

1930—The American Royal, Kansas City. A man from the Flint Hills of Kansas is fascinated by a display of cattle. They are a novelty in this area. The man—E.L. Barrier. The cattle—Angus.

1979—Dalebanks, Eureka, Kan. Two men check over some of their 300 registered cows. The men—Francis Perrier and his son Tom. The cattle—Angus.

These two men are son-in-law and grandson respectively of the late E.L. Barrier. And their cattle, with few exceptions, trace back to three cows bought by Barrier after he saw the Angus at that early American Royal.

Barrier bought his foundation cows in 1904 from Parker, Parrish & Miller, Hudson, Kan. He took them home to the Flint Hills, bought a bull from the McWhorter herd in Iowa—and 75 years of Angus production was underway.

The Name

Barrier's farm was called Dalebanks, a name apparently brought to Kansas by an early English immigrant. The original Dalebanks, a section in northern England, fittingly enough had been home for several Angus herds.

The farm dates back to the 1860s. It is beautifully situated in the Kansas Flint Hills, an historic cattle grazing area famous for its abundant grasses. Cattle have always been Dalebanks' business.

Since the beginning, Dalebanks has used its own females for replacements. Very few cows have been purchased. That's why most of the 300 cows in residence today trace back to those first three head.

Seventy-five years is a long time in any business. It is unusual in the cattle business. Prices change. Cattle change. But at Dalebanks, one thing has always stayed the same. There has always been a ready market for bulls—and that's why Dalebanks is a thriving business.

Good Times and Bad

The world has seen both good times and bad during the last 75 years. So has Dalebanks.

It was tough enough in the 1930s when drouth hit the Flint Hills. But when brucellosis appeared at the same time, the beef industry was nearly destroyed. The calf crop at Dalebanks one year dropped to 33%.

At that time there was no approved brucellosis vaccine. The Bureau of Animal Industries did initiate a test and slaughter program, but it was not a feasible solution for cattlemen. Barrier realized his herd was threatened so started using vaccine developed by a friend, Dr. Christian, who worked for Franklin Serum Co. Barrier was one of the first cattlemen to try the vaccine. It worked and the cattle were saved.

By the 1940s things were looking up for the cattle industry. In Francis' words, "All you had to do was own a beef animal and, if it didn't die, you made money." By this time E.L. Barrier was a state senator and



Francis Perrier (left) and his son Tom look over females that trace back 75 years to the first three females bought by E.L. Barrier, Francis' father-in-law.

Dalebanks Angus— 75 Years and Still Going Strong

Dalebanks cattle were enjoying a good market, with strong demand.

Not All Good

The 1940s weren't all good at Dalebanks, though. Francis was sent overseas during World War II. In 1943 Barrier was killed in a farm accident, leaving his daughter Alice to carry on alone. Neighbors, through the Red Cross, petitioned to bring Francis home and, in 1944, he returned to Dalebanks.

The '50s brought some bad times. In 1952 Alice died. And there was another crisis in the cattle industry—the market was once again dropping.

Dalebanks survived. Once again, the market is good.

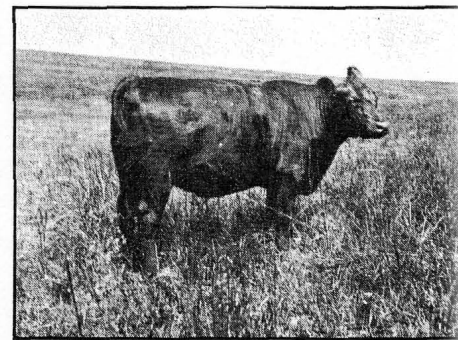
The basis of Dalebanks' 1979 operation is sensible management, with emphasis on performance.

The Perriers calve twice a year, selling the spring calves in their fall sale, with the fall calves selling privately in the spring.

Range conditions make it difficult, but Tom does A.I. some of the females for one heat period in the spring and one in the fall. The majority of the calves, though, are sired naturally, many of them by bulls the Perriers have raised.

Traditional Customers

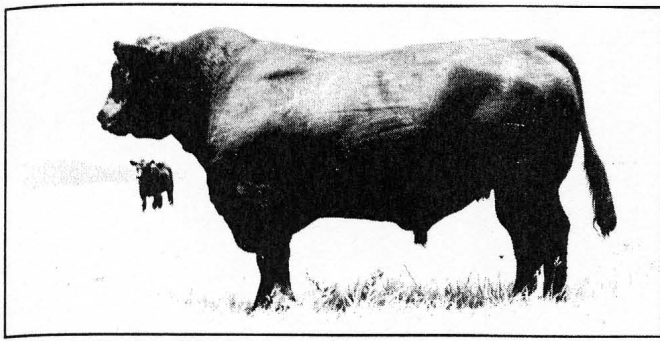
Although now their cattle are selling far



A Dalebanks female—1920s vintage.



It's chow time for some of the bulls scheduled to sell this fall in the Nov. 17 Dalebanks production sale. All the bulls are backed by AHIR records.



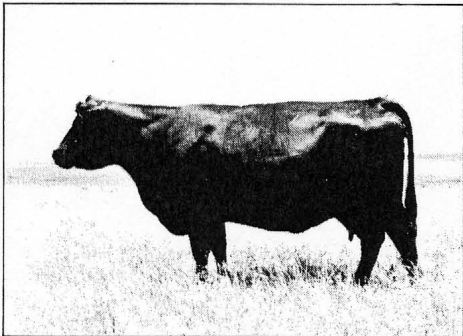
Dalebanks Emulous 7G 3219 has seen extensive use in the herd. He was top gaining bull at the Corbin Ranch Flint Hills Test Station in 1974.

by Ann Gooding
(photos by Carr)

ther from home, traditionally their customers are their neighbors, commercial men mostly. Sixty percent are repeat bull buyers.

