

4-H

The Dreamer and His Dreams



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We open our story with a scene in a country farm house. In the sitting-room, propped up amid pillows in a chair by the stove, for it is a cool, crisp April day, is a frail lad, reading a paper. It has been many days since he has been able to attend school, for if he caught the least bit of cold his throat would compel him to remain indoors for days at a time. So it had been.

Now we turn to the paper he is reading. Someone had sent him a bundle of papers. He has just finished reading a story about a boy who had joined a Corn Club in the corn belt section, how he had worked hard against many obstacles and after three years had gone to the International and was awarded Champion Corn Grower.

Thus we find this lad dreaming of the time, when he, too, might win state honors and maybe National. But it was two years before he had a chance to start toward this far-off goal. In those two years he had changed, those terrible enemies in his throat, which were effecting his hearing, seeing and even breathing, had been removed and he was able to run, race and do things like other boys. He no longer hated to go to school or do his share of work with his two brothers. This was one of the great changes in his life.

Now we come to another change just after the World War had come to a close. At this time a new organization known as Junior Project was formed. A County Agent was hired. He came to the High School, where our friend was just entering in his first year. He, with many others joined the Poultry Club. They raised their chickens and showed them all, as they did not know how to select the best, at the Annual Fair, held in the town for schools. This was the beginning. Little did he dream though of what was to follow.

The Determination to Win

The next year there were not so many in the Club. The novelty had worn off for the village boys, but there still

remained a few of the country boys. This year, they even ventured to the County Fair, where they had good luck. So much so, that two of the boys, one of them the "dreamer" (as we shall call him) sent some of their prize-winning birds to the State Fair, but alas! they knew nothing of selecting and were defeated. Did they do as the village boys had done, drop Club Work? No, there was the determination to learn why their birds did not win.

So with the next year, we find them studying the selection of their birds and they began to show in the open classes at the County Fair, and won. Late in the summer, after the Township Fair, was held a Tri-County Poultry Event, and in conjunction was an egg-laying contest to be staged during the winter months. The owners of the prize-winning flocks were to be sent by the Bank to Junior Field Days at the State Agricultural College. The "dreamer" was one of the winners. A State Poultry Show was held and the boys won a few prizes. This same year, the same five boys, who had stayed in the poultry club, organized the first Calf Club. The "dreamer" had a grade calf to raise, as there were no purebreds on the farm. The Club showed at the County Fair, but the fact that he had a grade prevented him from showing at the National Dairy Show, which was held that year in his own state. He resolved that next year he would have a purebred, so that fall he sent one hundred dollars, hard earned money, to a breeder, who was to send him a calf. She was a beauty the pride of the family, the foundation of the purebred herd to follow. To bring this year to a close was an Achievement Day for outstanding club workers in different projects in each town. These boys and girls were entertained by some of the business men, who were beginning to see the value of the work.

The First Championship

As they began their work the next year, there came the task of studying to judge poultry. This seemed an endless task, but when the State contest was held, they were the State Champion Team with our "dreamer" champion poultry judge. This was the beginning of the dream realized, for they were to go to the National Event to judge. This was not all they did that year, for there was the trip to the State College Field Days in the spring. Our "dreamer" was chosen cheer-leader for his county delegation and to represent them in the candle-lighting ceremony. A gold medal was offered to the one, who wrote the best story of the trip and he was the receiver of his first medal.

Then came the hard work during the summer months. The "dreamer's" father was a carpenter and with the

addition of another farm, at the request of the three sons, increased their work.

Persistency Brings Recognition

When the County Fair came, they won still better on their calves and chickens. There were now two pure-breds, for the older brother had purchased one, too. Their Club protegee were so good in the county competition that they were placed in a boxcar and the "dreamer" and his Club pal started for the State Fair. Such a glorious week! The other boys came later in cars, so together they learned a great deal and made many friends. The "dreamer's" younger brother and his teammate, who had been coached by the older club workers, won second medals and a trip to Camp Vail, the next summer. But alas, there was no class for the two brothers' calves in the calf club so they had to show in the open classes and knowing nothing about showing and fitting, did not place. A certain man made a remark that there would not be any use of putting in a class, as they would not be back next year. The two boys overheard this and resolved to come back next year with more and better calves and so they did for four years and now there is a class. The County Dairy Judging Team was composed of these two brothers and a Club pal and in the State Contest won third place. At the time of the Poultry Judging Contest, another person had remarked that he could be State Champion Poultry Judge but not win the same honors in Dairy Judging, because no one had ever done so before. That was why he had studied hard to judge cows and it was this that sent him back home resolved to do better next year. It was on this trip that he gave his first talk to a group of Calf Club members. In the fall, he was awarded a beautiful Corona portable typewriter for being one of the outstanding Club Workers in his banking district. A County-wide Achievement Day was held this year, at the county seat, with over one thousand attending. Following this came the State Production Show in which their birds won and the judging team composed of the same ones as the cow judging team prepared for the national event.

