

Acres of Memory

BY D. A. CAMPBELL

Old MacDonald had a farm. He also had a boar who was known to quite a few lady pigs in the area. MacDonald sold the services of his animal to anyone willing to bring their sows to his place for a little piggy lovemaking.

Angus found this part of the bargain most difficult. He didn't have a truck and usually had to walk his porkers about a half mile to the MacDonald place. On one such occasion he solicited my assistance.

The lady in question had found the shade of the orchard much to her liking on that hot summer's day, and particularly at the end of a pipe from whence water discharged from the kitchen sink. It took a lot of gentle persuasion to get her carcass out of the fillth and head her towards the farm gate.

Many times we almost succeeded in reaching the road, but madame would insist upon wheeling back towards the orchard, with Angus and I in pursuit.

"It's no use Angus - she just doesn't want to go!"

Angus was not a man to give up easily. He was a thinker, and he pondered on the problem until he finally came up with an idea.

"I'll fetch the cows", he said. "The sow will always follow the cows - we'll drive 'em down the road to MacDonalds and the pig will follow."

He was right. So it was that two men, about ten cows, a cattle dog and one pig made a joint pilgrimage to the MacDonald place.

Our journey took us through an avenue of maples, which in places completely shadowed the sandy road. At the top of the hill we could see our destination in the valley below. A collection of broken down buildings on a terrain of thin grass and milkweed.

It was my appointed task to proceed ahead of this motley throng, open MacDonald's gate and guide the cows into the farm laneway. This tricky mission was accomplished according to plan.

Angus paused when the animals were safely on the MacDonald property.

"You stay here until I come back," he commanded. He did not see any point in bringing a third party into such a delicate business transaction as breeding a sow.

I perched on the rail fence and prepared for a long wait. Angus was a strange man, I told myself. I never

pretended to admire his farm management capabilities. Some of his actions (like today for instance) were beyond the realms of my comprehension. He scratched a living from the "Hungry Hundred" when many would have surrendered to a pay package in some other far less arduous occupation. Angus was foolish perhaps, but fighting against overwhelming odds was his motivation for living. In the "war to end all wars" he, like many other descendants of the pioneers, had just the right attitude to take Vimy Ridge - Angus and his Canadian comrades found victory where other allied armies had been defeated!

My waiting was short lived. The high pitched voice of Angus calling to his dog told me that my weary wanderers were returning.

I opened the gate and dutifully positioned myself to direct the cattle up the hill. The sow (somewhat frustrated I thought) took up the rear of the procession.

By this time, I had known Angus long enough to realize that he had little use for small talk. We walked behind the sow in silence. The look on the face of Angus told me that he was suffering some embarrassment and I had no desire to make him suffer further. It was obvious to me that our carefully planned mission had failed, but why?

It was only when we turned into the laneway of the "Hungry Hundred" that Angus offered to speak. "That MacDonald - sold his boar, more'n a month ago - so he did!"

Grow all year with greenhouse

by John Hughes
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Under Ontario conditions, heating and cooling are two critical operations that often cause problems for owners of hobby greenhouses.

The purpose of a greenhouse is to collect as much sunlight as possible to grow plants. In doing this, the air inside the greenhouse heats considerably. Adequate ventilation must be provided during the summer. When you construct a building designed to collect light, you also have a structure that loses a lot of heat at night. Adequate heating must be provided during the winter.

Locate your greenhouse in an east-west orientation, if possible, with a southern exposure. This will minimize effects of prevailing nor-

therly winds and maximize capture of winter light.

I would suggest using either cedar or aluminum bars for construction materials, and either glass or SDP for a covering. I like the double-layered acrylic material called SDP, now available for commercial greenhouses in Ontario. It can save 40 per cent more heat than glass, and is also strong and durable to resist damage. The SDP comes in sheets about 4 feet wide and varying lengths to accommodate most situations.

Heating is most easily accomplished with an electric heater. I like the 220-volt type with a fan to give circulation. Most have a built-in thermostat. Locate your heat source as closely to the ground as possible, to get the most efficient distribution. Be cautious of burners that

require fuels such as propane, natural gas, kerosene or oil. With incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, gases are released that can be toxic to plants. As a rule, you require 1 square inch of fresh air for every 2,000 BTU's of heat. This fresh air should be ducted to the burner.

Cooling is a problem for most hobby greenhouse growers. With the small air volume and high glass surface area, the greenhouse air will heat rapidly. Year-round cooling is required. Effective cooling demands thermostatically controlled vents and/or fans. A manual system works only if someone is in, or near the greenhouses. The cost of proper cooling equipment may seem expensive considering other costs, but improper cooling causes

most crop failures in hobby greenhouses.

Energy costs may deter you from buying a hobby greenhouse. To reduce energy costs, start with a solidly insulated northern wall (gable and sidewall). Apply insulation at least 2 feet into the ground around the perimeter sidewalls. Locate your heat as closely to the ground as possible. One of the most effective energy savers is the thermal curtain which is pulled inside the greenhouse each night, over the crop.

Energy costs can be reduced by 30 to 40 percent with these commercially available materials.

With good planning and layout, a hobby greenhouse will give you years of enjoyment.

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