

Chronicles



Ginger Farm
Written Specially for the Acton Free Press by Gwendolyn E. Clark

There are often people on farms who are tired—very tired. That isn't news—we expect it to happen and we get used to it. But, when animals get tired that is something else again. And our animals are very tired. The pasture is so wet, the yard nothing but mud and the poor cows wander around all day, munching half-heartedly here and there, looking for a dry spot some place where they can lie down and chew their cud in peace and comfort. But there are no dry spots, so the cows keep wandering.

At milking time, just as soon as they get into the stable, they flop down in their stalls with a sigh of relief. And of course they are very dirty; their flanks and udders need a lot of washing before the cows are fit to be milked.

At this time of year, after the evening milking, the cows are usually turned out to pasture again, the gap closed, and there they remain until early morning. But this

spring Partner leaves the gap open. In the morning he finds all the cows in the barnyard where it is comparatively dry and sheltered. Of course this arrangement, and the tiredness of the cows, is all due to the excessive wet weather we have had now for several weeks. Each day we look at the land and think it couldn't get any wetter, short of a flood—and then it rains again.

Even the cats are tired. Black Joe and Mitchie-White are used to hunting in the fields for mice but no self-respecting cat enjoys getting his or her feet wet, so the cats stay home where they are sure of bed and board without discomfort. What the mice are doing we have no way of knowing—probably drowned in their burrows.

One species of livestock, however, seems quite content—and that is the common housefly. Apparently they say to themselves—why should we worry about the weather, there is plenty of good picking around the house. So they watch their opportunity and every time a door is opened another hundred or so come in. I get them killed off but almost before they are swept up reinforcements arrive. As for the garden... vegetable garden we have none. The flower beds we work at for an hour or two between showers if it is possible but some of the bedding plants haven't been put out yet. Partner dug up a small border at the back of the house for my geraniums—but the geraniums are still in their pots. And so it goes. Today the sun is shining and the weather looks more promising than it has done for a week. May it so continue.

Now here is something I have been meaning to pass along for some weeks—just for folk who are interested in first aid for felines. Mitchie-White, ever a month ago, got into an argument with a visiting cat, who left Mitchie with a flesh wound on the back of his neck about as big as a quarter. It would have healed quite easily except that every time a scab formed Mitchie promptly scratched it off again, leaving the place raw and bleeding.

This went on for three or four weeks. I was at a loss to know what to do. Ointments and dusting powder helped the place to heal but the healing was not sufficient to withstand scratching of vicious claws—and a cat's head and neck can hardly be bandaged without incarcerating the cat. I am sure Mitchie would have strangled himself in the bandage. But one day I hit on a wonderful solution. Instead of bandaging Mitchie's head I bandaged his foot! Yes, indeed. I wound good, strong, sugar-sack cotton around his foot, and then adhesive tape around the cotton to keep it on—and it really worked, in two ways. Mitchie was so busy trying to chew the bandage off his foot he forgot about his head most of the time and when he remembered he found there was nothing to scratch with. Naturally the unsightly sore spot soon began to heal. Now the fur has started to grow; the foot has been released from its bandage—after being re-banded a couple of times when Mitchie had succeeded in pulling it off with his teeth. Now we have a happy, respectable looking cat once more.

Then, just to keep in practice, I had to do a little first aid on myself. First I jammed a finger in the furnace door, then, while cleaning windows, I fell backwards off the step ladder. The resulting injuries were inconvenient but not serious.

Before this gets into print the Coronation will be over. You may have noticed I have said very little about it in this column. Not through lack of interest but because so much has been said by so many, what was there left to say? Probably, never in the history of the British people has a new monarch been so acclaimed, and, in the case of Elizabeth II, never has praise been so well deserved. So now, we can only say in all sincerity—"God Bless Elizabeth... long live OUR QUEEN."

NEW CANADIANS PASS CITIZENSHIP EXAMS

Four new Canadians were successful in passing their Basic English and Citizenship examination which was held at the school on Tuesday evening, May 19. The examination was set and marked by the Community Programs Branch of the Department of Education.

The new Canadians were Mrs. Mary Ancker and Martin Ancker, both of Acton, James Hartholt, Cheltenham, and Mrs. Jannelje Koetsier, Georgetown. They received their Certificates from the Department Monday.

COMMENTATOR

It was in the horse-and-buggy days before the age of the sports commentator. A resident of Indiana had left a hotly contested ball game when the score was nothing to nothing in the seventh inning. As he drove through Main Street, he was hailed by a storekeeper with: "How's the score, Captain?" His reply was accurate and picturesque. "Nary-one's gon ary-one yet!" he yelled.

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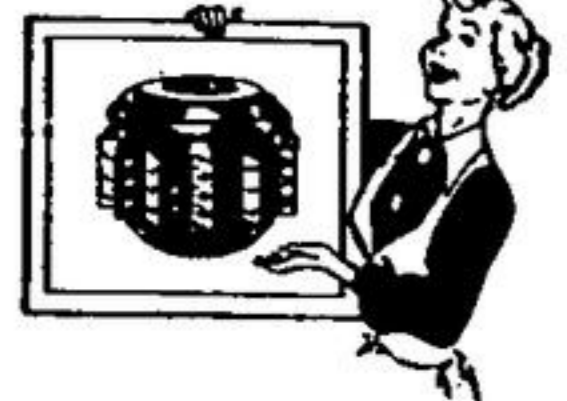
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