It was a great trip, to the largest city in the world. Imagine these country boys, as they walked up Wall Street or Broadway at night, how they thrilled as the trains raced through the tubes, and the visit to the Statue of Liberty out in the harbor. The team won third place with high man in fifth place.

Playing and Working

During the winter and following spring, the "dreamer" and his pal worked hard to graduate from High School.

They were carrying on their club work, playing baseball, football, basketball and tennis during their four years in High School. It was their last year, when the "dreamer" was manager and he and his pal were forwards that the school hung up one of the greatest basketball records ever made in the school. Following graduation came Field Days with the same duties. This trip proved an inspiration. It gave him the desire to study within those college walls, to learn more about farming. With that thought in mind, he returned home and many times while sweating in the hayfield, came the thought of how to obtain means to attend that world of knowledge.

Then came the County Fair with his Club, winners of three out of the five breed champions, his brother having one. Then followed the trip to the State Fair in the box-car again in charge of the exhibits. Again they won prizes although very few were blues, this year he and his brothers showed poultry in the open classes and won. Again he won in the Cow Judging, second this time—still there was that one step yet to go. This fall a big School Fair was staged by the older Club Members. It was a grand success with its three tents full of exhibits, people came from far and near, even the State Club Leader was there.

At the State College

Following the Achievement Day the "dreamer" and his brother were awarded Scholarships to attend the State College for the winter course. With the aid of the 4-H typewriter, they both received marks well toward the top and as soon as the course was over they returned home for there was a great deal of work for their father and younger brother who was still in High School. It was while attending the College that our friend told a group gathered there for Farmers' Week about his 4-H work.

It was while at the State College that our friend thought out the plans for a Cow Testing Association to be organized by boys, run by boys to test boys' cows. So the first of its kind in the state was started and the boys learned which were the poor cows and showed the people how good their profitable cows were. The big result of it was the proof to Dads that the boys could raise calves that made cows just as good as theirs or even better.

Soon after his brother wrote an essay "The Value of Club Work to His County" and won a purebred Jersey calf as a prize.

Cornell Field Days

Again in the spring came the Field Days with the same honors and again was another dream realized by being awarded the gold medal for being the State Champion

Dairy Judge. While two of his club pals won the gold and silver medals in the poultry judging, as a result of his coaching. Another County Fair with several of the 4-H boys acting as assistant superintendents in the livestock divisions. This year his Club won four out of the five breed Championships and his demonstration team went to the State Fair. The trip to the State Fair was the same as in previous years. This year a dream was a little nearer realized, when he and his brothers and two club pals had calves good enough to go in the State Calf Club herds to attend the National Dairy Show. So it was that he and one of the latter were chosen to pilot this first carload of calves to the National Event. Such a trip and experience, the show nothing like they had thought and their herds winning first, but there were still the Championship to work for and to dream of.

There was another trip that year that had not been dreamed of, as the boy from his state, to the International Training School, to learn more about leadership. It was an inspiration, this meeting other boys and girls, young men and young women, from other states, and then Camp Vall the following week, such a lot to learn in a week if one only tried.

Elected County President

Achievement Day, more than a close of the year's work for our friend for he was elected the first president of the County-wide 4-H Club and was awarded a silver loving cup for the best pair of birds in the county and he had bred them and last but not least the announcement that he had placed second in a local-leadership contest, which included leaders all over the United States—a close of another year of dreams to come true.

Next we find our "dreamer" organizing Clubs in other counties as well as his own, attending spring rallies, milking three times a day, caring for the purebred stock and chickens while another winter wings its way. Then like a flash in the sky comes the announcement that he has been chosen as one of the delegates to the First National 4-H Club Camp to be held in Washington, D. C. Such a trip, to live for a week with boys and girls, each one outstanding in his own state from the east, west, north and south, at the Nation's Capitol, the most beautiful city in the world. What more could one ask for? Here was education, experience, friendship and last but not least, the true American spirit of the farm boys and girls of to-day. Never will that day be forgotten. Twice he was selected in those sacred campfires, as the most outstanding examples of the Hand-H in the First National 4-H Camp ever held. Then came the reception awaiting them on their return to their State College. Over two

thousand attending Field Days to greet them and to listen with eagerness to their stories of that wonderful camp they had just attended.