Dalebanks is responsible for putting a lot of black in the Flint Hills, once a Hereford stronghold. When neighboring Hereford breeders realized the black baldies would out-weigh and out-sell their purebred calves, they visited Dalebanks, bought Angus bulls and started their own crossbreeding programs.

Dalebanks has always taken the lower end of its calves to market. In fact, Barrier originally took the lower end to Kansas City, topping that market consistently. Calves often went to repeat buyers, among them Cunard Steamship Lines.



A Dalebanks female—1979 style.

Barrier wrote in a herd history, "As long as we raise cattle whose culls will top the market, we believe we have the right kind; and we have a record on the open market, covering many years, that speaks for itself. After all, the price the packer will pay is the real comparative standard in a beef animal."

Premium for Lower End

Today the Perriers still sell their lower end at a premium, with 40-60% of them rating Yield Grade 2. They have never sold a Yield Grade 4.

In November of 1966 the Perriers joined the AHIR program, the performance program sponsored by the American Angus Assn., keeping both weaning and yearling records on each animal. As a result, weights have increased, and Tom finds the records an excellent tool for culling the cow herd.

Several bulls have influenced the herd through the years. One of these was Exaxus Prince 2, a grandson of Prince Marshall, 1923 International grand champion, who saw extensive use at Dalebanks in the 1930s. Through the years, the Earl Marshall line has influenced the herd as have several Eileenmere-bred bulls. In the 1960s Peace Garden Eileenmere 54 (CMS) saw a lot of use.

Emulous A 400

Emulous A 400 (CMS) left his mark on

the cattle. This Dalebanks-owned bull was a grandson of Emulous 7000 (CMS), the first Certified Meat Sire of any breed. (Emulous 7000 has a Dalebanks cow in his pedigree.) Emulous A 400 weaned at 618 lb., with an average daily gain of 3.94 lb. on official 140-day test. He weighed 1,202 at 365 days.

Dalebanks Emulous 7G 3219, the top gaining bull at the Corbin Ranch Flint Hills Test Station in 1974 and a son of Emulous A 400, is now working in the herd.

Looking to the future, the Perriers are choosing other bulls, several of them Dalebanks-raised. And they are excited about their recent purchase from Nichols Farms in Iowa, Nichols Barometer K16.


In 1962 Francis remarried. His wife, no stranger to the Angus business, had owned Creek Valley Angus, Fall River. Creek Valley's first cattle came from the Barrier herd in 1942.

University Graduates

The three Perrier sons graduated from Kansas State University as did their parents. Charles is involved in a John Deere dealership at Parsons, and Lewis manages a Getty oil refinery at El Dorado. Tom and his wife Carolyn (also a Kansas State graduate) and their two children, Matthew and Michele, are at Dalebanks.

The Perriers have never considered changing breeds or going commercial or crossbreeding. For 75 years registered Angus cattle have been a way of life at Dalebanks.

At a field day in the 1940s Barrier said, "Through the years we have tried never to be misled by fads and fancies. We've always tried to produce an animal that would profit its owner through its production."

That is still the ruling philosophy at Dalebanks. And it has paid off. Customers like the cattle—they just keep coming back. Last fall's sale featured 52 bulls that averaged more than \$1,300. One of the outstanding things about those bulls was their uniformity. But then, that's not too surprising; 75 years of performance, selection and breeding stood behind them. 

Dalebanks is located in the Flint Hills bluestem area of Kansas, a region rich in cattle history.

Since the days of the trail drives, this country has been the largest commercial grazing area for transient cattle in the U.S. The native bluestem grass is an excellent feed, growing out of a limestone-rich soil—and it is abundant.

The strength of the bluestem first gained fame during the early trail drive days when, in one summer, it reportedly put 300-400 lb. a head on Texas steers. Word spread and, by the late 1800s, the railroads tallied nearly half a million steers shipped north into Kansas annually.

The cattle arriving from the south were generally three to seven years old.

They were tall, thin, rangy, short-coupled, pinched in the shoulders and hindquarters—and horned. It is rumored that some of them had horn spans so huge they had to turn their heads to get in a boxcar.

Many of the southwestern ranges from which these steers came were overstocked, and what little grass was available often lacked protein and other nutrients. So the southern cattle arriving in Kansas were in rough shape—lean, gaunt, hungry, weighing around 600 lb.

The Flint Hills bluestem is a powerful feed, and it did an impressive job of putting meat on the bones of those steers. A 300-400-lb. gain in a season was not unusual.

In addition to supplying good strong

nourishment, the bluestem pastures were strategically located between the cattle-growing ranges of the southwest and the markets and feedlots of the midwest. Southwestern cattle could be shipped into Kansas and finished near the markets, cutting down on freight costs and shrinkage losses. And owners were able to take advantage of market fluctuations, since cattle could be shipped more quickly from that area.

Today the Flint Hills is still a major grazing area. The large absentee-owned operations are carrying on the tradition of feeding transient cattle. The Longhorn has been replaced by a more modern critter and another generation owns the land, but the bluestem is still thriving, still putting pounds on cattle.