



Clearwater Farm

According to W.D. Pipkin, his family just grew into the Angus business. Over the past 50 years, three generations of Pipkins have done just that at Clearwater Farm in Springfield, Mo.

Jim, representing the youngest of those generations, started with a heifer when he was 4 years old. Now at 21, he is a full partner in the family operation. He owns 70 of the 150 Clearwater cows, does most of the A.I. work, keeps the show barn full, participates in local and state sales, junior Angus association events and much more. The farm's future is assured through the attitude and involvement of this young partner.

Clearwater Farm, 700 acres in the heart of America's Ozarks, draws its name from a creek that runs year-round through the center of that land. The present place has supported Angus cattle since the early '30s and Berkshire hogs before that; original deeds for the family farm trace back to 1865.

Morris, W.D. and Jim (father, son and

A 50-Year History And A Strong Future Built On Several Generations of the Pipkin Family

by Nancy Ann Sayre

Morris, W.D. and Jim Pipkin—father, son and grandson—represent the three generations involved with Clearwater Angus today.

grandson) share in the ownership and work load involved today. The family and their cattle are well-known across Missouri and surrounding states, mostly as a result of long-time successful participation in sales and shows. A solid market for their farm-tested bulls and young females is founded on local and commercial support, yet cattle carry the Clearwater prefix across the entire country.

A look at each of the three Pipkin generations at Clearwater today gives insight to both the history and future of the operation.

Weathering the Changes Well

Morris Pipkin retired a few years ago at the age of 75. He distributed some of his cattle to grandchildren, then sold the remaining cows and machinery to his son and grandson. He still owns much of the land though, and his lifestyle denies any hint of complete retirement. Each morning finds him feeding hay or helping with daily chores, and when the weather and his health

permit he pursues whatever projects need his attention.

Morris' generation of the Pipkin family, though, was not the first to play a role in Clearwater Angus—he and his father were original partners in the initial Angus purchase. Morris' father had bought out his brother in 1904; the operation has since expanded from 80 to 700 acres and shifted from crops and hogs to Angus cattle. Those first heifers were bought in 1933 and included Kansas-bred commercials at \$19 a head and six purebreds at \$50 a round. Four bred heifers were selected the next year from the top of Sunbeam's offering to really get Pipkins in the registered business.

Since that time, Morris has seen Angus cattle swing from one side of the genetic pendulum to the other and back. Some of his early herd bulls weighed close to a ton and yearlings pushed the scales down to 1,000 lb. After seeing smaller Angus dominate show and sale circles for many years, selection at Clearwater once again centers around big, growthy Angus cattle. Daughters of Dormacs Bardoliermere 77, Ankonian Bandoliermere 4079 and Bon View Great Northern 553 make up much of the herd's nucleus; Hi Way Lumbo is the current senior herd sire.

The farm location itself provided good advertisement (it straddles old Highway 66 which used to be the main route from Chicago to Los Angeles and was referred to as the backbone of America). Showing, though, has always been a big part of Clearwater promotion. Morris can reflect with a smile on many years of Angus history—winding tales of show circuit life on a boxcar, or looking through an *ANGUS JOURNAL* file which dates back as far as Clearwater Angus.

Sale and Show Participation Have Been a Key

W.D., Morris' only son, grew up with Angus cattle and today they are his only business. He too can recall many miles on the show road—he exhibited Berkshire hogs and Angus extensively in the south central states in the late '40s and '50s. Economics of keeping show cattle on the road brought an end to those days, but state shows and consignment sales still serve as Clearwater's strongest form of advertising.

The current operation now centers more heavily around growth and production of the cattle rather than show winnings. Pipkins have been keeping production records for the past 20 years, and W.D. can measure direct progress of his breeding program by the performance of his young bulls. A young Sir Wms Warrant son out of a pathfinder cow boasted a weaning weight of 840 lb. and a frame score of seven last fall to surpass any other Clearwater figures. All bulls are fed for a 140-day gain test on the farm, and yearling weights climb regularly over the 1,200-lb. mark (and those figures are reached while the bulls run on pasture and have free-choice hay).

As for the females, W.D. insists that they produce consistently within a pasture and

hay management system. He knows his cows well, and depends more on that knowledge than calculated records for his selection decisions. A good, working cow has to have plenty of volume and capacity, he says, and it is much cheaper to breed flesh on than feed it on. His biggest and heaviest calves do not always make the cut; they must be feminine and have a strong reproduction record behind them. As a result of W.D.'s philosophies, Clearwater cattle have plenty of grow to them, but they are not extremely large-framed. Extremes will not work in that environment.

