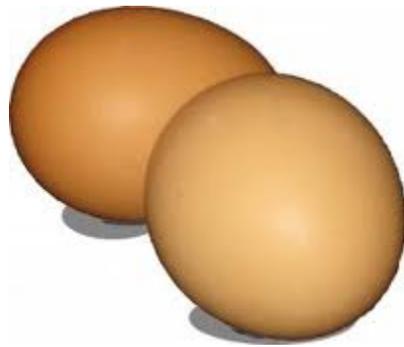


# EGGS



**(A part of the life of Esther L. Scott for forty years)**

When growing up in Barton County, Missouri, Esther Livingston would frequently walk down the dusty road that led from her birthplace to the home of Aunt Jennie and Uncle George Quillin. When visiting them, Esther was welcome to eat her fill of eggs, since Aunt Jennie always kept a large flock of chickens. It was quite a treat for a growing young girl from a large family.

In later years, the memory of those pleasant visits may have been a motivating factor in establishing her own flock of poultry. Married in Miami, Oklahoma, in 1926 to Winifred B. Scott, they soon came back to Missouri to farm in the Duval community. Esther, like all hard working farmers' wives of that era, raised chickens to use for a ready source of food. If needing dinner for the family or for company, one could always chase down a fryer, chop off the head, pluck the feathers, cut it into pieces, and put it in the frying pan for a meal. Eggs were used in cooking on a daily basis. Any excess eggs were sold to the local Duval Store or to the Farmers Exchange in Jasper; the cash received was used to pay for the chicken feed and buy what few groceries were needed. In 1927 eggs sold for twenty cents a dozen and for a brief time, thirty-two cents. During the hard years of the depression, they only brought ten cents, less than a penny apiece, but provided many a meal for the family.

At first not too many chickens were raised; in 1929 twenty-five Leghorn pullets were purchased. The next year Esther, recognizing the opportunity to augment the income of the farm, increased her number of hens. Eighteen dollars were paid to have 600 eggs hatched, and the same number was added in 1931. In March of 1933 two "Old Trusty" incubators (one holding 120 eggs and one 150 eggs) were purchased from Grace Pfander for \$4. The cost was soon recouped by setting eggs for another neighbor for \$4.14. Esther continued to do custom hatching for others for several years as well as hatching eggs for herself.



**Old Trusty Egg Incubator**

The gray metal incubators were housed in the cellar down the steps beneath the smoke house. Having no electricity, the necessary heat was provided by oil burners which mimicked the warmth of a mother hen. The eggs needed constant attention as they had to

be individually turned three times a day for a period of twenty-one days. Shortly thereafter, the little chicks would peck their way out of their eggshell prison, become dry and fluffy from the warm temperature of the incubator, and before long be ready for a move into the brooder house. At first there was no suitable henhouse on the Everett Deardorff property west of Jasper. To remedy this, Mr. Deardorff purchased lumber for one, and W. B. constructed a nice-sized building. After the newly-hatched baby chicks developed their pin feathers, grew in size, and became pullets, they were transferred to the new hen house.

As eggs accumulated, they were stored in the cool cellar and saved until time for the weekly Saturday trip to Jasper. Any old hen that did not produce soon found her legs tied with binder twine, put in the trunk of the car, and taken to town to be sold. Young cockerels, sold as fryers, always found a ready market. After collecting the cash for these products and paying the feed bill, Esther headed down the street to the grocery store for needed items, splurging a bit on a copy of *The Saturday Evening Post* (5 cents) and a sack of Country Gentleman tobacco for Winifred's pipe (10 cents). Hard work was thus rewarded.

Moving to the Dr. Knott farm just west of Jasper in 1943, Esther had a large chicken house north of the residence. Now, with electricity, an electric incubator with a capacity for 600 eggs was purchased. Placed in a corner of the dining room, all eggs in each tray could be turned at one time by using a lever; this was a great time saver. The big incubator was not used very long for it became both more cost and time efficient to purchase already hatched baby chicks. Some years they were ordered by mail and picked up at either the train station or at the post office in Jasper; later they were bought from Wells Hatchery, north of town. The downy baby chicks were transported home in cardboard boxes with little round air holes in the side. The peeping little babies were placed in the fresh yellow straw of the brooder house, cozily warmed by a kerosene heater.