In the Sunny South

The hay was harvested. Again the Fairs—we see our "dreamer" with his flock of Club Workers attending them and winning the blues; more now. Taking defeat with the same pleasant smile, "4-H spirit" they call it. As the County Fair breaks up, the prize winners are loaded into trucks and are off for the State Fair, under the same charge as in former years. This was a happy week for one, for he saw the first part of his dream come true, of having a State Champion heifer and his pal had one, too. And there was the demonstration team, his brother and another pal, whom he had coached. They too were victorious, so it was a happy Club of five members who had won trips into the "Sunny South" to attend the World's Dairy Show.

Such a trip! Again in a boxcar, five days and five nights in charge of the calves owned by boys and girls all over the state. After their arrival, one would think that their work was a matter of life or death, but as a result, they realized their dreams of owning and showing National Champions, after eight hard years of work, but that is not all there was to the trip, the educational value was priceless and there were pleasures galore.

Achievement Day was again a success and the same county officers were elected. The State Poultry Show had to give his county all the awards and as a climax for this year he was proclaimed fifth outstanding local leader for that year in the Nation.

Nationwide Recognition

The winter was spent as the year before, working on the farm, planning new 4-H ideas, going to other counties to get Club Work started. In a contest for the best story of Club Work our "dreamer" was awarded the prize, a 29-piece set of silver. There were stories from all over the Nation and it was the "dreamer's" name and picture that was in every paper.

Elected State President

Soon the National Camp delegates were selected. Another one from this Club was selected. 4-H events came thick and fast. Field Days were attended by this Club. State officers were elected, and it was a unanimous vote that made our "dreamer" the first President of the State 4-H Organization with a membership of thousands of boys

and girls. Also his brother was the State Champion Dairy Judge winning the gold medal.

Haying was heavy and the Fairs started before they were through. This year the club showed over sixty head of cattle, about 400 chickens, thirty sheep and pigs, also vegetables and other 4-H products. Our friend was Assistant Superintendent of the 4-H exhibits and with the aid of his club pals, who were assistants in the different divisions, made better and bigger exhibits.

Getting Results

He with his brothers had many prize winners, one heifer was Champion and the award was a Silver Loving Cup. Three of his Club pals had Champions and received cups, too. In the judging contests his pupils were the winners of the medals in both the cow and poultry. There were ten of his Club who won trips to the State Fair, and there they repaid their local leader, namely, by the boys on the Demonstration Team winning trips to the National Dairy Show, again repeating what two boys in the same club did the year before. Another boy had a heifer, who won a place in the State Calf Club herd for the Dairy Show. Another won a trip to Camp Vail on his Camp Activities. One of the girls won a calf. Our friend's brother was the State Champion Showman and as a result of his showing ability received a Loving Cup, medals and a ninety dollar separator. While our "dreamer" was again selected to pilot the boxcar of Club calves from the State to the National Dairy Show which was again held in far off Tennessee. And his same heifer that went last year won the trip again. She took first in her class in the 4-H and seventh in the open, repeating what she did the year before and her owner was awarded the National Championship as Brown Swiss Showman. This heifer was bought for one hundred dollars and brought home in the back seat of a Dodge touring car from Camp Vail by the "dreamer" when she was just a month old. She has won in individual classes and in groups a total of 31 firsts, two seconds, two thirds, two fourth, two sevenths and seven Championships, a total of just \$400 in money and her expenses as well as her owners to two Dairy Shows, which come to \$216. And on the day she was thirty months old she became the proud mother of a fine heifer calf.

A Recognized Leader

Soon after this came the last Achievement Day for the "dreamer" as a Club member. He had charge of the program for over 1200 boys and girls. Two of the new officers elected were from his Club, his brother to succeed him as president. Out of the seven cups awarded and fifteen

medals, four of the former and thirteen of the latter went to homes of his Club pals. They had set out with determination to win, if they could and do it with the 4-H spirit.

In the State Poultry Judging Contest to determine the team to represent the State at the National Contest, we again find that the winners were coached by that older Club member. This contest made another one of that Club a State Champion Poultry Judge—a total of four and two of these have won the State Championship in Dairy Judging.

