

## A 'CENTURY' OF PANSIES

BY DAVID CHURCHILL

I turned the corner of the house about four this June morning and came on Mary's pansy bed all jeweled with dew. Like the bloom on grapes, yet softer and brighter, the crystals blended the purples and the oranges and reds, the orchid shades and the deep wines.

I wanted her to see it before the sun struck it. I started to call her and there she was, all dressed, coming out through the shadowy porch.

Mary and I hung over that bed of pansies, each pointing out some new beauty, till the sun climbed over the gumac hedge and lighted the wet petals to a depth and brilliance that made her cry out with pleasure, for their velvet was not really wet at all!

"Think of all the years we might have had them before we tried," she said.

"Think of all the people around here that are having them this year because we finally did try. Because we started them last August."

"They might have had the fun of starting them themselves," she said.

"But they didn't and we did. And because we have Neighbor with his truck and his business sense about trimming his vegetables with baskets of pansies, lots of folks are going to have pansy beds as fine as ours."

DOUBLING LAST YEAR'S BED.  
Mary started the pansies herself, though it is I who pets up the ground for a couple of weeks before the seed is planted. It was Mary who first thought of growing some to sell—getting Neighbor to try them out on his truck of vegetables.

It was she who saved up her four-pound baskets and lined them with paper. And the arrangement of colors, the number of plants and all that makes those baskets the prettiest that come into the market of our burg is Mary's. I don't take a bit of credit for it.

Because of the demand that two years of thrifty pansies have made, I am making the bed where we grow them for sale, just double what it was last year. It now measures 100 feet square—a "century" of pansies. I began yesterday to work in a couple of loads of old cow manure. On the top I shall broadcast a hundred pounds of fine bonemeal. Then let it stand for two weeks.

At breakfast, there beside the coffee lay the packets of pansy seed, just come from the seed houses—one and a half ounces all told.

"You are forehanded, Mary—this is only June, and you said it would be soon enough to get the seed in the ground by July fifteenth."

"David," she said, "it will be less than a month before we begin putting in this seed if we are to have it all in by the fifteenth of July."

Late that evening Neighbor's truck of vegetables stood outside. "Can I have another dozen baskets?" he demanded. "Some summer folks just gettin' up here, must have blooms—can't live without 'em. They pester me to death if I don't carry pansies! I try to put them off with my marigold plants or my asters or 'snaps, but they don't put off worth a cent."

NEIGHBOR'S GOOD-NATURED COMPLAINT.  
"I declare, I started out to be a trucker—a vegetable trucker! But what with flower plants and pansies and bunches of sweet peas and what not, I look about as much like a trucker as one of these stores that is all soda fountain and magazines looks like a drug store."

"In other words, you look right up-to-date," I encouraged him. "Which means that you find out what the public wants before they really know it themselves—and give it to them. There are no pansy plants sold in this neighborhood before you began carrying them."

"No, nor any other flower plants," he rumbled. "I didn't know what I was letting myself in for. Plenty of

others growing flower plants under glass here now."

He turned. "But I wouldn't be seen trying to sell those they keep down at Farnes'. One bloom, dead flowers—pinkin' little plants! What ails them anyhow?"

"You ought to know the effect of too much nitrate of soda when you see it," Mary said. "Mean little plants out of two and a half-inch pots, forced in a cold frame and with nitrate. See this?"

She scooped out a plant with twenty-two ivory-white blooms. The root was as big as my head, solid with rootlets that hung onto four or more pounds of my good earth.

"Shake it off!" cried Neighbor. "Don't sell them all that good loam and manure you bought!"

"And lose our reputation for thrifty pansies that bloom through the heat and up to Christmas? Not much! That dirt goes with this baby," said Mary.

"No wonder they tell me your pansies stand up half a week in the baskets, and go on blooming when they are set out!" Neighbor said.

"How many pansies can you raise on the 100 by 100?" he asked.

"Well, to make a conservative estimate, somewhere near 5,000. We can really count on more than that."

"I just want to ask you why you plant them so close together," asked Neighbor. "Those in your own bed here just about meet; not room for me to set my foot between. I always supposed you had to keep them from going to seed if you wanted them to keep on blooming."