Roosters were kept for the fertilization of eggs. Anyone who entered the chicken yard – especially little girls – had to beware of an attack by the strutting fowl with their sharp talons. Avaneil learned to carry a bucket to defend herself. After the move to the Knott farm, a croquet court of hard packed dirt was measured out in the bare ground of the chicken yard. Before a game of croquet could be played, however, the chickens (especially roosters) had to be chased away, and the court swept clean. Early each morning the proud roosters, “ruling the roost,” awakened all on the farm with their cock-a-doodle-dos.

There was a side benefit to raising chickens during the years of World War II - colored feed sacks were acquired without any extra cost. These brightly printed cotton bags containing chicken feed were carefully selected as the feed was purchased each week. After the mash was emptied into a bin, the sacks were ripped apart, washed, ironed, and

used for many sewing projects. Three of them were enough to make a dress; five white sacks would make a sheet. Cotton material was difficult to find and purchase during the lean war years, therefore the feed sacks filled many a need.

The military needed many eggs during the war. The eggs were dehydrated and sent to feed the soldiers of the armed forces. As the demand for eggs grew, Esther gradually increased the size of her flock. By 1946, following the end of World War II, she was gathering 100 eggs each day.

\* \* \*

An eighty-three acre farm had been purchased in 1947. While negotiating for it, not sure if they could swing the deal, Esther bemoaned the fact that all the Livingston sisters owned their own homes except her! After final papers were signed, the “Robinson farm “ was rented out until Esther and W.B. felt financially ready to leave the larger farm of 160 acres and move to one with only half the acreage. At the end of 1952, after having lived on rental property for twenty-eight years, they finally moved to their own place north of Carthage.

Moving day meant hauling all the farm equipment and animals as well as the household goods. Arising in the wee hours of the morning of moving day, Esther and W.B. took the kerosene lantern to the chicken house where the hens were sleeping on the roost. The drowsy hens were caught and, raising quite a squawk, were crowded into coops for transportation to their new home. The portable brooder house, as well, was relocated to the Carthage farm, a distance of several miles. It was built on skids and had previously been moved only a few yards at a time by using a team of horses. This time was a different story. W. B., aided by six strong neighbors, loaded it upon a flat bed wagon for the trip. Soon it was in its new location and ready to serve for many more years.

\* \* \*





April 1956

It didn't take long for Esther to begin planting trees, shrubs, and flowers, confident she would enjoy their beauty and bounty for many years. Long rows of gladioli bulbs continued to be planted in the garden as had been done in the past at Jasper. Favorite perennial flowers were transplanted from the Dr. Knott farm. Friends and neighbors shared many "starts" of their plants. As they became established she would pass on the favor, dividing roots or digging up extra seedlings to give to other acquaintances. Purple iris came from Mrs. Evans, the wife of the Jasper band director. The big white iris bulbs were part of a rare purchase from Wild Bros. Nursery in Sarcoxie. Having been transplanted several times through the last fifty years or more, the irises survive today along with the pink and white peonies and the purple violets.

Rhubarb, asparagus roots, raspberries, blackberries, boysenberries, gooseberries, and strawberries were set out. Planting was just the beginning. Weeds were fought continually, old straw was applied as mulch, and manure was hauled from the barn lots to increase productivity of the garden. A wide variety of vegetables were harvested and canned or frozen for later use, including spinach, peas and the hard-to-shell lima beans. The fruit, picked fresh from the trees or purchased by the bushel, was also preserved or made into jams and jellies. Bushels of black walnuts were picked up. Esther was content when she could say she had a "full cellar and a full freezer."

“Use It up, wear it out, make it do, or do without,” the motto of the hard years of the depression and wartime, was followed religiously throughout Esther’s lifetime. Grease provided the base for homemade lye soap. Made and poured into round crocks, it was cut into blocks after it hardened and provided a good supply for use in doing the weekly laundry. Carpet rags from worn out clothing were torn into strips, sewn together, rolled into balls, and taken to a lady to weave into new rag rugs. Clothing sent from Chicago by Aunt Lu was washed, ripped apart, and became dresses or new little coats. Nothing was wasted.

But rather than “do without,” Esther carried everything a step further by learning all she could about a particular “want” and then following through with a finished product. When new drapes were needed, Esther carefully studied the method of making them and produced professional-looking curtains for her home. The procedure for braiding wool rugs was learned, resulting in several being made. The list of activities continually expanded.

