

Brown's Yard.

One day when helping to fetch the cows to be milked from the Wheel Pit's up to Brown's Farm Yard, like many of the other days be it morning or evening milking, I had helped to fetch them up to the Farm yard , or took them back down to the field after milking.

One particular afternoon when fetching the cows from the field, one of the Short horn cows had given birth to a lovely heifer calf, this was to please Derrick Bird as he had just taken the farm over from Oliver and Ern Brown, and was building up the milking herd.

We very calmly rounded her up with the new born calf, and started to take them along with the rest of the herd up to the farm, I had been taught to be very careful with cows when they had just given birth as they are very protective towards their off spring and can be more dangerous than a mad Bull.

We had just got them to the Elm Tree Bank, when this Short Horn cow with its Calf, happened to walk around the corner on the path to pass Mr and Mrs Sid Robinson's Shop, as the cow with the calf passed the large shop window, a very high rate Mrs Robinson started to wave her apron at the cow through the window, she was trying to make it get off the pathway away and from the widow and the shop doorway, for at times they would leave their droppings in this area outside the shop.

The cow had its calf between her and the shop window, in order to protect it, but as soon as the cow seen Mrs Robinson waving her apron, it did no more than to butt the window as hard as it could when it seen the movement the other side of the glass. The window smashed into smithereens when it did so, not only that, it did not seem to be content to stop, until there was not one thing on top of another with the displays that were on show in this window, I thought at one time the cow was going all the way into the shop after her, but at the last moment it backed off and carried along to the farm yard with it calf.

Another insurance pay out and a big job for Mr Fred Lovell to repair.

Another incident that I experienced while fetching the cow up to the farm ready for milking.

I was giving a hand one day to fetch the cows up to the farm, when a great deal of traffic including a Double Decker Bus came up behind us, after a while horns from some of the vehicles started to sound, followed by some verbal language about getting the cows out of the way, or to one side of the road, in order for them to get past.

A very young Friesian cow started to get very agitated when the bus got very close to it for it sounded it horn, things stated to get out of hand when it tried to get over the Iron Railing Fence opposite Mr Nightingales garden in West End, for the cow was only trying to get away from all the noise and commotion, I think the bus had bumped into it that made matter worse, it also did not like being constantly hit with a stick in order to make it get out of the way of the traffic.

2.

This particular Cow was one of the best milk'ers as well she had a very large bag and always gave many gallons a day.

When she tried to get over these iron rails with very sharp spikes on them, she caught her bag on the tip of one of them, it ripped open one of her teats, it took quite some time to get her off these railings, for they had to be cut through with an Hacksaw to release the cow that was impaled on them, eventually she was released and when she reached the Farm Yard a vet was sent for, the cow was very lucky for her wounds were not too severe, and after some stitching up of the torn side of her teat, she was very carefully milked on the three other's to take off the pressure of all the milk, this particular fence had to be altered for safety reasons for not only did the cow get hooked up on it but several children as well over a period of time.

The fence that she got hooked up on had been a replacement for the wall that had got washed down in the floods in 1939 when the Canal Bank broke at Weedon.

Regarding all the cow pats or droppings that were left on the road or pathways from the Wheel Pits to the Farm Yard, they would eventually fetch the entire road surface up and leave a small pot holes.

If and when a cow gave or had a calf, I would look forward to having some of the first milk (Beastnings) as it was very rich, for if any was going spare it was delicious when Cooked in the oven for a short time as it turned out like Egg Custard.

All through the year, day in day out twice a day, no matter what the weather, be it very hot and dry, or wet and cold old days, warm damp showerey days, or even Ice and Snowy days, the cows had to be milked.

On cold winter days it was nice to snuggle up to them when milking them as they were so warm and gave out a great deal of heat.

I have done this on the odd time before I went to school, and got told of and made to sit at the back of the class out of the way, for smelling of cows.

It was very interesting to get to know all the cows and their individual ways and habits, and to be shown what to look for when they were not very well, also being shown how to treat them to get them better.

The odd one would go down with milk fever after having a calf.

I thought it was a bit hard on the bull calf's when they had to be castrated, they would be all trussed up so that they could not kick anyone, then they had to be subjected to the very large pair of tweezers that crushed their testicles, thus rendering them useless.

At the same age they were subjected to being de horned by the use of a red hot iron, or by chemicals to burn them out to stop them from growing, as some of the cattle would grow very large horns if they were left to grow, when and if they were they were very dangerous and you could not get as many in a cattle yard.

3.

If and when the cows came into season they were taken to the Bull or given artificial insemination.

At odd times when cross breeding some of the cows with larger breeds cattle, be it for beef or what ever, they would have problems when it came to calving time, this was due to some of the calves being too big, I have been asked to reach inside the cow many a time to find the front legs of it, and when doing so attach a cord or webbing to them, so assistance can be given to pull the calf out away from its mother. Some of the methods that were used to do this were a lot to be desired.

Nearly all the Beef Bulls like Hereford and Aberdeen Angus were very docile but not to be trusted?

But all the dairy Bull's like Ayrshire. Friesian. Jersey. Guernsey or. Short Horn were very dangerous at all times, and had to be treated with great respect constantly.

I personally have been very lucky I have only been airborne once with a Jersey Bull and was lucky not to fall back in the pen that it stood in. This happened one night to me when milking a pedigree Jersey herd for a local Farmer while he was on Holiday.

It is quite interesting milking cows as they all differ, and they have to be given quantities of cattle cake according to the amount of milk that they give, as well as keeping you eye out for any problems with the cows or the milk (Mastitis etc.)

Their udders have to be kept clean, before and after milking, this is to keep away sores or any other complains that can occur if not done so.

They like to hear music while being milked, and they seem to give more milk when doing so, if someone strange comes into the milking parlour, they will all start to excrete and urinate.

(If you find out why please let me know)?

Stanley Joseph Clark.