

The Cow for the Western Farmers

It is significant that the International show at Chicago should, the past three years, offer a prize for "The Farmers' Cow," the requirements for entry to that class being the possession of dual or general purpose characteristics, in other words, the cow to be of what has been termed the double-decked variety.

It is not proposed here to debate the question as to the existence of such cows, the markets and show-rings have answered that in the affirmative; neither is it intended to argue whether this class of cows may be bred, that also has been shown in the affirmative.

It may be broadly stated, without fear of successful contradiction, that the type of cow referred to fills the bill or role, which the name given her would indicate,—viz., the farmers' cow. She is of no especial breed, but if a grade will be found to contain more of the blood of the Shorthorn than of any other breed; if a pure-bred, she will in all probability be of the Shorthorn or Red Polled breeds.

It is this type of cow which is responsible for the bulk of the dairy output in Iowa and other prairie States as also in Manitoba and parts of Ontario, consequently her improvement and breeding warrants attention by the agricultural community.

The special-purpose dairy cows are noted for milk yields, and should be in the hands and under the care, of first class dairymen, specialists in dairying, and in no sense farmers in the general and ordinary sense of the term. Unfortunately, as a result of the doctrines preached by some professors of dairying, who by the way, in so doing are (to use a slangy, but expressive term), butting-in to the field of the animal husbandman, some farmers have been diverted from the true faith, and have been induced to worship false gods, viz.—dairy bulls. The reference (which we regret it is necessary to make) to some dairy professors' assumption of the work of others is made, as it throws some light on a lot of agitation engineered by those misguided but worthy gentlemen.

Not all dairy professors, fortunately, stray outside their proper spheres, which is solely and entirely the teaching of improved methods in the manufacture of dairy products; but those who do stray, invariably cause untold damage to the cattle industry of the country in which they live, by their lack of breadth, exact knowledge and experience, and by their advocacy of the use of dairy breeds for all farmers wishing to produce milk or cream for market; further, it is well known that the leading men in the science of dairying are those confining themselves to that line of work, without the inclination or time to arrogate to themselves the work also of the animal husbandman. The farmers of the country therefore, should, on questions pertaining to animal husbandry, get their information from the specialist on that subject (the animal husbandman), a man who from dealing with all breeds dispassionately, is enabled to give reliable, un-

biased, and therefore valuable advice. This little digression will therefore put the general farmer on his guard against the advice of the crank, who would only have cows bred to, and from, bulls of the dairy breeds, and who overlooks entirely the dividend-yielding qualities of the dual-purpose or farmers' cow.

It is worthy of mention here that in the leading dairy show in the English speaking world, this animal, the farmers' cow, wins in competition against other breeds, and attracts a great deal of attention by reason of her robust constitution, heavy and persistent milking capabilities and her tendency to flesh when not in milk.

Many agricultural advisers have dilated on the difficulty in breeding the farmers' cow, and have made a mountain out of a molehill, largely by inculcating the additional sophistry that success in breeding for a certain type can be attained in a short time, or with little care if their pet methods are followed. This false doctrine is responsible for some abandoning useful cows, which might be improved by proper methods, to try a short cut in the breeding of milkers by making a radical and violent outcross with dairy bulls.

What are the proper methods to follow to breed the farmers' cow?

Firstly, procure good milking grades or pure-bred Shorthorn cows, low-set, wide and deep chested, wedge-shaped looking from above down and from before back, good handlers having a pliable skin, medium in thickness, with square-set well shaped udders. Secondly, these cows should be bred to a pure-bred bull of the best type of Shorthorn, (if, however, the Red Polled breed is preferred, a bull of that variety may be used), the son of a heavy milking dam, a cow with records of seven to ten thousand pounds of milk per period of lactation. Thirdly, the calves must be weaned and hand reared, and a record kept of each cow's milk, the non or poor producers being fed for the butcher at the first opportunity. A truism was uttered recently by an ex-professor of animal husbandry:—"the great cause of deterioration in the milking abilities of the Shorthorns is the practise of letting the calves milk the cows."

Below are appended the three year records of Jerseys, Shorthorn and Red Polled herds, the milk from which is sold to supply a large milk business. It is interesting to note how closely the breeds approximate in milk yields, and it would appear how necessary culling is in each herd no matter how bred. Especially noteworthy are the following individual records of cows in each of the three herds, demonstrating beyond cavil (none question their ability to flesh when called upon to do so), the general purpose character of the Shorthorn cows listed:

Jerseys—Gala has been in the herd eight years and given a total of 49,154 lb., or an average of 6,144 lb. milk; My Brunette has been in the herd six years and given a total of 49,007 or an average of 8,167 5-6 lb. per annum.

