



Studying Agricultural Europe

Henry A. Wallace in Wallace's Farmer.

In England.

Near the little village of Tring, thirty or forty miles from London, is the most beautifully kept estate we have seen. This is the Lord Rothchild property, 2,000 to 3,000 acres of which is farm land. Thanks to the courtesy of the manager, we had a splendid time looking over the famous herd of milking Shorthorns, the high-bred Jerseys, the rose garden, and the pastures that have never been plowed in the memory of man. The manager has been breeding milking Shorthorns for over twenty years, and all this time he has been striving for milk alone, and not for beef. All the time he has kept strict records, which have guided him more than anything else in his breeding. Some of his cows are white, some are roans, and some are red. Some happen to be of almost pure Bates blood lines, while others are mixed. The greatest thing to me is that they produce over 6,000 pounds of milk, year in and year out. Some of his cows give over 12,000 pounds, an average of four gallons a day. Such cows he uses most in his breeding work. Although the manager did not emphasize the point, I noticed that the heaviest producers are of the Bates breeding. The manager says that no one really knows anything about breeding. He has been at it all his life, and is still largely in the dark, and he says the one safe side is the producing power. We saw a number of the best producers. They are large animals, weighing 1,200 to 1,400 pounds as near as we could judge. If they had been black and white instead of red, white and roan, we might have taken them for Holsteins, but their heads were more refined and the quality of the hide was more like a Jersey than a Holstein. Some of the cows which had been dry for a month or so looked to be splendid beef animals. So, also, did some of the bulls we saw. The Rothchild bulls are sold for breeders at prices ranging from \$200 upward. The manager doesn't think much of our pedigree fads, and some of his cows are not registered in the Shorthorn herd book at all. Five or six years ago the dairy Shorthorn breeders got together and formed a record association of their own.

Every building on the Rothchild farm is of brick or stone. The barnyards are all paved, and the barns themselves are most of them covered with vines. Wherever there are walks, the grass along them is cut to a straight edge. The part of the estate which is devoted to landscape gardening has a beautiful expanse of many acres of closely clipped grass, edged by a curving line of dense forest trees. In the rose garden you imagine you are in fairyland. The air is filled with perfume, and the

eye is filled with the red, white, pink and cream roses. Near the rose garden we saw the inside of a beautiful dairy. The floor was of white tile and the walls of blue. Here are butter samples. To one side was the most beautiful bouquet of yellow roses I ever saw. One of us touched his finger to a petal in admiration, and then we discovered that they were made of butter. None would have ever guessed it by looking.

Shorthorn cows grazed with deer on hillside pastures, which have never been plowed. Beautiful bits of woodland so thickly set with trees that the sun can scarcely shine through even at mid-day. Everywhere are roads as smooth as city paving. Flowers, grass and trees all in perfect order. There are deer-like Jerseys on the Rothchild farm. Nowhere have I seen Jerseys with more refinement of finer boned. They seem like toy cows, and would make a nice ornament for the front yard, but, like every other farm animal on the place, they must show a profit or be sold. Records are kept of every cow, and each year the low producers are sold. On the London market Jersey milk wholesale for 24 cents a gallon, as compared with 19 cents a gallon for Shorthorn milk. Jersey milk will test five or six per cent, as compared with three or four per cent for Shorthorn. During 1911 the average daily yield for the nineteen Jerseys in the herd was two gallons.

We saw a few of the 4,000 chickens on the place. They are the white legged, single-combed, Sussex breed. The manager looks upon them as one of the best paying of the all-purpose breeds of fowl. They not only furnish fine early broilers for the London market, but they are good layers.

Here at the Rothchild place we asked again about the rent of English land, and were told that there was a variation of from \$5 to \$25 per acre. Some of the finest pasture and hay land rents for as high as \$25 per acre, but this is not really too much when you consider that hay last winter sold for \$30 a ton, and one acre of such land will produce three tons.

The manager at the Rothchild farm not only wined and dined us to our heart's content, but insisted that we be served with afternoon tea. A rather amusing thing occurred at lunch. When—as usual—the servants came around to get our orders for drinks, most of us ordered ginger ale or lemonade, but several of our company, to be polite, so they claimed, ordered whiskey and soda, so the manager would not be lonesome when he ordered his. But, strange to say, this manager differed from some of the others by whom we had been entertained, and ordered nothing but water.

At Windsor, near London, the King lives and keeps his herds and flocks.