How Success Grows

As a climax for the livestock workers and as an inspiration for the next year, a banquet was held to which the fathers were all guests. As a result of the fine program and the number who attended this next year promises to be the best year in the history of 4-H livestock work. Not necessarily because the "dreamer" is the county livestock leader and the President and Vice President are from his Club, but there is an added interest being shown especially among the parents.

So as our "dreamer" draws near the end of his 4-H career he looks back over his years of Club Work, of what he has done, the first prize ever won—a red ribbon, a second prize and then this year over one hundred and twenty-five firsts alone. What a change and the change in the other boys and girls and in their homes, the 4-H influence—proof that more than one can accomplish what he has done.

Over the Top

Club work in is community has a higher standard than any other club in the county, if not the State. They have reached the top of the ordinary 4-H ladder and nearly everyone has an extension ladder and such a ladder needs two or three or several others to pull on the rope to raise the top of the ladder, so it is in this way that these boys have helped one another and with their fathers and mothers have reached the round on the ladder where they can now see their own herds and flocks, a better education and a better life on the farm.

Changes Wrought

We again look at the farm of our "dreamer"—from a fifty acre farm of eight cows to over two hundred acres and a forty-five head dairy of which twenty-six are purebreds—all T. B. tested and in a Cow Testing Association. Standard bred poultry in place of barn-yard fowls and the flock is much larger. A white-faced flock of purebred

sheep. A new cow stable, hen houses, electric lights, new inclosed car, truck, modern machinery for farm work and now logs are being hauled out for a new basement barn—all a result of 4-H work and the cooperation of three brothers and their father and mother.

Prizes and Awards

Let us glance over the prizes won those years in 4-H work—\$4045 in money, loving cups, medals, typewriter, silver, calves, separator and many other trophies, over a thousand ribbons. And there are the trips, our friend has won—sixteen trips to state events, six to National and two to International events. All these were gained by playing the game fair and doing what was required and a little bit more.

A Changed Community

Suppose we just glance over the results of his club of which he is a member as well as leader. They have paid several thousand dollars for calves, sheep, pigs and chickens, but look at the quality as well as the quantity. It is this quality that has got them where they are in club work. If we should undertake to load all their trophies and ribbons onto a truck, it would take a large one. Prize money, nearly \$12,000 and trips, the eye-opener of the farm boy as well as education never gained elsewhere. Eighty-three trips to State events and twenty-six to National events. Is it any wonder that all you hear in that little community is Club Work? Everything depends on it now. It is their source of education, recreation and in fact the destiny of that section relies upon Club work. None of the older boys would be there now if it had not been for Club Work, the "dreamer" would not have been there—there was nothing worth while then. Probably one of the outstanding things about those boys in that Club and there are eighteen over sixteen years of age in this, there is not a smoker among them. Probably that is one of the reasons: why they can win judging contests and demonstrate and do all those things, because their minds are keen and active—they are healthy and they use the money saved this way to pay that extra price for Quality.

Looking Forward

We again look into that same sitting room, in that same chair sits a rosy-cheeked husky chap, pouring over some books and his 4-H typewriter, dreaming and planning the next Club meeting, of his groups he is teaching in judging cows and poultry, how to better the next County Fair, what animals will be best to show, if their rations are just right, of a new Club Member, who is just starting in,

trying to keep him coming 'till he too realizes that he can have dreams that will come true.

A Dream Come True

Ten and a half years have lapsed, since that frail youth read about the International. We can see him there now, viewing the hundreds of beef cattle, horses sheep and swine, the wonderful exhibits of grain and the corn—especially that raised by the 4-H Champion Corn grower and there were the other 4-H exhibits. He had the opportunity of being one of the delegates to Club Congress from his state the first year that it was ever represented. He had a wonderful time learning ideas from new acquaintances and renewing old friends—he seems to be remembered by them all—as one state leader remarked to another—“His smile goes a long, long ways.” It was while there that he received the greatest honor ever bestowed upon him. A city lad gave the address of welcome to those farm boys and girls from all over America in one of the finest churches in Chicago and it was the “dreamer” who was selected to give the response for those hundreds of farm youths. Webster says that a dream is “an idle fancy”—so we now bring our story of “idle fancies” to a close.

Carry On

Most boys look forward with eagerness to their twenty-first birthday—but our “dreamer” dreaded no event more than this. For he would then no longer be able to be a Club member, only a worker. Like the wounded soldier by the road, he must stand to one side and only encourage and cheer his comrades as they march on to the front but whether it be to a victory or a defeat he will always have these two words for them—

“CARRY ON”