"I can set my foot between," said Mary, "but really I don't very often. They are mulched when they are small with half rotted leaves and can stand the occasional cleaning up I give them. The reason I plant them so close is to keep the ground cool—the same reason I mulch with leaves in the first place. They are really cool-weather plants, though with lots of water every evening during the hot spells of July and August, they get through and are as gorgeous again from September till snow as in the spring."

I used to keep the old flowers picked, but once I got so busy I could not do it, and they kept right on blooming, the old flowers falling under the leaves.

"Once a week or so I do have a sort of housecleaning in all my flower beds. Carry along a pail full of mulch and sort of put up those that need it."

"That is my only secret formula for flowers, and especially for cool-weather flowers during the heat. And pansies are especially grateful for it. I have had them last two and three years because of it."

### Names of Cheese Invited.

The Dominion Dairy and Cold Storage Branch, Ottawa, invites suggestions of names for the following types of cheese:

1. Small-sized Canadian Cheddar.
2. "Processed" pasteurized cheese (commonly known as Kraft from the name of a maker) put up in 5-pound and 1-pound loaves or in tins.
3. Cheese which is made from ordinary cheese passed through a grinder and packed in jars or cartons.
4. Any other type of cheese that is not properly named.

A wise man will select his books, for he would not wish to class them all under the sacred name of friends. Some can be accepted only as acquaintances. The best books of all kinds are taken to the heart, and cherished as his most precious possessions. Others to be chatted with for a time, to spend a few pleasant hours with, and laid aside, but not forgotten.—Langford.

## PICNICS WITHOUT COLD HAND-OUTS

BY FLORENCE TAFT-EATON

"I don't like cold hand-outs," announced a masculine guest emphatically, when a holiday luncheon in the grove was suggested instead of on the dining-room table.

I think that men, as a rule, do not like cold hand-outs; and as men—and women too—are more and more coming to avail themselves of the chance for an extra outdoor hour, and the picnic lunch is becoming more and more popular, it behooves us menu planners to see that our men have the sort of food that they really like.

Picnic equipment is vastly improved since my young days. Families addicted to picnicking now possess delightful hamper, dedicated to picnic lunches, containing a convenient assortment of near silver and enamel-ware, salt, pepper and sugar shakers.

Our hamper holds four sets of table-ware; larger families need more. This sort of a hamper divides honors with the modern picnic basket—deep, stiff and strong—the shape of a suit case. This is, I admit, lighter, but it must be stocked with the aforementioned utensils, and therefore cannot be quite as convenient.

One energetically picnicking branch of our family purchased a basket of the same general shape, but much larger, to be attached to the running board of the automobile. This is big enough to include a frying pan, chowder requisites, dishes, vacuum bottle and all of the food.

### MAKING THE PICNIC CHOWDER.

As picnic impedimenta must, however be reduced to a minimum, only absolutely necessary utensils must be included. These, besides dishes, are a couple of long-toasting forks, a long-handled frying pan, a big tin coffee-pot and a folding stiff-wire rack of good size, with top and two sides, to be set up over the fire. On this the coffee pot and frying pan may be set, and on it chops or steak may be broiled. A narrow strip of hen wire, long enough to be held over the coals, also makes a splendid broiler.

So much for equipment.  
Our very favorite main dish for a picnic is a chowder, made in a large kettle swung gypsy fashion between two poles over a fire. I must hasten to say, however, before proceeding with my chowder, that the style of picnic meal served depends entirely on whether a fire is possible. Some property owners refuse to allow fires to be built in their woods.

A fire should always be carefully and surely put out before one leaves it, and a bare space scraped around it. Not even the tiniest ember should be allowed to escape.

To make a picnic chowder, the fish should be cooked, boned and flaked beforehand, chilled, and carried in a wide-mouthed vacuum bottle or in a jar in the ice pail. A basket of potatoes, onions and a cube of pork, with seasoning and iced milk containing a liberal cube of butter, complete the chowder equipment.

