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## A Leader in North Carolina Dairy Farming

By P. T. HINES

**M**R. J. F. DIGGS, owner and manager of Diggs Farm, Rockingham, N. C., is a big cotton farmer who has worked out a fine system of farm management. On this phase of his farm activities a story containing much information could be written. On the other hand, he is blazing away in the new and somewhat neglected field of dairy farming, and information, inspiration and suggestions along this line will perhaps be of more help to the average reader of *The Progressive Farmer*.

The present owner of Diggs Farm is a graduate of the North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering. In 1903, he returned to the farm for the purpose of carrying forward the farm-building process which his father had started. He bought out the interests of his brother and sisters and purchased an additional 600 acres nearby.

On the Diggs farm at the present time there are some 30 families and about 200 people. Each home has its cow, garden, pigs and chickens, and firewood for the cutting and hauling. Every farmer also follows the methods outlined by Mr. Diggs for the whole farm. A smaller cotton acreage per plow is grown here than on the average cotton farm. All these things mean gradually improved soil, better preparation and cultivation, more prosperous owner and tenant.

Eight years ago, Mr. Diggs made his start in the dairy business by buying a few granddaughters of the famous Jersey sire "Eminent." Since that time

he has built up one of the very best dairy herds in the South, two-thirds of the present herd cows having been bred on the farm. In the breeding work, only the "Raleigh" and "Eminent" families have been used, and all this has been toward the farm ideal of productiveness, beauty, and conformation to the standard Jersey type.

Diggs Farm is one of the first in North Carolina to enter into cow-test work. "Fortune's Admiration No. 297207" has been on test for 10 months and with present indication will produce 13,000 pounds of milk and 600 pounds of butter during the year. This will break all previous North Carolina records. She has stood the test well and will be in perfect show condition at the end of the year, which indicates that she has not been pushed too hard.

Perhaps the general reader would like to know something about the meaning of the test work being conducted on this farm.

Here, as on many other farms, all the animals are registered. Among registered animals there are scrubs as well as among ordinary or unregistered

animals. How is the general buyer to tell the difference between the registered scrubs and the registered producers? If a good judge of cows, of course the buyer can come close to telling the quality he is getting, but it is only by the test work that one can be sure—especially the untrained man—of the quality of dairy cow which is being bought. Cow testing is therefore done to show buyers the quality of animals one has to offer, and the buyer wants to know about the test so that he can be sure of what he is getting.

From his herd, Mr. Diggs sells milk, but he also sells considerable breeding stock. He soon real-

tacked in the barn. Some time during the month a man comes to the farm from the Extension Service and spends two days there.

To make the test fair, the farms doing the work do not know when the inspector will come. It may be at any time of the day or any day of the month. With this system the test is absolutely fair and any deception is likely to be detected. During his stay, the inspector also makes two tests of each milking for butter-fat, on which the production of butter is based.

The feeding problem is largely taken care of by the pasture in summer and the silos in winter. The barn itself is built on land adjoining the Pee Dee River, the bottom lands of which furnish fine grazing from native grasses and clovers. Two

silos are used, one of 250 tons, made of concrete and one of 125 tons, made of wood staves.

As the plantation is devoted chiefly to cotton growing, nearly all of the grain for the dairy cows is bought. Enough grain is raised for the farm work stock, but Mr. Diggs has decided that with the present price of cotton it will not be wise to devote cotton lands to growing grains for the cows. Most of the grain bought is in the form of commercial dairy feed.

Cowpea hay, soy beans, and velvet beans are also raised for the dairy cattle. Cowpea hay is considered one of the very best feeds.