A serious A.I. program for more than 20 years has been another key to progress at Clearwater. W.D. and his son Jim breed 80 to 90 percent of the herd artificially (some to the breed's most popular bulls and many to their own herd sires). The remainder are bred by pen matings. No bulls are turned out in Clearwater pastures—even as clean up

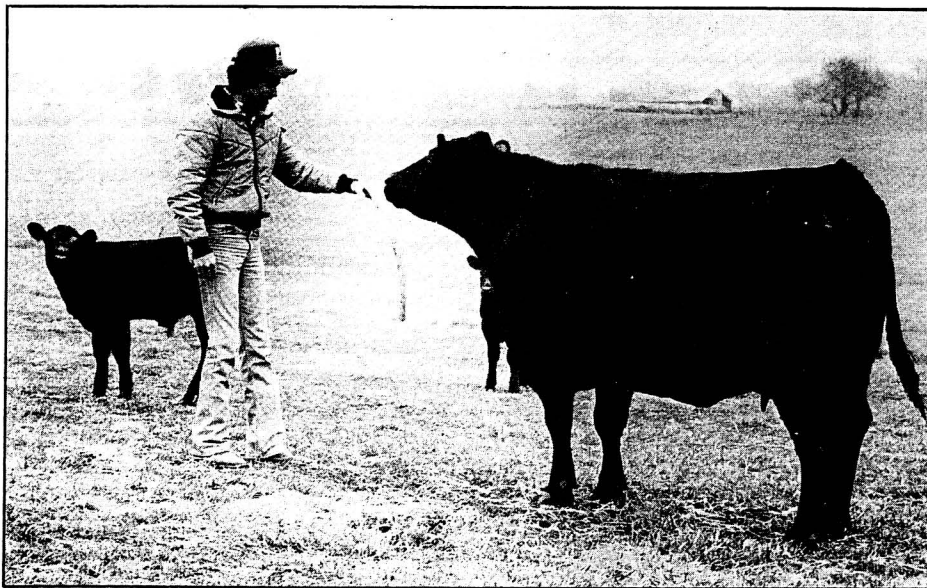
bulls—and although the calving season stretches through 10 months of the year, (a result of the old show days which is hard to change), each cow calves on an annual or 11-month interval.

This type of calving and breeding management requires year-round attention, but the extra efforts of W.D. have paid off. He stopped cropping 15 years ago and the Berkshire operation which used to include 50 purebred sows has been reduced to three sows, so Angus pay all the bills at Clearwater. Bull demand from commercial and purebred cattlemen is strong and participation in local and state sales helps keep it that way. Pipkins have sold top cattle in the Ozark Empire, Southwest Assn., West Plains Assn., Kansas City Assn., Southwest Regional, 4-State and Missouri state sales (centering around their trade area). They still show some too, in fact they have not missed a state fair or Ozark Empire fair since 1947.



Clearwater Angus have a 50-year history behind them and a strong future ahead. Size and growth have been important to the Pipkin family, but production, fleshing ability and structure are considered just as vital.

Jim Pipkin halter breaks every animal at Clearwater. He considers it a must for consignments to various sales, and quiet cows make their extensive A.I. program easier (cows are often haltered and bred right in the pasture).



W.D. and his wife Bonita have raised three children on Clearwater returns. Each of them—Nancy, Mary Anne and Jim—were active in junior Angus events and remain a part of the industry.

Breeding for the Long Run

W.D. and Morris gave each of the children a heifer when they turned 4 years old and each has grown into the business from there, buying females by selling bull calves, etc.

The two girls, although no longer primarily involved with the farm, own their own cattle and stay close to Angus circles. Both are honor graduates of Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, and Angus scholarships helped them through college. Nancy is married to Keith Tate, a Polled Hereford breeder, but maintains her own Angus herd on their Mountain Grove farm. She also helps head up local bull tests and sales. Mary Anne, now a certified public accountant, lives at home and owns part of the Clearwater herd. She showed in every National Junior Angus Show for which she was eligible and received a belt buckle in Wichita in recognition.

Jim, now in school at Southwest Missouri State University, is a full partner in the farm. He has been quite successful in junior Angus shows and plans to continue showing—the premiums don't pay the way, he says, but the added exposure pays off. He insists that his show heifers are top producers too;



W.D. Pipkin knows every Clearwater cow and depends on that to make selection decisions. He insists that cattle have the volume and capacity to make it on pasture and hay—Clearwater Angus have plenty of grow as a result.

three generations of National Junior Heifer Show winners were represented by the heifer he showed last year. Accomplishments with his herd won Jim a national Angus scholarship, he was a state showmanship winner last year, and this year received the state's young cattleman award.

Currently, Jim keeps about 10 head in the show barn. That is what he feels he can do a good job with, but the number fluctuates with each calf crop. His work hardly stops there though; many calves are fitted for various consignment sales each spring and fall, and every calf weaned is halter broken (a necessity for sale consignments and a practice that is appreciated by bull buyers as well; Pipkins also benefit by being able to treat and A.I. cows right in the pasture).

Many of his father's views are reflected in Jim's outlook on selection and the cattle business in general. He tries to pick out areas in their herd that need improvement to compete and meet market demands, then uses every tool available to breed in that direction. He took over most of the breeding two years ago and is now flushing his top cows for embryo transplant.

"We try to get more size and scale in these cattle," says Jim, "but we've got to keep structure in mind too. If you go all for size, you're just defeating your purpose. If you don't keep your eye on legs, correctness, conformation, straightness of lines, etc., you're going to hurt yourself in the long run."

Generations of that kind of thinking has the long run looking secure at Clearwater. As Jim's mother says, "It's a good way to raise a family—we're happy and have a good future. That's the most important thing about it all." AJ