I pare and slice my potatoes into a pail of water. The fire is made and kettle heated. Then we try out two or three slices of finely diced fat salt pork until reduced to bits, stirring. Then we add about a quart or more of sliced potatoes, a cupful of diced onions, a liberal dash of pepper and salt, and just cover with water. Simmer, covered, until all is tender; add the flaked fish—a three-pound haddock—and a good quart or more of whole milk. Let it just come to a boil, add more seasoning if needed; and if you can thicken it a bit it is better. Serve with an abundance of crackers. Clams, cooked, chilled and brought to the picnic on ice, may be substituted for the fish. Or a pint of cut-off corn or the same quantity of diced tomato, or both, makes a delicious chowder.

We greatly enjoy fresh sweet corn as picnic food, and try to always include it in season. Here also a fire is useful, but not essential; for last summer, when picnicking in a lovely spot where the owner was obdurate, we prepared at home a quart can of cut-off corn, cooked it six minutes in boiling, highly seasoned tomato, added a lot of butter, and carried it in a newspaper-wrapped jar. I assure you that it didn't go begging!

To prepare the corn, score down the middle of the rows, slice off tips of kernels, scrape out the pulp and cook in highly seasoned stewed tomato which has been sweetened. Don't economize with the butter.

Potatoes Plus is another excellent hot dish for a picnic. This consists of diced cold-boiled potatoes, browned in bacon fat, seasoned highly with salt, pepper, minced parsley and a bit of onion, with which two or three eggs are scrambled and mixed. This also makes a nice home dish; one egg will do for the quantity needed at breakfast.

Cheese Dreams make a tempting food for picnics. Prepare at home, making the sandwiches of buttered bread and sliced cheese, sprinkled with a bit of mustard. Brown over the picnic fire in some of the bacon fat. Naturally one mustn't plan too many fried things for the same picnic, but it is well to have a variety in mind.

### PREPARING THE SALAD AT HOME.

Slumgullion is a splendid picnic food. To make this delicious dish, mix a can of peas with a big bowl of cooked rice and add any congenial leftovers, such as hard-boiled eggs, cooked vegetables, and so forth. Moisten all liberally with a can of vegetable

soup. Add necessary seasonings, a good lump of butter, and heat. Serve piping hot, with stuffed eggs, cold meat or bacon.

Chops and steaks are both delicious at picnics, but they are expensive, and I hesitate to advocate them for ordinary fare. Ham has an especial lure at outdoor meals; buy it shaved instead of sliced, and brown it quickly. Stir some stewed tomato into the pan with a little of the ham fat, and when boiling scramble eggs in it.

With one or two hot dishes an ice-cold salad is attractive. We peel and chill tomatoes, slice cucumbers, wash and drain lettuce, shred sweet peppers, roll all in cheesecloth and lay in the ice pail, with a jar of mayonnaise.

Or we mix a delicate vegetable salad and pack, ice-cold, in a jar or wide-mouthed vacuum. Coffee is carried ground, mixed with a raw egg and cold water in the big tin picnic coffee-pot. At the picnic ground water is added, brought to a boil, cooked five minutes, settled, and served.

Here's a menu for a recent fireless picnic:

A big dish of spaghetti, tomato sauce and cheese, taken directly from the oven, wrapped in a towel and then in thick newspaper and set in a deep basket. Boiling hot coffee in a vacuum bottle. Stuffed eggs, beef loaf, tender long homemade rolls filled liberally with creamed chicken, tomato salad, sandwiches, and a hot mince pie, wrapped as was the spaghetti.

A picnic on the slopes of beautiful Monadnock, preceded by a long automobile ride, offered the following menu: Cold roast chicken, accompanied with currant jelly sandwiches, ice-cold vegetable salad in a vacuum, brown bread sandwiches with cheese. A really good apple pie, with cheese, can hardly be improved; or, fresh doughnuts and cheese. Fruit and coffee, of course.

Don't make too dainty sandwiches for picnics. Don't trim off the crusts, and cut them a bit thicker than for a tea or reception, for at a picnic they constitute real food. Egg sandwiches—chopped, hard-boiled eggs flavored with minced parsley, sweet pepper or stuffed olives, and very liberally moistened with mayonnaise—are great favorites with us; also those spread with broiled Hamburg steak put through the meat chopper and moistened with highly seasoned tomato sauce.