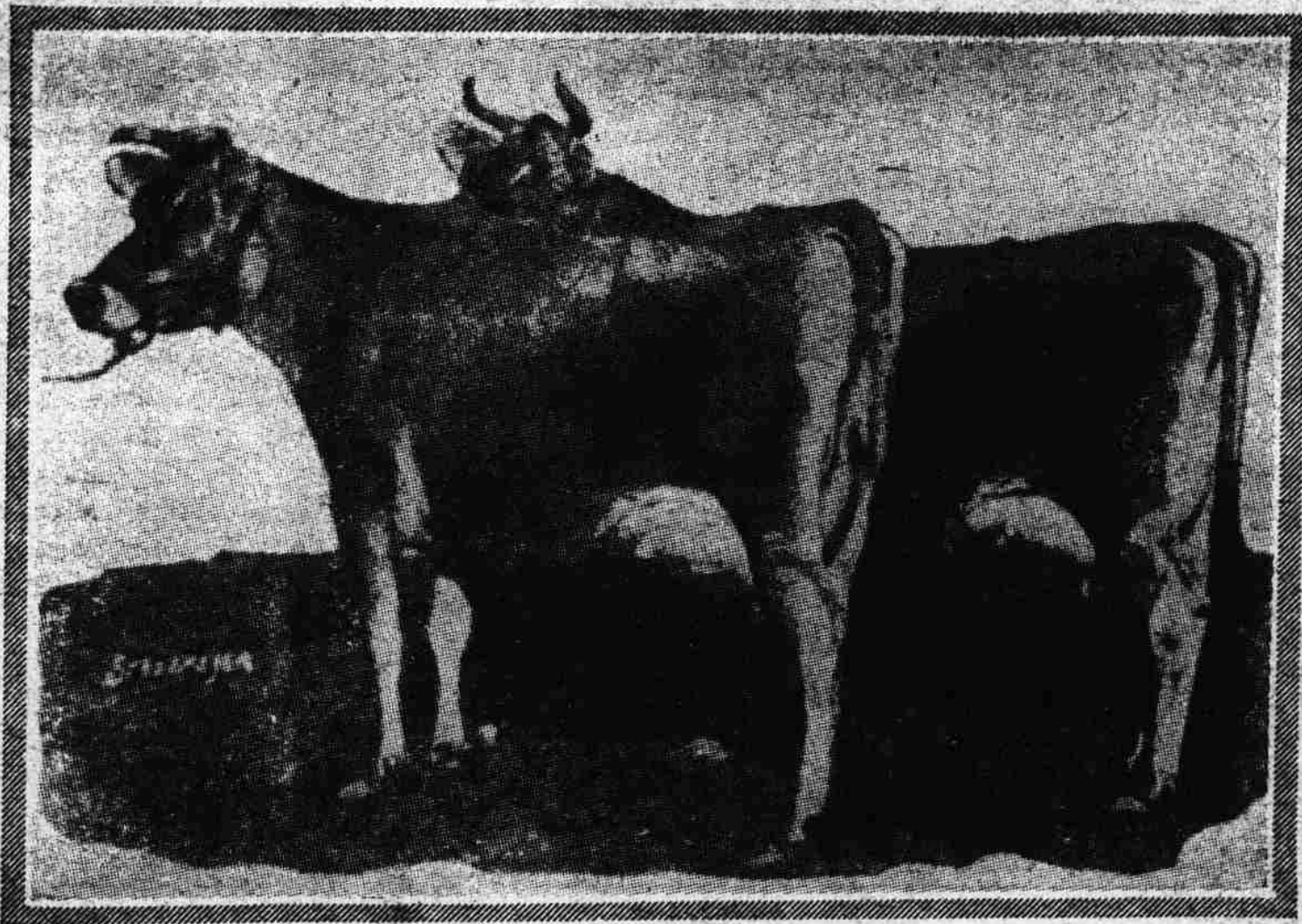
Much of his success in dairy work, Mr. Diggs says is due to his dairyman, Mr. W. D. Lewis. Mr. Lewis is a 1914 graduate of the North Carolina State College of Ag-

riculture and Engineering and went with Diggs Farm in 1915. With the exception of a year and a half spent in France, Mr. Lewis has had entire charge of this farm's dairy herd since his graduation.

The hog raising on this farm deserves mention, especially its cooperative feature. Five men in this particular neighborhood all own herds of Duroc-Jersey hogs. They have organized themselves into a company called "Duroc Farms" and through this organization own their boars and hold their sales cooperatively. The men who are working with Mr. Diggs are Mr. John L. Everett, Mr. Henry C. Wall, Mr. H. F. Long and Mr. W. E. Crosland.

The reason for such cooperative ownership of boars is that much better individuals may be secured than could be done when owned individually. This would be especially true where several farmers had only a limited amount to put into a sire of any kind.

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GILBERT'S MODEST, ROSE NO. 346101 AND GILBERT'S GALA ROSE NO. 346102, REGISTER OF MERIT IMPORTED TWIN COWS, OWNED BY DIGGS FARM, ROCKINGHAM, N. C.

ized therefore that he would have to put on the test work if he was to get very far in the breeding business. Ten months ago he put on test his first cow. Since that time 12 others have been added and it is the plan to put every cow in the herd on test as fast as they freshen.

This test work does not make the herd any better, but it gives the breeder definite facts about the animals he has to offer and it also gives him a chance to check up on his own judgment and thereby better the herd by getting rid of any cows that fall below the standard set. It also makes it possible to tell very closely what young stock will develop into.

The actual test work is done by the farm itself under the direction of the Dairy Division of the North Carolina Extension Service. The test cows are milked three times a day and the milk carefully weighed. These figures are set down on cards printed for the purpose and usually kept