Esther’s hands were never idle. A pan of black walnuts, previously cracked, often awaited either “resting time” or a long winter’s evening. The nutmeats must be meticulously picked out. Learning how to crochet doilies or to tat lace became challenges for period of time. Corduroy quilt blocks of many colors were cut and sewn together in nine-square blocks. Lined with flannel, they made warm throws. These became treasured gifts for family and friends. The Singer sewing machine was kept busy stitching many dresses, shirts, and other articles of clothing for the family. Items for the household, including tea towels, bedding and curtains, were sewn. And then, there was the never-ending mending; a farmer’s overalls often met with rough wear and needed patching.

The Marion Extension Club offered various craft lessons, all thoroughly enjoyed by Esther. These included learning how to do textile painting, basket weaving, and glass etching. The technique of etching designs on metal trays and the creation of fiber flowers for corsages were learned and practiced. Photo albums and scrapbooks made from plywood were decorated with colored pictures through the use of a wood-burning tool; these were gifts for the grandchildren. There was always an on-going project of some kind.

It did not take Esther long after the move to Carthage to make friends in the Marion community. She called on her new neighbors and continued to stay in contact with the old friends from Jasper. The visits were returned – usually unannounced since a telephone was not installed until 1956. When the Scott relatives or the Livingston sisters (Daisy, Mabel, Effie, or Josephine) would come to visit, Esther would have a big family dinner, complete with large dishes of sugared strawberries (in season), and always big hot buns. Very frequently the grandchildren and their parents dropped by. Seldom was a day spent at home without someone coming to visit W. B. and Esther.

Soon Esther, a former member of the Four-Square Extension Club of Jasper, became a member of the Marion Extension Club. She became involved with the Bawl 'n' Beller 4-H club because of Lynne's membership and served as its leader for ten years. Meetings of these organizations were regularly attended in addition to those of the Alpha Club of Jasper and the Methodist Church Sunday School. All met Esther's desire to "learn something new."

Esther and W. B. worked together on carpentry projects, with Esther doing the planning and measurement while W. B. did the physical labor. Before moving, the house had been partially torn down and rebuilt. Later a new machine shed was erected; henhouses were repaired or newly constructed. Smaller items such farm gates, chicken nests, feed boxes, or kitchen cabinets were made. Farm work was a joint venture also, particularly during harvest time when Esther would help by doing the milking or driving the grain truck. Both hard workers, they had a true partnership.

\* \* \*

Regardless of all the interesting things to be done, and being continually plagued with blinding sinus headaches and other physical problems, the daily chores demanded attention first. The raw milk for household consumption must be pasteurized. The chickens required feed and water. The henhouses needed to be kept clean and new sawdust added for litter. Eggs needed to be gathered, cleaned, and cased for sale. For a period of time after moving to Carthage, frequent trips were made to the Farmers Exchange in Jasper to sell the eggs. Esther always said that she had done a day's work before her daughters ever got out of bed.

The old rock henhouse only held 250 chickens. W.B. and Esther rebuilt an old shed west of the big barn that held 400 laying hens. When back-to-back droughts reduced farming profits, additional income was needed. An ad was placed in the newspaper advertising fresh eggs, resulting in many phone calls and subsequent sales at the door. There was such a demand, the old hens had a hard time keeping up, necessitating the purchase of additional eggs for resale. In 1958 more than 300 eggs a day were gathered; the flock was enlarged to meet this need.



With a larger number of laying hens and increased production, an even bigger market was needed. Each week neighbor Elizabeth Shaw would take as many as 50 dozen cartons of eggs to her workplace, the shirt factory in Webb City. People from Carthage continued to come to the door; since they were willing to pay a

premium for fresh eggs, Esther raised her price.

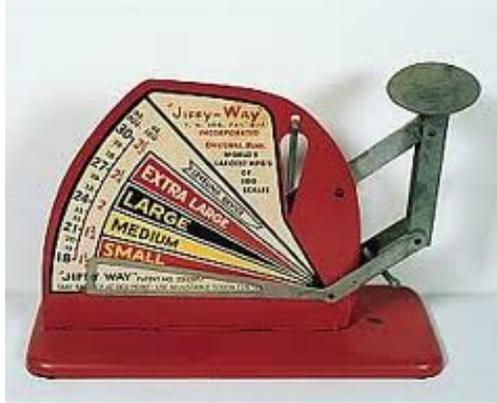
In 1960 a contract was signed with the K & K Truck Stop and Café to provide weekly delivery of eggs. This was the first of many other contracts through the years. Customers using large quantities included the County Jail, the McCune Brooks Hospital, and the Fair Acres nursing home. These were delivered in crates, holding 30 dozen eggs each. Stanton Plumbing, the Oak Street Market, another grocery store, and another truck stop required a smaller quantity of eggs. Nancy Lane, baker of wedding cakes, used quite a few. (Nancy Lane became a good friend and baked the wedding cakes of Avanelle, Ruth, and Lynne.) The white 1958 Ford station wagon was well-used, often filled to capacity with the large boxes of eggs. Many sales continued to be made to individuals.



