

# Our School Garden

Boys and Girls from three provinces tell about their school gardens

## FIRST PRIZE LETTER

I saw your offer in The Guide, and since we have a very successful school garden I thought that I would have a try for a prize. This year is the third year we have had a garden, and last year we won the silver trophy cup.

Each pupil has two plots, measuring nine yards by three yards, making each plot twenty-seven square yards, and one foot extra allowed for a path all round them. One of the plots is for vegetables and one for flowers. Altogether there are twenty of these plots. Our garden is not in the school grounds. We hire an eighth of an acre on account of it being better land. The vegetables are sown in rows, but the flowers are in designs. For instance, one girl has the design of a flag in red, white and blue. There are seven kinds of vegetables, namely, turnips, beets, parsnips, carrots, onions, cabbages and potatoes. We have ten kinds of flowers. These are: Pansies, nasturtiums, pink, petunias, sweet Williams, bachelors' buttons, morning glories, sweet peas, mignonette and poppies. The garden was first plowed seven inches deep, and then harrowed, hoed and raked thoroughly.

There are five little children coming to school, so five of the older children help them to keep their gardens tidy. Our teacher has offered two prizes for the best little one's garden. The first prize of one dollar and the second prize of fifty cents is to be given to the two bigger ones for the best little one's garden. This is to help the little ones to get a better garden. The main idea of the garden is purely educational, not to make money, altho we expect to sell our produce and get a little return for the labor we have put on it. The garden has formed a subject for drawing, arithmetic and composition. Each child has kept a diary describing the preparation of the soil and the putting in of the seed. When the plants come up we will put in the cultivation of them. We have also drawn designs of the garden. There is no doubt of the children liking the garden work, for my part I always enjoy the time we spend there. Last year during the summer vacation the children and the teacher spent two days of the holidays in the garden, but we have not decided whether we shall do the same this year or not.

In the fall each school gives three prizes, first, second and third, for the best exhibit of vegetables. The first prize exhibit goes to the municipal fair to compete with the first prize exhibits from other schools. From the remaining vegetables, a collection is made, which represents the school exhibit, and is taken to the fair, for the best of which a shield is awarded. Our school won this shield last year, as we had the best collection of vegetables in the municipality.

ERIC OLORENSHAW,

Dundurn, Sask.

Age 14.

## SECOND PRIZE LETTER

I read of your offer in The Guide, and thought I would write and tell you about our school garden, and by doing this I might be able to win one of your prizes and also let other children know what we are doing in the way of school gardening.

Our school grounds are about two and one-half acres in size. The grounds being neither fenced nor plowed, we secured a piece of land from one of the trustees for our garden. Our school garden is about one-sixth of an acre in size. The garden is laid out in twenty-five different plots. The centre one is used for a flower garden, three for experiment plots, and the rest are individual plots held by each pupil. Each individual plot has a flower garden in the centre. Vegetables are: Potatoes, beets, cabbages, onions, parsnips, carrots and turnips. The garden was plowed and then harrowed by one of the trustees, and apart from that we did all the work, and we all take care of the garden. Each pupil of the school has his own plot.

The organization in our school is that each of the seven older children have two smaller ones to look after. If the older pupil's little ones have a good garden, he will get a prize. The garden is mostly for our school work, like nature study, drawing and arithmetic. We will have more arithmetic when we sell the vegetables this fall. We also want to make it pay. Up to the present time the garden has been used for school work in this manner: First, we had to draw a diagram of the whole garden, marking off the plots with a one-foot path all around it. Then we drew a diagram of each individual plot. We have used it in nature

The letters here published are the results of the School Garden Competition announced in The Guide for May 31. The first three are the prize winners. There were many other letters almost as good as these, some of which we are publishing. Some teachers read the competition announcement to their pupils and had several write, a splendid method indeed. Some suggested they could write more in the fall, so we may hold another competition later. Watch for it.

study, and small questions, such as, "What is the best method of seeding and how many potatoes will each get." We also become more friendly with the teacher and she gets to know us better. The garden is popular among the school children.

We will not have any summer vacation this year. Had we been having one, we would have come over once every week to weed and hoe the gardens.

We had a school fair last year and the year before, and we expect to have another this fall. After the ground was ready and each pupil knew his own plot, we put in the garden, each child be-



The field crops section of an Alberta school garden. Pupils using the cultivation.

ing very careful to get it put in right. It did not take the seeds long to germinate and come up. The plants are small now, but we hope they will be very fine vegetables this fall, because we want to win some of the prizes given at the fair. Amongst these prizes are three shields and a silver cup.

