

Magazine Story Gives Credit To Local Club Work

Etta Squire Seley, writing in the Boys' and Girls' Leaders, an eastern magazine devoted to the development of children's industrial projects...

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By Etta Squire Seley. Oregon can say with pride, that in every county in the state there is at least one bank willing to finance the club. Most of the banks take the member's note at 6 per cent. All of the banks in Polk county are backing the movement, and eight in Marion county are doing the same thing.

The boy jumped. He was so lost in his interest in his work that for the time he forgot there was anyone else in the universe. "Why, I'm making my pig pen," he replied.

"Your what?" exclaimed Old Foggy incredulously. "Yes, sure; my pig pen," repeated the boy. "What's the bright idea of the floor?"

"Well, the government bulletin says to make it this way, and I've joined a pig club and I am going to do the way they say." "Do you mean to tell me the government says to put a floor in a pig pen?"

"Where's your wallow goin' to be?" continued the skeptic, with a thinly disguised sneer in his voice. "Ain't going to have any."

"Ain't a goin' to have none, eh? What'll your pigs do on a hot day?" The boy was growing pretty nervous but was determined to defend his new-fangled doctrine.

"Oh, yes, sure. I give 'em to ye." "Well," and the ring in the lad's voice sobered the old fogey. "Well, I'm going to raise my pigs the way the club says. What Uncle Sam says is good enough for me."

All these agencies co-operating with the rural school superintendents, who give much attention to the work, are potent influences in guaranteeing a higher standard of efficiency among these boys and girls who will be the future citizens of a great state.

I am wiser. Very much wiser. I have been introduced to the pig of tomorrow; and believe me, ye who love pork, he is some pig, and is being raised by the Boys' and Girls' Pig clubs of Oregon. Shortly before the Oregon state fair an amusing story was brought to my attention which determined me to find out at first hand just how much the boys and girls did really know about pig raising.

Here is the story which was told me: One of our old fogey farmers had a sow which presented with six little squealers. Also he had a son; a youngster of perhaps 14 years.

"Dad," said the boy, "can I have two of those pigs when they are weaned?" "You have 'em? What for? Do you know bacon is worth hard cash this year?"

"You bet I do. That's why I want them. Call them my birthday gift, please dad." "Oh, well; I suppose it'll mean two dead pigs, but you can have 'em since you put it that way."

When weaning time came Mr. Old Foggy found Sonny building a pen with boards from a torn down shed. He was busy nailing down a floor and frequently consulted a pamphlet, and didn't hear his father come up.

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ord books were properly made out and handed in. Why, one little chap only 11 years old, had his Poland China there and he told me this story: He started the year 1918 with one purebred Poland China pig which weighed 27 pounds.

For a while he was handicapped because his pet had indigestion, but he built a pen near the house and fed it scientifically for several weeks, soon bringing it back to a normal condition. He was as anxious about that sick pig as a mother might be over a sick child, and he did not regard it as a hardship to care for it even at night, as he had to for a while, but took it as a matter of course.

At the state fair, six months later, this pig weighed 268 pounds. In the meantime Orval had taken \$41 in prize money at various school fairs. He said the entire cost of the pig was about \$30. This gave him a profit, apart from his winnings at the state fair, and he had just refused an offer of \$75 for the pig.

"Aren't you going to sell it at that price?" I asked. "No," he replied in the most business-like manner, "he is worth more. I ought to get \$100 for him."

"Might I photograph his pig?" He would be delighted. And then something funny happened. One of the adult club leaders who had seen the boy manage the pig said to me, "Now you will see something remarkable. Why, he handles that pig as a man might a horse. Just makes him do anything he wants him to do."

It seemed to me that would indeed be fine; nothing to prevent me from taking a quick photograph. But right there I learned something more about pigs. That however well grounded they may be supposed to be in proper behavior, they sometimes do something different. This one did. He proceeded to run around in a circle for nearly 30 minutes before I could get him at all.

But I did admire the plucky persistence of Orval. It didn't occur to him to give up. Patiently, again and again he flicked Mr. Poland China with the whip to bring him within the focus of the camera. Right there I saw a prophecy of future success for the lad. He didn't lose his temper nor get the least bit annoyed even if his piggy had smashed every rule of etiquette he had been taught, but there was a quiet smile of satisfaction when at last he made him obey, which showed conclusively the lad had learned a lesson in self-control which would prove a valuable asset in future years.

Passing again through the barn, I came upon another boy who seemed unable to tear himself away from the stall where the pride of his heart was comfortably bedded. I paused to admire the whiteness of his pig. Would it tell me about it? He would.

Six months ago, this pig, which was a Chester White, weighed 22 pounds. Today it weighed 211 pounds. The total cost of raising had been about \$15 and he held it worth \$100. He did so want a photograph, but he was afraid he could not manage her alone; she was so bad about running away if she got a chance.

Ah, I thought, here is more trouble; but just then G. W. Eyre, fondly known among the boys and girls as "Daddy of the pig club movement in Oregon," came to the rescue. He would take a gate out to head her off if she tried to run. Of course I was bound to get the picture, but I wondered—if a pig with a good reputation would act naughty, just what might one expect from one which was not accredited with being good.

A fully equipped still with several gallons of home made whiskey has been located at North Bend.

Some pessimists among the farmers still say, "Show me," but without fail, one season of proof convinces them, and they are from that time enthusiastic converts. Many a man who has raised pigs as long as he has been on the farm, cannot tell how much profit his work has brought; it has seemed largely a matter of luck with many of them. If a pig dies—why it is dead. Why trouble to bother about why it departed this life, or figure the cause, or give serious thought to the fact that it might have been prevented. But with the boys and girls, it is all different. They join a club; one of these progressive banks loans them money to buy a pig, and encourages them to buy purebred stock. The idea impressed upon them is not merely to "raise a pig," but to raise the very best pig possible.

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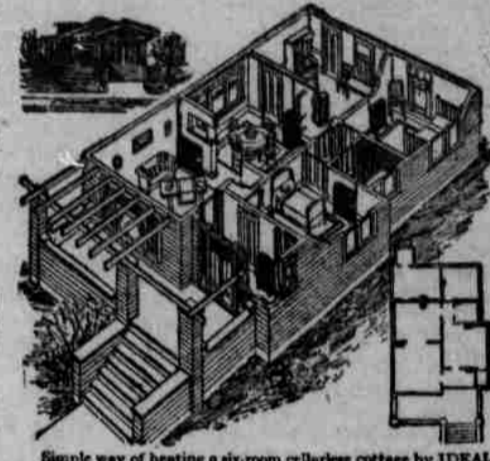
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