A larger house for 600 hens was constructed in 1963. A feed room was built enabling the Farmers' Exchange to deliver feed by the truckload, cutting down somewhat on labor as the heavy sacks of mash or pellets no longer had to be opened and dumped. The new henhouse had an added feature of an "egg room." Additional poultry equipment and a cooler were purchased. Inside the egg room were the egg washer, egg candler, scales, crates and boxes, as well as a couple of stools for the workers. So much time was spent isolated in the egg room, the installation of a telephone became a necessity.



Eggs were gathered in wire baskets which were then placed in the egg washer. The open wire allowed the water to gently swish through the eggs, removing any straw or soil. The back and forth movement produced a "wee-waw-wee-waw" sound, that echoed in the small egg room. Built without windows, it was dark enough for a worker to effectively candle the eggs. By holding them up to a bright light source, the condition of the air cell, yolk, and white were checked. After being found acceptable, the eggs were weighed, sorted, and put into cases - ready for sale.



The "red" egg scale used by Montee is now in his possession in Columbia, TN. Another egg scale used was a green one.

\* \* \*

As the grandchildren arrived, “Grandma” and “Grandpa” were frequent baby sitters whenever their mothers needed to make trips after groceries, to go for doctor appointments, or just to enjoy an evening out. It didn’t matter how busy they were, Grandma and Grandpa never said “no.” Allison, Amy, Montee, and Vicki had good times visiting their grandparents, as did Michael, Murray, and Steven in their turn.<sup>1</sup> When Michael was about three years old he said, “Grandma like grandsons . . . and grandsissers, too.”

Montee, the first grandson, was a frequent visitor. His grandparents were proud to have a boy in the family after having had a family of three girls. In July of 1962 seven-year-old Montee helped his grandpa pour concrete for the new 30 x 60 shed foundation. He returned to help all the next day, holding or carrying boards and running errands. In the fall when Grandpa went to Chicago to a sister-in-law’s funeral, Montee stayed with Grandma to keep her company and to help with the chores.

In December 1962 Montee and Vicki were taken by their grandparents to the Carthage Christmas Parade and taken out to eat at Jed Brown’s café. Returning home, they both helped spread sawdust in the chicken house. The next spring, in 1963, Montee was “old hand” at working with concrete and helped pour the foundation for the new henhouse.

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<sup>1</sup> Susan and Sarah were born in 1970 and 1974, never knowing their grandmother. The trips of Grandpa to New Jersey gave them special time with him.



Montee December 1963

In June of 1964 when Montee was nine years old, Grandma phoned to offer him a paid job candling eggs. Every evening he would ride his bicycle two miles over to his grandparents and work an hour or so. Each time Grandma paid him with a fifty-cent piece. The time spent in the egg room with his grandma turned into a learning session as she taught him a new word each day. Grandma always introduced a new, interesting topic (usually of a historical nature) for discussion. Montee also learned the commitment of being a “farmer” as he found his job required him to be there seven days a week.

The next spring Grandpa and Montee picked up many rocks from the fields. He helped his grandma carry and lay 500 bricks for a patio. As he grew older, he would help mow the grass or do other chores. Montee assisted Grandma as she assembled her coin collection, begun because egg customers often paid in small change. He was a big help as his eyes could see the small dates on the coins and could watch out for the ones needed. He also helped with the braided rugs; his small fingers were effective in helping to turn the tubes of woolen material that were braided for the rugs. With daily contact spanning several years, Montee was privileged to develop a close relationship with his grandparents.

Vicki recalls candling and grading eggs on occasion when she was visiting. Since her big brother had a job, Grandma must have believed seven-year-old Vicki felt left out. She was given a “job” of cleaning the bathroom with her very own miniature brush and other supplies. And, it was a paying job!

Suddenly, in February of 1966, Esther was diagnosed with leukemia. Four weeks later, she was unexpectedly gone, leaving a huge void in the family. She left a wonderful

legacy of quick intelligence and an eagerness to face new challenges. How pleased she would be to know the fine young men and women her grandchildren and great-grandchildren have become.

