earned this in three months testing his cattle, and he was deprived of over \$100 earned of additional money on account of the rules of the Association allowing any one breeder to win only a certain number of prizes.

### 50 SCRUBS VS. 15 PURE-BREDS

"You must test your cows and let people know what they can do if you would make a success of this Holstein business," continued Mr. Arfmann. "It takes some work extra of course. I would advise anyone who keeps cows to get into this pure-bred business, and instead of keeping 50 as they now do, keep 15 good ones, and at the end of the year, with the price of grain and feed as it now is, one would have much more money to show for his trouble, and a deal more of satisfaction.

"A point about making money out of Holsteins, which many breeders overlook, is the matter of advertising. In my early experience with Holsteins I used to advertise in the local papers and sell a bull calf at \$25.00. Now if one of my calves come and is not worth at least \$100 when born, I do not think much of it. To reach satisfactory buyers for good stock one must with his advertisements get into papers of the right circulation, going to farmers who want this good stuff."

### CATTLE FOR YEARLY RECORD MAKING

Like unto the other leading breeders, we visit-

\*This is the 6th article that has appeared in this special section secured by an editor of Farm and Dairy last summer while visiting breeders in New York State.