We put in part of our time weeding the gardens to make them look as best we can. We have started thinning out our vegetables, and as soon as we get a rainy day we will transplant our cabbage plants.

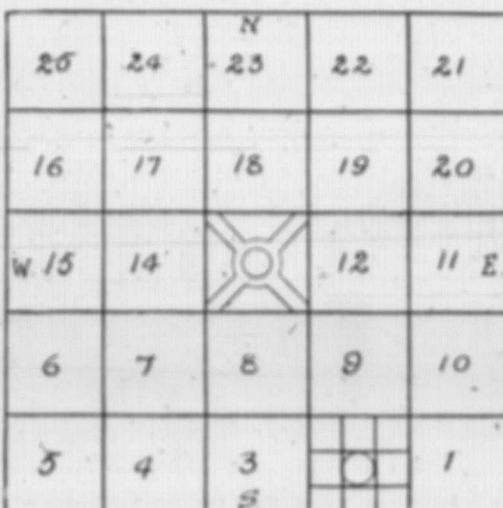
ORRIN PRENNELL,

Simmons School, Allan, Sask.

Age 14.

## THIRD PRIZE LETTER

Our teacher and we pupils, having made up our minds to have a garden at school, the trustees



Plot of school garden at Allan, Sask., described in the second prize letter. The little plot in the corner is an individual plot.

broke a strip in the upper end of the school yard for it. This strip we tried to work into a garden, but finding it impossible to do so, we were nearly going to abandon the idea altogether when one of the neighbors, seeing how disappointed we were, offered us a corner of his field, which is opposite the school. This offer, you may be sure, we took up and started to lay out our plans again.

The garden is about one hundred and fifteen by sixty-five feet, and is made up of flower beds, vegetable gardens and grain plots. The flower beds are on the north and west sides, near the road. Next to the flower beds come the vegetable gardens, which are four by five feet. Each child has one of these gardens, numbering in all seventeen plots. The grain plots are laid out in the rear where they will not interfere with the appearance of the other gardens.

The land being first disced and harrowed, the first thing we did was to lay out our beds. This done, we made walks and raked our beds, taking out all lumps and making them smooth. We larger ones made our own, but the smaller ones had to have a little help. With the aid of a string we made six drills in each vegetable garden, in which we planted our seeds. In the flower beds, which we have in common, we seeded poppies, alyssum, nasturtiums and pansies. In the back row of all these beds we seeded sweet peas, with the exception of one plot which is a wild flower garden. We had our cabbage, cauliflower and tomatoes seeded inside the school beforehand, and we set them out when all danger of frost was over.

For a couple of weeks after we seeded them everybody was waiting in expectation for the time when the plants would come up. Finally, the radish peeped above ground and the other vegetables and flowers soon followed. We all became very interested now and started visiting our gardens every day, always finding that something new had appeared. The last to come up were the cucumbers, which we planted too deeply, retarding their growth. Our duty now is to weed our gardens, which is not so pleasant as the seeding but has to be done. In vacation each pupil will have to take care of her own vegetable garden; and the flower beds can be weeded at the same time.

If we find that our vegetables are good enough in the fall we will take them to the fair. After we harvest them, we are going to sell the vegetables and give the proceeds to the Red Cross Society. I think a school garden makes us take more interest in our school. We also use the plants in agricultural study. We are all very proud of our garden and all hope that next year we will have it in the school yard.

HULDAH FRANKLIN,

Haultain School, Duhamel, Alta.

Age 15.

## KEEP NOTES ON THEIR GARDENS

Our school house and grounds lie directly west of the road allowance. The size of the grounds is one acre. Maple trees are planted on the west and on the south sides of the school house. It is between the trees on the south side and the fence that we have our garden plot.

Excepting for the plowing, we boys and girls, under the instructions of our teacher, did the work. First we took the hoe and broke up the hard lumps, then we levelled it off with the rake. Sweet peas, which need something to climb on, we planted in a row along the fence. Next to the sweet peas we have our vegetable garden. The width of the garden is six feet. We got our paths straight by putting a string from a stake at one end of the garden to a stake at the other end just as tightly as we could pull it. The operation was repeated at the other side.

The length of each garden is seven feet, thus making the dimensions of the beds seven by six feet, with one foot of path between each plot. The smaller gardeners had a plot about one-quarter the size of the larger ones. Each person made four stakes, one for each corner of his garden. The stakes were about two inches square and two feet long, painted white.

We planted such things as onions, corn, peas, beets, radishes, etc. Most of the gardeners used a board to get their rows straight with. They laid the board across the garden and with their hoe made the row. I made my rows by a tightly drawn string. I placed the string and then drew the hoe along it. Our flowers are on the north side of the

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