W. B. continued with the egg business on his own, with the daily assistance of his grandson. Working throughout the summer he and Montee made the difficult adjustment in working as a team. In the fall Montee started Junior High, and now football practices and games conflicted with his work schedule. Available to only work on weekends, it became evident that an additional helper for Grandpa was needed.

Ruth had substituted at the LaGrange rural school and had observed Marvin Baird playing catch by himself, bouncing a ball off a wall. The girls of the school spent their recesses walking around the schoolhouse, and the boys followed behind, trying to hear what the girls were giggling about. This wasn't Marvin's cup of tea, so he found his own entertainment with his ball and glove. Believing that this exhibited a good characteristic for a worker, he was recommended for the "egg job." Marvin was soon hired and began pedaling his bike across 71 Highway to work on week days. Besides helping with the eggs, his infectious laugh brightened the day. He was paid fifty cents unless he worked longer, in which case he earned seventy-five cents; he was always paid in quarters. (Later the boys' pay was raised to a dollar.) Marvin and Montee became Grandpa's "egg boys." They shared many an escapade and developed a life-long friendship.

After entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Montee added track to his schedule. Now, instead of riding his bicycle to work, he would put on leg weights and run, rather than ride his bicycle, to Grandpa's for the weekend work. Both of the boys helped with the eggs for several years, until other interests and higher paying jobs took precedence.

W. B., writing later about his transition in taking over "Esther's egg business," stated, "I had good help, Montee and Marvin Baird. After they moved on to better jobs, I tried another boy, who was not so good."

When additional farming acreage was undertaken and W.B. could not be at home to take care of all of the old customers; he gave up door-to-door sales and added several contracts to furnish eggs by the 30-dozen case. The flock now numbered around a thousand laying hens. This worked well until Fair Acres changed management and the big contract of furnishing 90 dozen eggs per week was lost. About the same time, the 750 laying hens in the large henhouse developed a disease. Losing the majority of them, it was too late in the season to get replacements from the hatchery. All things combined – along with his advancing age – helped W. B. make the decision to sell the hens.

For nearly 50 years chickens had been part of the daily routine of the Scott family. The chicken houses were now emptied and closed up.





Additions:

When gathering eggs, had to beware of the black snakes that might be curled up in a nest, feasting on the warm eggs.

along with the setting hens that would peck any intruder. Some hens were quite possessive and would not leave the nest; they knew their job was not finished until babies hatched from the eggs.

Mother - carrying two full buckets of eggs from the egg room, would turn and kick the door shut.



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287 PK 4101	25 Chicks	50 Chicks	100 Chicks	500 Chicks
Leghorns	\$2.55	\$ 4.88	\$9.25	\$45.75
Barred Rocks	2.69	5.15	9.75	48.25
S. C. Rhode Island Reds	2.69	5.15	9.75	48.25
Buff Orpingtons	2.75	5.25	10.00	49.50
Minorsas	2.69	5.15	9.75	48.25
White Wyandottes	2.75	5.25	10.00	49.50
Light Mixed Breeds	2.50	4.75	9.00	44.50
Heavy Mixed Breeds	2.55	5.00	9.50	47.00

**Standard Chicks.** Fine chicks of high grading and quality from vigorous, healthy flocks and well known hatcheries with a reputation for hatching quality chicks. *Skipped Direct from Hatchery. Postpaid.*

287 PK 4100	25 Chicks	50 Chicks	100 Chicks	500 Chicks
Leghorns	\$1.98	\$3.88	\$7.25	\$35.75
Barred Rocks	2.20	4.15	7.75	38.25
Rhode Island Reds	2.20	4.15	7.75	38.25
Buff Orpingtons	2.25	4.25	8.00	39.50
Minorsas	2.20	4.15	7.75	38.25
White Wyandottes	2.25	4.25	8.00	39.50
Light Mixed Breeds	1.90	3.75	7.00	34.50
Heavy Mixed Breeds	2.15	4.00	7.50	37.00

Prices Subject to Change Without Notice.



