

FARM AND DAIRY



We Welcome Practical Progressives Ideas

& RURAL HOME

The Recognized Exponent of Dairying in Canada

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham

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Testing and Breeding His Way To Success

How a Young Norfolk County Breeder Discovered the Producing Ability of His Herd and is Taking Advantage of It

MANY men are accomplishing good things in a quiet way on the farm. If little is heard of them it is chiefly because they refrain from heralding their own achievements abroad. They are too busy doing things to bother much about who hears of them, and it is only when they are discovered by some one in the publicity line that the work they are doing becomes known outside the circle of their immediate acquaintances.

Such a man is Ashton Somers, of Norfolk county. While on a trip through that county recently I heard of the good work Mr. Somers was doing with his herd of pure bred Holsteins. Naturally I became anxious to make his acquaintance, to see his farm and stock, and to learn something of the methods by which he was achieving success. Mr. Somers was busy at the spring seeding when I called and could not be expected to spend much time talking, so with his consent I strolled over the farm alone, taking notes as I went. Later, Mr. Somers told me that he and his father had worked the farm together until four years ago, when he took full charge.

The Barns Remodelled.

Two years after taking over the management of the farm, Mr. Somers remodelled the barn, putting in cement floors and up to date stable fixtures. New siding was also put on the barn and a good coat of paint added, thus improving the external appearance very much. One item of interest which was added at this time to the internal fixtures was a large cement trough. It was placed in one corner of the stable in a fairly large box stall. In the winter the cattle and horses, a few at a time, are allowed to come to the trough to drink. This seemed to me to be an ideally located drinking trough for animals in the winter. A certain amount of exercise is given without exposing them to the wintry weather, and the water in the trough is raised to a temperature much higher than it would be if it were outside. A similar trough is provided in the yard for use in mild weather. A windmill is used for pumping the water from a nearby well into an elevated

W. G. ORVIS, Associate Editor, Farm and Dairy

tank. The system is giving excellent satisfaction. The farm consists of 150 acres of the fine clay loam which is characteristic of Norfolk and sur-

rounding counties. Ten acres is kept under alfalfa, renewed only when the stand makes it necessary to do so. Ten to 12 acres is in standing bush, and the balance of the farm, excepting yards, buildings and four acres of orchard, is all other calves kept on the farm, with no special attention given her until she freshened the first time. From this time on she was placed with the best cows kept on the place and given the same care and feed as they received. All of her heifer calves have been retained in the herd, and under the system practised have grown to be good large cows of good dairy type.

The Herd History.

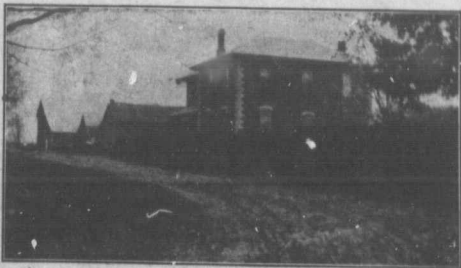
When asked if he considered this amount enough, Mr. Somers said, "We never have any trouble in getting a calf of clover in this district. The reason that I do not sow alsike or timothy is that I only take the one crop of clover and then 'fow the land.'" Surely this is enough evidence of the fertility of this farm, and the likelihood of it ever being depleted as long as this practice is followed. Enough corn is grown to fill a good sized silo. From 25 to 40 head of cattle are usually kept.

About 11 years ago Mr. Somers' father bought a pure bred Holstein calf named Nora Darling. She was allowed to grow and develop like other calves kept on the farm, with no special attention given her until she freshened the first time. From this time on she was placed with the best cows kept on the place and given the same care and feed as they received. All of her heifer calves have been retained in the herd, and under the system practised have grown to be good large cows of good dairy type.

Four years ago, when Mr. Somers took over the management of his farm from his father, the cows were to be sold. But he had worked with them, and in a sense, grown up with them. Speaking of them, he says: "I could not see the wisdom of letting them go off the place." Consequently he made arrangements for keeping them, borrowing money for this purpose. His neighbors laughed at him because of this, contending that their high class grades were as valuable as his pure bred

for producing milk for factory purposes. He resolved, however to stay with his cows, as he felt he had things in a fit condition to do so with justice to himself and his animals.

In the meantime a heifer had been sold to Mr.



A Norfolk County Farm Home.

The house and other buildings on the farm of Ashton Somers.

rounding counties. Ten acres is kept under alfalfa, renewed only when the stand makes it necessary to do so. Ten to 12 acres is in standing bush, and the balance of the farm, excepting yards, buildings and four acres of orchard, is all



The Barn and Silo on the Farm of Ashton Somers.

Photo by an Editor of Farm and Dairy.

taken up in the regular rotation of crops. Forty to 50 acres of this is sown each spring with grains, such as oats, barley and roots, and nearly all is seeded with red clover. This seeding is done at the rate of eight to 10 lbs. to the acre.