

Discovering the Boarders

By W. J. Elliott, Principal Olds School of Agriculture

What the Alberta Government is doing thru its Schools of Agriculture to build up Productive Dairy Herds on the farms thru Cow Testing work

Many readers of The Guide will have heard of the work that is being done at the schools of agriculture in the province of Alberta. The three schools have only been running three years, and notwithstanding the fact that new buildings have been added each year, the schools have run to their utmost capacity ever since they were started. This year, at the Olds School of Agriculture, over 200 students are registered. One hundred of these are first year boys and forty-five are first year girls. The work as given at these schools is appealing very strongly to the farmers as the large attendance of boys and girls testifies.

Not a small portion of the school's work is that which is termed extension work and which is carried on by the staff during the seven summer months. Last year one of the things that gave very practical results was the cow testing work as carried on by the animal husbandry branch. A record was kept of the milk produced by 160 cows belonging to thirty-five farmers. The school supplied milk sheets and scales and also sent an inspector to the farm once a month to see the cows milked morning and evening. This was done purely as a precautionary measure, and at the time of the visit a sample of the milk was taken to be tested later at the school for butter-fat. A definite scale of points was used for the scoring of the performance of each cow as follows:—

25 points for each pound of butter-fat.
3 points for each pound of solids-not-fat.

The farmers were keenly interested in the work and the interest was added to because of the fact that the department of agriculture had given a splendid list of livestock prizes to the owners of cows showing the best records. It was thought advisable to give livestock prizes rather than cash prizes, because such a scheme was encouraging the very thing that the

department of agriculture of the province of Alberta stands for, and that is, "More and better livestock."

Several Surprises

The records were kept of the cows for eight months and at the end of that time the results were summed up and at a special meeting called at the school of agriculture the prizes were presented by the Hon. Duncan Marshall. At this meeting the writer had prepared a statement showing the exact record of every cow entered in the test. It was at this meeting that a great many surprises were brought out. Farmers who imagined that certain cows in the herd were by far the best animals were surprised to see that an entirely different cow had won first honors in his herd, but the point that impressed itself upon all who were there was the fact that out of the 160 cows there were thirty-five that were not only not paying for the feed that they were eating, but were a bill of expense to the farmers every day that they were kept. This point became apparent early in the test to a few of the farmers, and the final results showed that these animals had been fattened and sold for beef. The next best fifty cows produced a profit of from \$1.00 to \$10.00. The next fifty from \$10.00 to \$40.00, but the real profits were made by the first ten or twelve cows. The result of the whole test brought this point out very clearly, that only a very small percentage of the cows that were in the test were producing anything like first class returns. So successful was the test with our first year's trial that a large number of farmers wished the department of agriculture to continue this work, and at the present time the school of agriculture has under test some 285 cows. As the test is just half over at this time it would of course be unwise to make any definite statements with regard to this year's work. If your readers are interested in the matter we

might furnish the particulars of the present test when same is completed.

The Rules

A definite set of rules has been drawn up covering the test. Again this year the department of agriculture is giving some handsome livestock prizes and the farmers are watching the results very keenly. The rules governing the contest are as follows:—

- 1.—The competition shall be open to any student who has attended the Vermilion, Olds or Claresholm Schools of Agriculture and living within thirty miles of one of the schools, and to any farmer within a radius of thirty miles of one of the schools.
- 2.—The competition shall be open only to grade herds and shall commence 1st of April, 1915, and fresh cows will be admitted until 1st of June, 1915.
- 3.—The competition shall close 31st January, 1916.
- 4.—All cows in the herd must be entered, but the final awards must be made on the average milk and butter-fat produced by the highest yielding 50 per cent. of the cows in each herd provided ten cows or over are entered in the contest.
- 5.—In herds of less than ten cows the highest five cows shall be taken.
- 6.—A herd must consist of a minimum of five cows.
- 7.—The test for each cow shall be started from the day she freshens and shall continue for a period of 240 days.
- 8.—Any cow freshening previous to April 1 may be started in the competition beginning April 1.
- 9.—Scales and milk sheets will be supplied by the department of agriculture.
- 10.—An inspector will be appointed to inspect the cows and weigh their milk at least once in six weeks or as often as he deems advisable.
- 11.—All milk record sheets must be

sent in promptly to the inspector by registered mail at the end of each calendar month.

12.—When a new cow freshens the inspector must be immediately notified by writing.

13.—The inspector must be furnished at the time of entry with the age and description of each cow.

14.—At each visit of the inspector the competitor shall furnish a statement of the amount and kind of food fed each animal.

15.—In cases of dispute the inspector's ruling shall be final.

16.—Any competitor not complying with the rules shall return the scales to the inspector.

17.—Each competitor complying with the foregoing rules in the competition will be allowed to retain the scales as their own.

18.—The prizes will be awarded according to the following scale of points:—

25 points for each pound of butter-fat.
3 points for each pound solids-not-fat.
(Solids-not-fat to be calculated by approved formulae).

19.—No competitor shall be awarded more than one prize.

20.—In calculating the relative standing of animals of different ages, the rules governing the Canadian record of performance will be used.

In each case the winner of a prize will be given the choice of an animal from one of the following breeds:—Holstein, Jersey, Ayrshire and Shorthorn.

1st prize—Calf over four months.
2nd prize—Calf under four months.
3rd prize—One pig.
4th prize—Pen poultry, six birds.

