

Harry Blackford Operates Mystery Farm Shown Last Week

This week the Press mystery farm reporter journeyed five miles southwest of Fairfield for the 34th mystery farm story. It was the Lewis Keith farm but farming this 240-acre Big Mound township farm is Harry Blackford and family—Mrs. Blackford, their two sons, Earl Eugene, 12, and Glendale, 8, and their daughter, Janice Arlene, 6.

Situated at such a low level of elevation that a good rainy spell means water lying on the land, the farm had previously been operated too extensively without consideration for clover needs to let the water level down into the ground. Mr. Blackford, who has been on the farm for the past seven years, has engaged in leveling operations Where needed and his farm program includes a good balance in clover. Such work is resulting in elimination of those water-locked spots.

Hogs Not So Profitable

Grain farming is the dominant operation of Mr. Blackford’s farm. As for livestock farming, he said, “The price of corn and the price of hogs today just don’t jibe. It’s too expensive raising hogs. We keep a few for our Meat and we may sell a few.” He added that in the summer they could be raised but that wintertime feeding is too expensive. He has four Guernsey milk cows.

His grain operations included corn, wheat and soybeans. Last year he had 40 acres of corn, 40 in wheat and 86 acres in beans. His beans averaged 18-19 bushels to the acre, the wheat averaged 16 bushels and the corn "came to about 60 bushels to the acre."

For Mrs. Blackford, we found out from other members of the family that she’s quite a cook and she has the blue ribbons to| was a prove it. The truth is that Mrs. Blackford’s angel food cakes have been awarded the blue ribbon first prize at the Wayne county fair the past three years.

Her gingerbread and cookies have also snared many prizes at the fair. This reporter got a sample of the small heart-shaped cookies which she had made for the two boys to take to their classes at the New Hope school on Valentine’s Day. They were tasty.

Quite A Gardener Too

Besides being a cook and liking it, Mrs. Blackford also is a gardener and likes doing that too. As a matter of fact, she sells some of her garden produce to local stores and this summer you may be eating her broccoli on your dinner table.

Mrs. Blackford specializes in such not-so-common items as okra, broccoli or eggplant in her garden. “I like to try something different and experiment a little with these plants," she told this reporter. Eggplant may not appeal to some but Mrs. Blackford has a recipe for an eggplant casserole which the youngsters in er family insists taste just like an oyster casserole.

Turning to the young folks, we find that Glendale is in the second grade and Earl Eugene in the seventh grade at the fine New Hope school a few miles southeast of their home. A picture of Earl and Glendale getting off the bus was snapped by the farm reporter. They like this bus ride each day and they're sold on New Hope as a fine School.

Active 4-H’ers

Earl has been a member of the New Hope 4-H agriculture club for two years, that's ever since he was 10 and old enough to join the club. This same New Hope 4-H club has won the outstanding club honors in Wayne county for three consecutive years now. Earl's soybean project was a prize winner at the county 4-H show last summer.

Mr. Blackford has his help problem solved because both Earl Blackford cand Mrs. Blackford can drive tractors and do it to help out in the busy farming season. Little Janice Arlene, whose sixth birthday was too late to allow her to start to school this year, isn’t a farmerette as yet but we’ suspect she'll be a 4-H’er when she gets old enough. She’s looking forward to going to school too. Now who says kids school!

Harry has belonged to the Wayne county Farm Bureau for many years and he’s a solid booster for the organization. He’ll find easy recognition here in Fairfield, for he once worked in the punch press department at Cheffords.



He and the boys, so Mrs. Blackford informs us, are great ball fans. “Whenever there’s a spare moment and the weather is good, you'll find ’em out in the yard playing ball,” she said. In fact, Harry has played on the Farm Bureau softball team in city league play in the past two years. Earl is a big rooter for the Chicago Cubs and the Boston Red Sox.

The Blackfords keep chickens —White Leghorns for layers and the New Hampshire Reds for fryers. “But the price of eggs makes me wonder sometimes about keeping the layers ... the cost of feed is so high that it’s hard to see any profit in them," he added.

Soil treatment 4s an important phase of farm operations for Mr. Blackford. "All our land has been phosphate and most of it limed, with some potash being added," Mr. Blackford explained.

He uses about a carload of lime a year. "This work to improve the soil is important, not only in bringing us a bigger yield but also in better quality crops, especially you can notice this in corn." Harry had one four acre tract of ladino and fescue that seven head of cattle and horses fed on all last summer and the crop was still heavy. That's proof that soil improvement pays.

Mrs. Blackford is a former Edwards county girl, Neva Crackel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Crackel, of Browns.

<div><p>A BAKER OF BLUE RIBBON CAKES at the county fair, Mrs. Blackford is seen here working in her modern kitchen as husband, Harry, and daughter, Janice Arlene, look on. —Press Photo.</p></div>	<div><p>THIS HANDSOME young man is Earl Eugene Blackford, who was snapped as he got off the school bus near his home. With him was his younger brother, Glendale, but the camera failed to “catch” him.</p></div>
<div><p>[picture of family in kitchen]</p><p>A BAKER OF BLUE RIBBON CAKES at the county fair, Mrs. Blackford is seen here working in her modern kitchen as husband, Harry, and daughter, Janice Arlene, look on. --- Press Photo.</p></div>	<div><p>[picture of Earl Blackford]</p><p>THIS HANDSOME young man is Earl Eugene Blackford, who was snapped as he got off the school bus near his home. With him was his younger brother, Glendale, but the camera failed to “catch” him.</p></div>

Home-Made Ice Cream

The kids insisted that Mrs. Blackford turn in this ice cream recipe, though it’s the middle of February, because as they said, “Everybody likes ice cream—any-time!” We think they are right. So here goes. Take 4 eggs, 3-4 cup sugar, 1-2 cup corn syrup (white or maple), 2 cups light cream) 2 cups milk, 2 tsp. vanilla, a pinch of salt,2 junket tablets dissolved in 1 tblsp. water. Beat eggs, sugar, corn syrup with rotary mixer until thick and pale colored. Mix milk, cream and vanilla. Add dissolved tablets. Pour into refrigerator trays and let stand about 10 minutes. Then put into refrigerator and freeze until firm. Return to mixer bowl, break-up with potato masher and beat with mixer until light and return to trays. Do not spread, refreeze.

IDENTIFIES FARM

Mrs. Marshall Sork, rural route 4, was first to identify the Harry Blackford farm last week —the Lewis ‘Keith property. But it wasn’t an easy one to name—many more thought it was the Raymond Lyons farm.