Shorthorns—Broadhooks 3rd, has been in the herd 5 years and given a total of 38,656 lb., an average of 7,731 1-5 lb. per annum; Darlington Cranford, 5th has been in the herd eight years

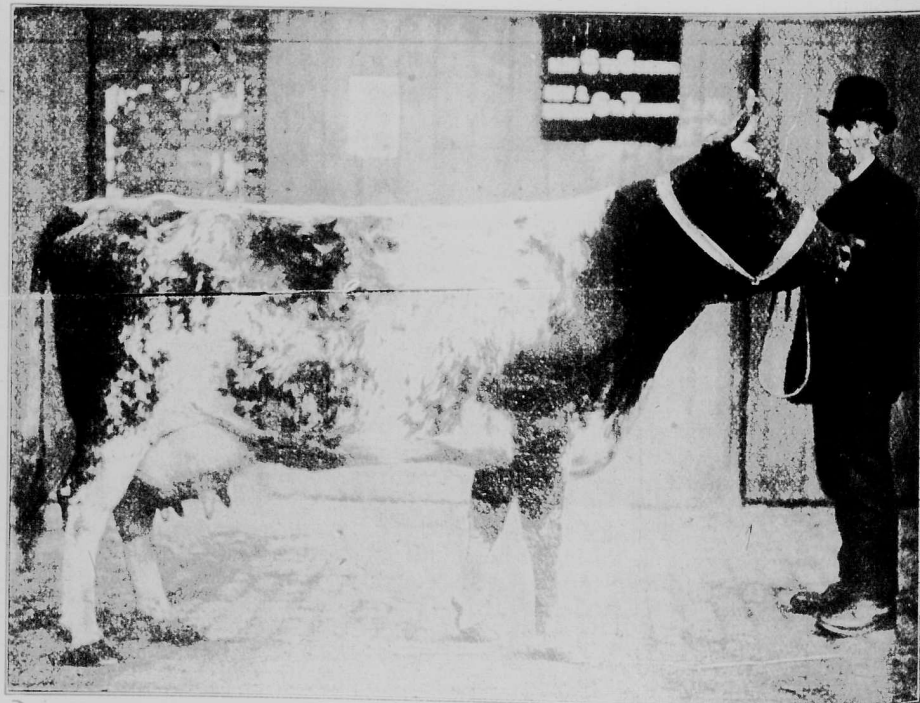
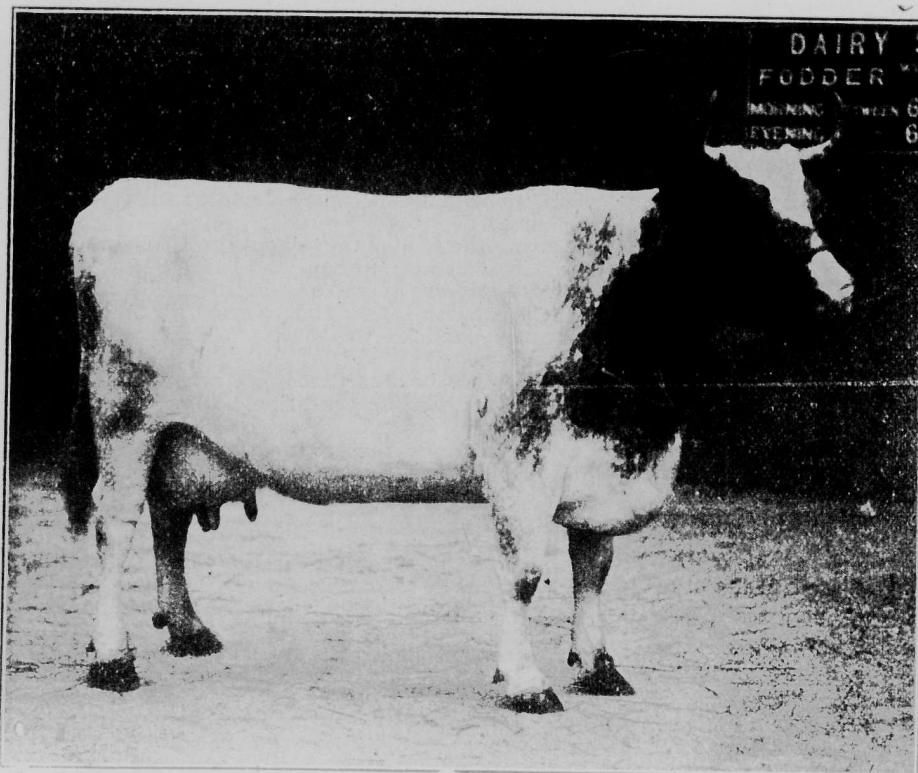
and given a total of 80,030 lb. an average of 10,003 1/2 lb. per annum; Furbelow Countess 2nd, has been in the herd four years, and given a total of 34,261 lb. an average of 8,565 1/2 lb. per annum; Red Rose has been in the herd six years, and given a total of 46,931 an average of 7,821 5-6 lb. per annum. Dorothy, has been in the herd five years, and given a total of 41,504 lb. an average of 8,300 4-5 lb. per annum; Moppy Gem 5th, has been in the herd eight years, and given a total of 62,006 lb., an average of 7,750 1/2 lb. per annum; Sweet Briar 30th, has been in the herd five years and given a total of 36,318 lb., an average of 7,263 3-5 lb. per annum; Tulip Leaf, has been in the herd four years, and given a total of 37,795 lb. an average of 9,448 1/2 lb. per annum; Warwickshire Hettie has been in the herd four years, and given a total of 32,547 lb., an average of 8,136 1/2 lb. per annum.

