



Duke and Smylie's other four-year-o/d Belgian Draft horse Dan, serve a dual purpose at Twin Knolls in addition to sometimes being used for chores, F.D. drives his hitch in several parades and fairs every year. He has found the horses to be a good form of advertisement.

Smylie doesn't pamper his cattle. He treats them as any good commercial producer does.



The man is a promoter. In his 42 years of breeding purebred Angus cattle, F.D. Smylie has promoted the breed, the people associated with it and the good way of life Angus cattle provide.

Smylie, along with his wife Lucille, owns and operates Twin Knolls Farm, the oldest continually producing Angus herd in southeast Iowa. The farm is located one mile south of Columbus Junction, on rolling pasture land of 140 acres. A 40-head cow herd and four Belgian draft horses are maintained on the farm.

The Belgians serve a dual purpose at Twin Knolls. In addition to sometimes being used for chores, Smylie often hitches Duke and Dan, the two 4-year-old draft horses, to a wagon emblazoned with "Angus" and his name. He drives his hitch in several parades and fairs each summer. Smylie has found touring with his horses results in good publicity for his operation and Angus cattle in general.

"So many people like horses. With everybody that comes up and talks to me, it turns out to be a good form of advertisement."

Smylie's promotion of Angus cattle doesn't stop with his two-horse hitch. He has also pushed Angus by introducing several Montana commercial producers to the breed, and through the operation of the

Smylie's Livestock Market. He owned and operated the auction for 33 years, from 1942 until its sale to three Illinois investors in 1975.

After attending Iowa State College (now University) for two years, Smylie took a job as a herdsman on a cattle ranch in California. In 1937, after working there three years, his father asked him to return to Iowa to help with the operation of the newly formed Columbus Junction livestock exchange.

"My father started the business and insisted I come back, because he foresaw quite a future in it. There were a lot of headaches that went with the business back then. At first everybody was suspicious that the livestock sold at the auction was sick or unhealthy in some way. They looked at the sale barn as a good place to get rid of unwanted or unhealthy livestock. After the adoption of health regulations, it didn't take long for the whole concept of livestock marketing to become big in Iowa," he says.

Smylie and his father ran the auction market together until the elder Smylie's untimely death in 1942. Over a period of three decades the livestock exchange has provided Smylie and his family with a good livelihood. It also started his interest in purebred Angus.

"I would have to say the livestock market

was the greatest influence in my interest in Angus. There were not many Angus in this area in the late 1930s and early 1940s. At that time there were more Herefords and Shorthorns. I began promoting Angus feeder cattle through the livestock market soon after they became popular at the International in Chicago. Pretty soon everybody in the area wanted Angus feeders. That is when I became interested in the purebred end of it."

The purebred herd at Twin Knolls was started in 1942 when Smylie purchased 10 heifers from the I.M. Mealey family of La Harpe, Ill. Later that year he bought George in a Brown 31 with her heifer calf at side for \$1,000 (a large sum of money at that time).

Smylie says, "Lucille and I sweated all the way home, because back then we didn't hardly have \$1,000." He says he has no regrets spending that much money, because in a short period of time that young cow proved to be one of the best producers he ever had.

Since the beginning, Smylie strived to put together a herd low in numbers but high in quality. He has done this by continually improving the cow herd through selection of top replacement heifers, and by purchasing bulls from other proven, reliable herds. Throughout the history of the herd, he has

never strayed too far from the norm of good, efficient, middle-of-the-road cattle.

"Around 1962 I decided I wanted one of those fancy little bulls-like the ones that were winning the shows. They had good bone, but they wouldn't grow after they were a year old. In spite of this, I decided I had to have one of those bulls. Fortunately, the bull I bought turned bad on me. I never got to use him, so he didn't hurt my cattle any," he says.

Smylie's breeding program has resulted in cattle that appeal to commercial producers in the area.

"We don't sell a lot of bulls to purebred breeders. We sell most of our bulls to good,

kept enough replacement heifers and were getting well-established, so he sold out his interests in the operations.

"We brought out a lot of Angus seed stock and scattered it around Beaverhead County. Of course, since that time Angus have become more popular all through that hill country. I'm proud to have been involved in their initial acceptance," he adds.