### Comb Foundation

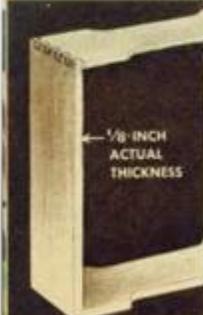
**Brood Foundation—Wired**  
 Nine wires in each sheet. Saves hand wiring. Finest American Beeswax. Size 8 1/4 by 16 1/4 in. Requires divided bottom bar frames. 7 sheets to lb. **Mailable.**  
 87 K 5725—1 Lb. . . . . \$2.90  
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**Brood Foundation—Not Wired**  
 Pure domestic Beeswax, finest quality. For brood frames. Size 7 1/4 by 16 1/4 in. 7 to 8 sheets per lb. **Mailable.**  
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 87 K 5729—5 Lbs. . . . . \$2.35

**Thin Super Foundation**  
 For extracting frames and sections. Size 3 1/4 by 15 1/4 in. About 28 sheets per lb. **Mailable.**  
 87 K 5732—1 Lb. . . . . \$6.00  
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 Ship. wts. above items 2 and 7 lbs.

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Rust-resisting Galvanized. About 4 in. wide; 2 in. deep; length 48 in. Metal rod keeps chicks out of feeder. Adjustable ends to raise feeder for growing chicks. Ship. wts. 2 lbs. 7 oz. and 4 lbs. **Mailable.**  
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 Two for. . . . . \$1.10



### 30 Sections 35c

Strictly first quality sections. . . nothing better made. Clear white Wisconsin basswood, select second growth, 3/4 in. thick. Strong square corners. Clean-cut tightly fitted V-grooves. Thoroughly seasoned, polished both sides. **Mailable.**  
 No. 1 Quality. Scalloped. Size 4 1/4 by 4 1/4 by 1 1/2 in. Ship. wts. 4.8, 16 and 31 lbs.  
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 87 K 5730—100 Sections . . . . . 98c  
 87 K 5731—200 Sections . . . . . \$2.00  
 487 K 5730—500 Sections . . . . . 4.75

No. 2 or "B" Grade. Special value. Scalloped style. Size 4 1/4 by 4 1/4 by 1 1/2 in. Slightly cream colored or with brown water stain spots, otherwise perfect. Ship. wt. 31 lbs.  
 487 K 5744—500 Sections . . . . . \$4.35

### Galvanized Barbed Wire

Tough open-bearing annealed wire, heavily galvanized and full gauge. Long, sharp round barbs. Two-point barbs spaced 5 in. apart on cattle wire and 3 in. apart on hog wire. Four-point barbs 6 in. apart on cattle wire and 4 in. apart on hog wire. Sold only in full 80-rod spools, 1320 ft. or a quarter mile. For Easy Payments, see Budget Plan in Wards General Catalog. *Skipped from Stock in Chicago or Factory in Fort Madison, Iowa.*

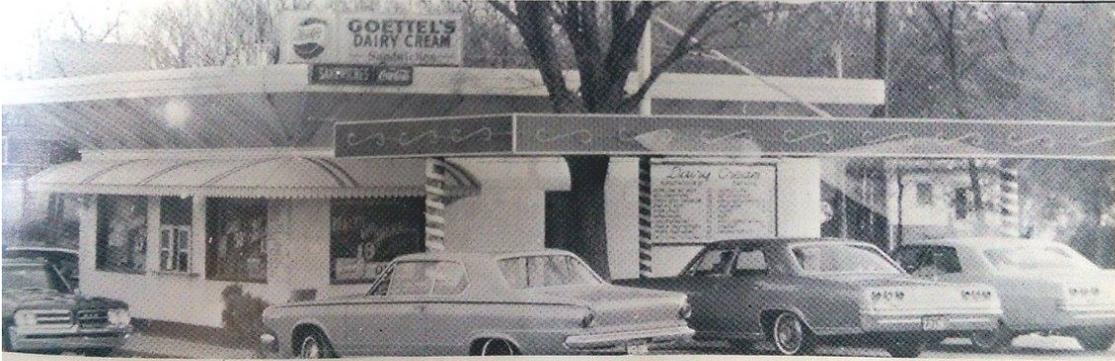
## \$1.87

80-RD.  
SPOOL

14-Gauge—2-Point Light Weight	Ship. Wt.	Per Spool
188 K 5443—Galvanized Cattle Wire	43 lbs.	\$1.87
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188 K 5421—Galv. Cattle Wire, 2-Pt.	79 lbs.	3.00
188 K 5423—Galv. Hog Wire, 2-Pt.	85 lbs.	3.00
188 K 5424—Galv. Cattle Wire, 4-Pt.	85 lbs.	3.00
188 K 5425—Galv. Hog Wire, 4-Pt.	92 lbs.	3.00

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