Red Polled—Clarissa, has been in the herd three years and given a total of 36,700 lb. an average of 12,233 1/2 lb. per annum; Fly, has been in the herd ten years and given a total of 74,130 lb., or an average of 7,413 lb. per annum. Necklace Grand 7th, has been in the herd four years and given a total of 31,314 lb., an average of 7,828 1/2 lb. per annum; Necton Daisy, has been in the herd six years and given a total of 42,360 lb., an average of 7,060 lb. per annum; Ruth, has been in the herd nine years, and given a total of 58,501 lb., an average of 6,500 1-9 lb. per annum.

One of the fallacies which beclouded the right of the Shorthorn and its grades to the term dual or general purpose, is that only thin, bony, hat-rack bovine specimens can be good milkers; on this point we quote the recent opinions of Robert Bruce, one of the most noted Old Country authorities on all that pertains to cattle:

"There is an ever increasing demand for milk and milk products in all the great centres of population, and owners of herds have come to recognize that there is no more profitable animal on the farm than a cow, whether pure-bred or otherwise, that can produce a calf to grow into a quickly maturing animal for the block, and for at least nine months in the year make a milk record of 700 to 800 gallons. The result of the neglect on the part of our breeders to give milk production the attention it deserves, has in my opinion led to the much too general idea that it is necessary to sacrifice many, if not all, pre-conceived standards of excellence in the direction of form and flesh before one can expect to own a deep-milking cow.

I venture to assert that there are really no sound grounds for the belief that a narrow-chested, bare loined and thin-fleshed cow must be selected if we are to expect a deep milker. At once acknowledge that a large proportion of the wide-chested, full-fleshed cows are disappointing dairy animals, but until it has been proved that form has anything to do with the milking powers of an animal, it can quite legitimately be held that such may not be the case. It is at once granted that the cows of most of the distinctly dairy breeds are moulded upon different lines from those from a showyard Shorthorn.



TYPES OF THE MILKING SHORTHORN COW, THE SOURCE OF THE ENGLISH MILK SUPPLY

Having spoken of form having anything powers of a cow, although a different opinion management has almost subject. No doubt, milking strains deserve to be given to the management of the even deep-milking cow prove of little value.

After a somewhat all matters connect parts of the world, I that speaking gene reared in the poorer comparatively spea others reared upon ri anything likely to e of a superabundance operate against the after life.

I am quite aware breeders, who give milk, hold a firm belief bulls the produce of entirely with them i part ways with then sacrifice form and in and peculiar shap powers.

A fair description would read as follow or red and white in three latter colors, inance of Shorthorn feminine in appeara 1100 to 1350 lbs. li paratively large not in the neck and nar soft pliable and only an exception to find mossy hide desired and with well develo large milk wells, a r meatiness, yet a ves its texture or consi ever possible, the g possess an authentic duction amounting f and should give an four per cent. or ther

Some hold firmly broken colors (red milkers,—color has lacteal function. To and heifers, do not al keep at the milking first a perceptible sl tioned, endeavor by to freshen the cows. can be done natura calve down in the f aid in freshening the (b) Keep milk res (c) Use bulls fro records. (d) Cull out and do not come up to th Comparative yield of milk):—

Jerseys:—

A.
B.
C.

Shorthorns:—

A.
B.
C.

Red Polls:—

A.
B.
C.

A cows are retaina for a full twelve mo duced during the t which have gone ou months. A yields a C are not but are av and the time spent in the cows being culled Sask.

Sylvester Campbel selected to judge Shor mer but who decline recently.