Cold roast or corned beef, or any left-over meat, may be used instead of the Hamburg. Ice-cold tomato sandwiches are hard to beat! Any sort of club sandwich is delectable and makes a substantial main course. Cold Welsh rabbit makes an unsurpassed sandwich filling, and I often make it especially for this purpose. Potato chips, vegetable salad, stuffed eggs, and, if possible, a transported jar of the hot corn and tomato, or a dish of hot-escaloped fish and potato with cheese sauce, are fine accompaniments for these hearty sandwiches.

### Work of the Illustration Stations.

John Fixter's report for 1924 of the operation of that invaluable auxiliary to the Dominion Experimental Farms, the Illustration Stations in the three Prairie Provinces and British Columbia, might profitably be in the hands of every farmer in the western half of the country. Mr. Fixter is the Chief Supervisor of the system and he not only tells, through the different district supervisors, of the work that is being done but of how it is being performed. These Stations, which three years ago numbered 89, last year totalled 145. They, by actual demonstration on the spot, carry the work of the experimental system immediately and directly to farmers both individually and collectively; the location of the Stations being chosen with a view to attract the greatest attention. As nearly as possible the whole country is being gradually covered, there being at present eight of these Stations in Prince Edward Island, thirteen in Nova Scotia, seventeen in New Brunswick, thirty-eight in Quebec, eight in Ontario, eight in Manitoba, twenty-three in Saskatchewan, sixteen in Alberta and fourteen in British Columbia.

One of the principal functions being carried on is encouragement of the use of good seed. In pursuit of this class of work last year there were sold 20,943 bushels of seed grain, 3,636 bushels of seed potatoes and 9,399 bushels of grass and clover seed.

Another branch of the work to which special attention is being paid is the improvement of stock by weeding out the poorest and the use of the best types.

An illustration in the report shows an exceptionally convenient rack-stand, loader and unloader, instructions for the making of which are supplied.

One other among the many useful lines of work followed is improvement in the housing, feeding and breeding of poultry. For this purpose in 1924, 256 cockerels, 193 pullets and 699 settings of hatching eggs from good laying strains of Barred Rocks were sold by the Stations.

An ordinary cutter, such as will be found on almost every farm, comes in useful to cut long grass, vegetable tops, or other green food, in suitable lengths for fowls. The old corn stalks can be cut in half-inch lengths and used for scratching material.



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### Clean Eggs.

Clean yards, clean litter and clean nests are the greatest aids in producing clean eggs.

If one keeps the yards free from material that will soil the hen's feet, the hen will enter the henhouse without carrying a lot of excess filth. By keeping the birds penned up during wet weather, this cleanliness may be controlled to a great extent. If a green crop can be maintained in the vicinity of the henhouse, the problem is greatly simplified.

The litter within the house should be replaced as rapidly as it becomes filth-laden or damp. Dry, clean litter acts as a doormat for the hen before entering the nests. If wire is fastened on the lower side of the roosts, the hens will be prevented from walking on the droppings boards.

The nests should be cleaned often and filled with fresh clean nesting material. Wood wool or clean excelsior is excellent for this purpose. The nests should be of sufficient size to enable a hen to be comfortable. A nest about twelve inches wide by fourteen inches deep is usually large enough except for exceptionally large birds.

The nests should be placed so that they are darkened. This discourages the hen remaining on the nest longer than necessary, which often results in soiling the eggs.

Provide one nest for each four or

five birds. This will prevent crowding, with the consequent soiling and breaking that usually occurs.

Gather the eggs often. To insure the highest class product, the eggs should remain in the nests no longer than is necessary. The eggs should be gathered at least twice daily during warm weather and once a day during cold weather. Do not allow the eggs to become overheated or frozen.

### It Wouldn't Wash Out.

An amusing story is told by Mr. A. J. Munnings, A.R.A., whose picture "The Coming Storm," has attracted so much attention at the Royal Academy—concerning an artist friend of his.

While on a walking tour in a rural part of Sussex, the friend came upon a piece of scenery which so enchanted him that he felt he must record it there and then.

He had all his materials with him except an empty canvas. So, determined not to be baffled, he took from his pack a new linen handkerchief, stretched it across his case, and painted on that.

Some weeks later he was showing a lady visitor over his studio, and produced for her inspection the charming little landscape, at the same time telling her the story of its origin.

The lady looked at the handkerchief and then turned a shocked face to the artist. "You'll never be able to wash that paint out!" she said.

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