F.D. Smylie is proud of his involvement with Angus cattle and Angus people. He is a good cattleman, and an even better ambassador and promoter of the breed he has been involved with for so long. Angus people can be proud to have him as part of their family.

AJ

Twin Knolls Farm

In Angus cattle or Belgian horse circles, F.D. Smylie is a promoter.

by Dan Kirkpatrick

sound commercial breeders. They're willing to give a price that enables us to raise them and use the best bloodlines. In other words, we cater to commercial people," he says.

Smylie's promotion of Angus cattle has not been limited to southeast Iowa. He was instrumental in introducing several Montana commercial breeders to black cattle.

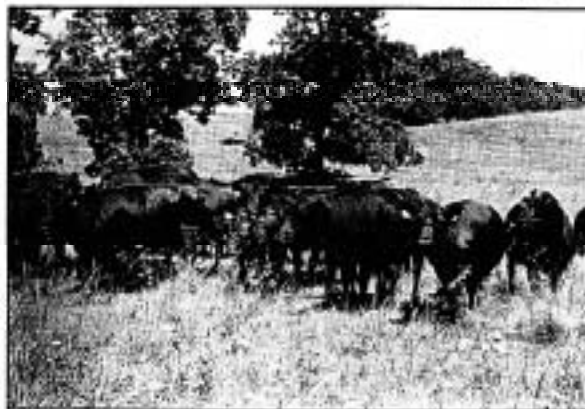
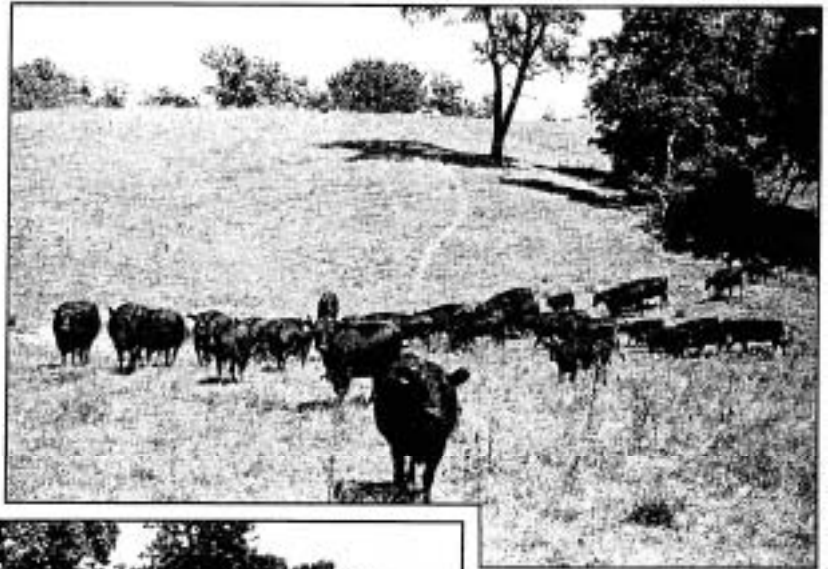
Starting in the late 1950s and continuing through the early 1960s Smylie bought a large number of feeder cattle out of his headquarters in Dillon, Mont., and sold most of them on private order to feedlots in the Columbus Junction area.

Smylie says, "In those days there weren't hardly any Angus out there. Everything was Hereford. I became acquainted with quite a few of the fellows out there. Several of them said they were interested in getting into Angus, but they didn't know how to do it."

Smylie was more than willing to help them get started. He began by marketing several Dillon area cow herds through his auction back in Iowa. He then bought several Angus cows in Iowa and Illinois, and shipped them out to Montana.

"I owned the cows and furnished the bulls," says Smylie. "We would split the calf crop and then I would ship the calves back to Iowa. They brought a premium over any other feeder cattle that sold in this area. Of course the higher prices left a good impression on the people of that (Beaverhead) county. I didn't get all the cattlemen converted, but I did bring a few of them around."

Smylie says that after five years the herds



Twin Knolls Farm has been in continuous production for 47 years, longer than any other Angus herd in southeast Iowa.