EGGS BY MAIL---HOW WE BUILT OUR LIST

By Nell C. Westcott, Maryland

Several years ago I passed on an October day through New York City. Waiting for my train at the Grand Central Station I browsed around the attractive shops under its spacious roof. A sign announcing "Fresh eggs, one day old" caught my eye and I stopped to inquire the price.

"A dollar and five cents per dozen, madam." I trust I had a "poker face," for that very week I had sold eggs down home (180 miles south of New York) for 42 cents a dozen.

On my return trip through the city I bought a number of daily newspapers, not only New York papers but also those of Newark, N. J., and other near-by cities. (You can get these at news stands in any good-sized city.) By that time I had visions of a mail-order business. We had the eggs. My Problem was to find customers.

I had an acquaintance in New York whom I called up by phone. Except for an inferior grade for cooking purposes she was not, she said, using eggs on account of the high prices. I proposed mailing eggs to her postpaid, in quantities of not less than two dozen at a time, at more moderate prices.

Throughout the life of our business we never deviated from that rule. If two dozen proved too many and were more than a patron could use weekly, she ordered alternate weeks or divided with a neighbor. We always kept well within the top-notch New York price, never going beyond 90 cents. This we evened up by never going below 50 cents, and after the postal rates were increased 55 cents was the minimum.

My New York acquaintance became our first customer. Since the growth of our business was from one lone customer to so many that we had to refuse orders I want to tell of its development in detail lest others attempting it become disheartened with the apparent show results their first efforts bring forth.

I searched my newspapers for society items, particularly for names of people living in some of the expensive suburbs of New York, such as New Rochelle, Pelham Manor, Montclair and the Oranges.

We had postal cords printed with our name, the name of our farm and our address; in the upper left-hand corner, "Fresh farm eggs, postage prepaid, safe arrival guaranteed." I wrote fifty letters, briefly stating our plan, enslosing a card and inviting the patronage of each of the fifty women addressed. Perhaps one third answered on the cards but only one customer was obtained. Within a very short time she brought us nearly a dozen patrons from among her friends. I wrote more letters, thus getting two more enthusiasts in different localities. A satisfied customer is undoubtedly one's best advertisement.

My husband and I were the only ones who gathered the eggs. An egg that was found any place but in the nest was put aside for home use. We took no chances on eggs being other than what we claimed for them, not more than twenty-four hours old when mailed. We were scrupulously careful with the cleaning, candling, selecting and packing.

We used cardboard cartons once only, so customers were not troubled with having to return them. Each egg was wrapped in blue paper. Paper, twine and cartons we bought in large quantities at reduced prices. Insured mailing proved worth while, breakage was very slight and boxes lost were refunded by Uncle Sam, more or less promptly.

The work was pleasant and profitable with often a gleam of humor: some people have absurd fancies inregard to their breakfast eggs—whether they are to be white or brown and why; as a business it had a very delightful human side.

During the years we mailed eggs we dealt almost entirely with people we have never seen. We sent monthly bills and our "bad bills" did not exceed $10 in all.

Circumstances made us give up our poultry business and it was with real regret that we had to sever so many pleasant relations. Six months have passed. At first we had daily letters hoping we could supply eggs again, and even now an occasional pleading letter comes begging us, as a special favor, to send eggs. From the letters it would seem as though eggs such as we sent are as scarce as hens' teeth in New York and vicinity—and at our prices I believe they are.

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CONGRESS A HUGE SUCCESS

The Del-Mar-Va Takes Inventory Congress held at Salisbury last week was a huge success. Prominent agriculturists and business men were among those who reported on the surveys that have been conducted for the past few weeks.

The scope of the Congress during the two-day session included:

The Outstanding Problems of Agriculture On the Del-Mar-Va Peninsula.

The Problems of Land Settlement and Community Development.

The Present Status of The Resort Business Considered as a Future Peninsula Industry.

Federal And Inter-State Co-Operation In Future Legislation For Development Of The Peninsula.

Improvement of Peninsula Educational And Recreational Equipment As Immediate Essentials Toward Desirable Immigration.

Development Of Industrial Opportunities For Surplus Labor And Del-Mar-Va Products.

The following paragraphs were taken from the speeches made at the Congress:

"I very heartily agree that the biggest problem before the Peninsula, is the problem of marketing including production problems as to quality, and standardnzation of grading and packing. We have learned how to produce but we have not learned how to market. We have produced by machinery but we are still marketing by hand."—Dr. Joseph H. Willets, University of Pennsylvania.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."—Mr. Filkin, New York.

"From the foregoing entirely inadequate discussion of the agricultural situation on the Del-Mar-Va Pninsula, it is evident that here is a land of unusual resources and opportunities. Its highly productive soil, its mild climate and long growing season, together with its liberal and evenly distributed rainfall all conspire to make it one of the most productive and most highly diversified agricultural and horticultural regions of America. Its nearness to the teeming centers of urban population and its highly efficient transportation facilities provide marketing opportunities and advantages not enjoyed by most of the areas competing with it.

"To meet the competitive conditions ignored or undreamed of a decade or two ago, more attention must be directed to economical production of high quality products. This is not only try in the dairy industry, but it is almost equally true of every type of production. More business in farming is required. Every available aid to better agriculture needs to be utilized. More definite information is demanded concerning specific problems of production and marketing. To secure such information there is need for an exhaustive searching survey covering all phases of the industry.—Dr. Bomberger—Maryland Extension Service.

"Agricultural in this Peninsula is at the cross-roads; its future will depend upon our own action. If we choose to go among after the slipshod methods of the past, we need expect no improvement in our present situation. But if, on the other hand, the intelligent force of all the agencies on this Peninsula are brought to bear on our agricultural problems there is no reason why we should not look to the future with hope of better conditions. It all rests in our own hands, but remember in this connection the old adage "United we stand, divided we fall."—Dr. C. A. McCue, Dean University of Delaware.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans' Court for Kent County letters of Administration c. t. a., on the personal estate of

JOSEPH H. M. CHESNEY

late of New Castle County, Delaware, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchers thereof, to the undersigned on or before the 29th day of July, 1927, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 25th day of January, 1927.

STEPHEN R. COLLINS,
J29. Administrator c. t. a.

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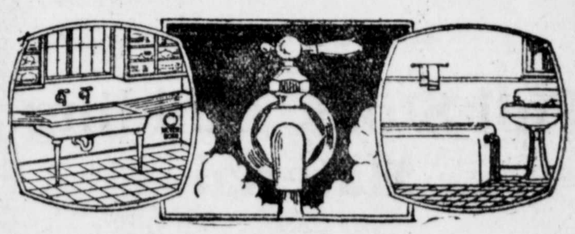

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