A prize of a pen of poultry will be given to the girl whose cow makes the highest number of points, provided she does not win any of the other prizes.

Application should be made to the principal of the agricultural schools at Vermilion, Olds and Claresholm, Alberta.

First Lessons for the Colt

Make the Colt understand from the first that he must have no will of his own and must obey promptly

By J. H. S. Johnstone

Breaking colts should be begun when the youngsters are a few days old. Little headstalls should be fitted to their heads, with a short strap, say five or six inches long, hanging from the tie ring. Catch the foal by this strap a few times until he learns that he is not going to be hurt, then eliminate it. Pet the foal much and often. It never pays to "baby" a horse; it is all right to fondle a foal often. Thorough familiarity with and trust in mankind are the best insurance against trouble later.

First teach the foal to lead. Don't get in front of him and try to haul him along. Using a tolerably long leading rein, get behind him and make him step up. Touch him with a light whip if he needs persuasion. He will soon lead up promptly and enjoy showing off his paces.

It is best, all things considered, to accustom colts to the bridle and to make them harness wise at two years of age. First of all get a short, thick, straight bit and with short straps buckle it to the square irons in the nose piece of the halter, fitting it snugly up to the corners of the colt's mouth. Do not let the bit hang too low in the mouth. If it is not well up it will bother him and make him try constantly to hitch it upward toward the corners of his mouth. Let him stand tied in his stall or loose in his box for some hours at a time to accustom him to the "feel" of the bit in his mouth and to begin the toughening of those parts which come into contact with the steel. Procure a leather surcingle of the right length, fitted on top with a loop and buckle, and two buckles sewed on each side half way down. Buckle the surcingle moderately tight round the body of the

colt, adjust a checkrein loosely, but so as to keep his head up off the ground, and attach lines from the bit rings to the buckles on the sides of the surcingle. This is a very good home-made biting rig.

Accustom Him to the Bit
Ready-made biting rigs, consisting

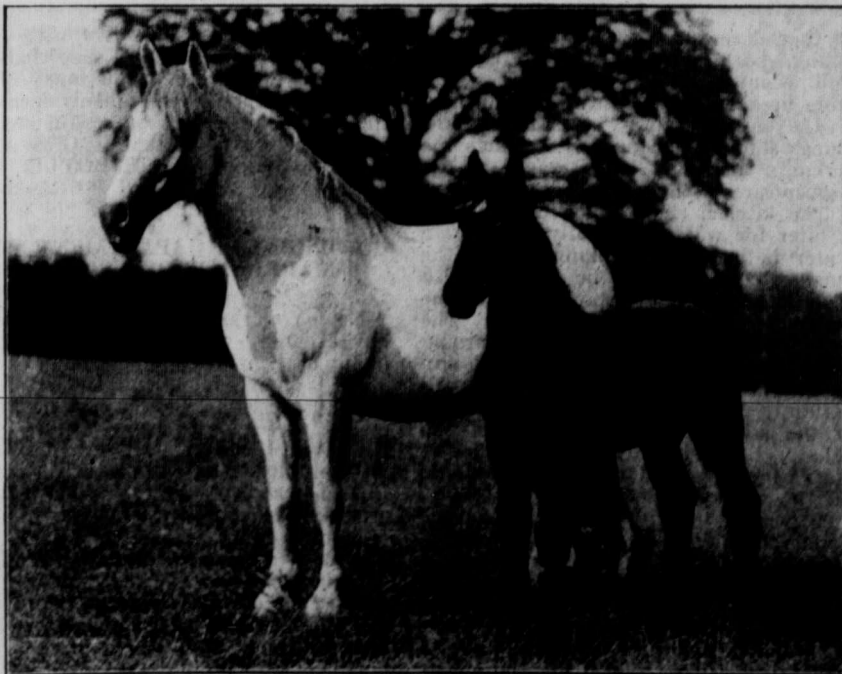
of bit and bridle, surcingle, checkrein and side reins, can be procured of any harness maker. After the colt has been accustomed to the bridle, bit and check and side reins in his stall, turn him out into a lot and let him stand or trot or run at his pleasure. Two hours the first forenoon will suffice. Then the same

length of time twice a day and after that three hours twice a day, or less, according to the temperament of the youngster.

When perfectly accustomed to this rigging, substitute a pair of long reins for the short side lines and, getting behind the colt, make him step off, walking along after him. Use of the checkrein is necessary in breaking a colt to prevent him from getting his head out of position and running away. First teach him to start at the word and to stop instantly at the command "whoa." Get this part of his education thoroughly impressed upon him—to stop instantly when he hears the word "whoa." Now teach him to guide to the right and to the left and to back at the word with a strong pull on the reins. Note that—teach him to back up only when there is a firm pressure on the reins as well as the command. Make him stand stock-still from the very beginning while being harnessed.

After he has learned these lessons, hitch him to a long-shafted breaking cart, get in and drive him off. Some people like to hook colts double with steady-going old horses, but it is better to educate them single first of all. It gives them greater self-reliance. Having learned his lessons—to stand still while being harnessed, to start and stop at the word, to guide to the right and left and to back—he will give little trouble when the wheels are behind him. It is then a mere matter of practice and careful handling. Always make him stand stock-still while being hitched up as well as when being harnessed. A horse is not well broken if he does not stand immovable until he is hooked up, the driver

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Start training the youngster early. Thorough familiarity with and trust in mankind is the best insurance against trouble later.