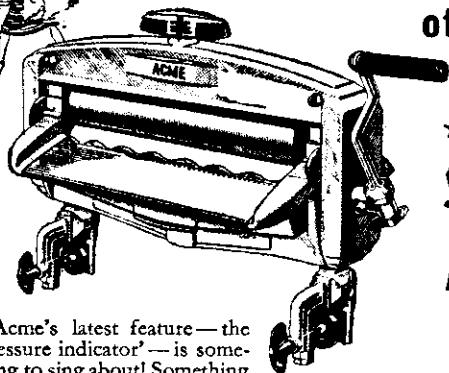




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THE CHURCHILL FEW OF US KNOW

CHURCHILL the statesman, the orator, the historian, the amateur of painting, the dam builder, even Churchill the bricklayer, we know. Now comes someone who knows him as Churchill the farmer—a Churchill that few of us in New Zealand even knew existed.

Among the nine-hundred-odd new settlers aboard the Atlantis when she berthed at Aotea Quay recently was Elizabeth Bryan-Brown. She is twenty-one years old and comes from Kent, where for the past twelve months she has been helping with the dairy work at Bardogs, one of Mr. Churchill's two farms. Christopher Soames, who is married to Mary Churchill, farms Bardogs for his father-in-law, assisted by a bailiff (or farm manager, as he would be called in New Zealand).

The herd at Chartwell, Mr. Churchill's other farm, consists of forty to fifty Shorthorns, some of them prizewinners, but Bardogs carries a dairy herd of fifteen Jersey cows, all of which are hand-milked.

The Bardogs herd came into existence because of Maybelle of the Isles. Maybelle is a champion Jersey cow presented to Mr. Churchill as a "peace offering" (if it could be called that) by the people of the Channel Islands, after their liberation from the Germans.

Maybelle seems to have been a bit of a roaring girl. The grateful Channel Islanders sent her to England in the middle of lactation. The sea-trip and the change of scene upset her and on her arrival she became known in the district as an "awk'ard" cow—"awk'ard" being the local word for temperamental.

But Mr. Churchill was proud of her and always recognised her among the

other cows. When he used to go up and scratch her head she would dig sideways with her horns and catch the Right Honourable Leader of his Majesty's Opposition in the waistcoat. That may be why Mr. Churchill, buying stock one day at a private sale in the locality, prodded one beast in the ribs and asked, not "What's her butterfat yield?" but "Does she bite?"

WHEN Miss Bryan-Brown left Studley Agricultural College with a Dairy Diploma under her arm, she thought it would be rather fun to work on one of Mr. Churchill's farms. Bardogs is only a few miles from her home at Edenbridge, near the Kent-Surrey border, so she rang Christopher Soames and asked if there was a job on the farm for a landgirl. There was, it happened, and for the next twelve months (until she left to sit another examination) Miss Bryan-Brown was in charge of the Jersey calves at Bardogs.

Her day's work began fairly early—she was up at 5.30 in the morning, winter and summer—and had started the milking by 6.30. In wintertime all the milking cows "slept in" under cover and the calves, which were hand-fed on a gruel made with milk substitute, were also kept under cover until they were about twelve months old—in calf-pens for the first eight weeks, then in covered yards. Sometimes, if the weather was good, they were put out earlier, but this depended on the season. Miss Bryan-Brown tried out a small radio in the milking shed but as Maybelle and the others in the herd continued to kick and plunge during milking, she was forced to conclude that either music was not their dish or the dulcet tones of the radio were not loud enough to drown the other noises.

BRITAIN'S main agricultural college is Reading, but Studley in Warwickshire, where Miss Bryan-Brown did a two-year course, is the only women's agricultural college in the whole of England. In addition to dairying, the fifty-year-old college provides training in horticulture and the college farms three hundred and fifty acres including ten acres of market garden and fifty acres of woodland. In England today many girls gain an agricultural training and then farm their own land or go into a farming partnership. There were ninety students—and a two-year waiting list—when Miss Bryan-Brown was at Studley College.

She set sail for New Zealand at only twelve hours' notice. Ten days earlier she had rung the emigration authorities to



THE RT. HON. WINSTON CHURCHILL, O.M.
Books, bricks, dams, pictures, cows, etc.

N.Z. LISTENER, JANUARY 27, 1950,