The day after visiting Lord Rothchild's beautiful establishment we saw the King's Shorthorn herd. Of course, George V. really doesn't bother his head about the herd, but just the same he has many good Shorthorns which, under the management of Mr. McWilliams, win their share of the prizes at the big shows. The King's Shorthorns were big, and largely of Scotch breeding. They are blockier and lower set than the milking Shorthorns of Lord Rothchild's herd, but on the average, are not much better than Lord Rothchild's, even for beef. On the whole, we were disappointed in the King's herd, although we saw there some very good animals. One was the herd header, Proud Jubilant, bought from Duthie, the Scotch breeder, for \$1,700, when six months old. The best cow was Windsor Bell, who won first at the Royal shows this year. Also we saw a two-year-old steer carried over from last year's Royal, where he was champion over all breeds.

Windsor Castle, where the King lives, is not so fine looking as I expected. It is just a plain castle, with no fancy work about it. The interesting thing about it is, that the Kings of England have lived here for more than eight hundred years. The most beautiful thing about the grounds is a broad avenue three miles long, lined with old elm trees. They were planted 230 years ago by Charles II. The castle is at one end of the walk, while at the other end, three miles away, is a statute of George III. on horseback. Back of the statue begins a wooded park twenty-five miles in circumference.

In southeastern England is some of the prettiest farming land of any we saw. It is all underlaid with chalk, which is a kind of lime, and, like our limestone soils, is very fertile. The most noted crop of Kent County is hops, but there are also fine oats, wheat and hay fields. It was nice to drive out from Canterbury, through the farming country on a fine macadamized road. Mr. Scott pointed out some Canada thistles in a pasture. Mr. Pervier called attention to the fact that many of the orchards were in grass, and not as cleanly cultivated as they should be. Yet, try as we might, we could find but little fault. The wheat fields were better than any I ever saw in the Corn Belt. The Hawthorn hedge fences were kept in almost perfect shape. But it was when we looked at the hop fields that we saw the most condensed cultivation. Hops are vines which must grow ten to fifteen feet into the air if they are to produce well. The hop itself, which is used in brewing, is the blossom of the hop plant, just after it has bloomed but before seed has formed. This hop blossom has in it flavors which make beer taste better. Brewers pay good prices for hop blossoms, and for this reason thousands of acres around Canterbury are put in hops. We had the pleasure of visiting Mr. Berry, one of the largest hop grow-

ers. For three weeks during the busy season in the fall, 2,500 pickers are at work on Mr. Berry's three hundred acres of hops. On this place we saw one solid field of seventy acres of hops. From above, it reminded me of a gigantic piece of green lace. Every six feet fourteen-foot poles are set. The hops follow up the poles for five or six feet; and then follow strings across to the next row. The big seventy-acre field looked like a continuous row of arbors. Clean cultivation was given between rows. We decided that hop growing is more like market gardening than farming. Hops are affected with a louse and mildew. Tobacco decoction kills the louse, and powdered sulphur prevents mildew. Mr. Berry lays great emphasis on spraying. He has four miles of pipes in his fields, so that spraying machines can load up quickly and easily. It was interesting to look at the spraying machines. They were arranged so they could be pulled between the rows, and were equipped with twelve nozzles, pointed at all angles, so that every leaf would be covered from the under side. Every plant louse must be killed, for if even one escapes there may be a million more within a week. Many little galvanized sheds are found on every hop-grower's place. Here the hop pickers from out of town live. Some of them live in Canterbury, but large numbers come from London. They get lodging and firewood, and are paid a shilling (24 cents) for picking a six-bushel basket. A good picker will earn a dollar a day. After the hops are picked, they are put in kilns to dry; these look like silos with long, pointed roofs. After the hops are dried, they are baled and marketed. Mr. Berry says that New York and California hops have been giving the English hops some close competition.

There are several hundred acres of pears, apples, cherries, raspberries, and gooseberries on the Berry farm. Suppose we stop for a minute in a seventy-acre sweet cherry orchard. The big, black, juicy cherries are now being picked. It takes but one invitation for us to help ourselves. I never tasted such cherries. Our Corn Belt cherries are about half as large as these, and about one-tenth as sweet. The trees in this orchard were headed high. Mr. Berry claims that Southern England is one of the best apple growing sections in the world. He has apple trees that net him \$500 worth of fruit per acre every year. His orchards are set with trees eight feet apart each way. The trees are grown on what is called a dwarf stock. Also they are kept low. Some of his trees are set twenty feet apart each way and headed high. Under them he grows gooseberries and raspberries. As we walked through such an orchard, it was gooseberry picking time, and we had to stop and pick a few sweet English gooseberries as big as plums. Mr. Berry told us that an acre of gooseberries had netted him as high as \$500. We