

CLEAN AS A BABY'S EAR—Mrs. L. G. McNeill, who raises registered Duroc Jerseys in East Hillsborough County, turns up Rose Anne's ear to prove her contention that pigs are clean animals.—(Tribune Photos).

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Little White-Haired Lady Pig Raiser Says Pigs Are Clean And Intelligent

Mrs. L. G. McNeill Runs Own Herd Of Registered Duroc Jerseys All By Herself; Calls Pigs By Name

By BURTON TALBOTT

"Pigs is NOT pigs," according to a little white-haired woman who lives in East Hillsborough County, and raises registered Duroc Jersey swine — pigs with personality.

Mrs. L. G. McNeill, a very unusual person in her own right, raises unusual pigs.

They are clean pigs because Mrs. McNeill doesn't go along with the theory that a hog is a dirty animal. They are intelligent—she thinks the pig is the most intelligent four-legged animal domesticated by man. And they have names—not just legal names testifying to registration and lineage—but pet names bestowed on them by Mrs. McNeill.

There is Rose Anne, a rather sizable sow of about 300 pounds. There is Lady's Boy, also known to his friends as James. That's not to mention some of the younger set, including Susie, Sylvia, Sarah and Sophie.

MRS. McNEILL knows all her pigs by name, and the pigs all know her.

"You know," she says, "sometimes Rose Anne—she is the big one—will come up to me and rub against my legs, and if I don't pay some attention to her she will reach up with her mouth and catch hold of my skirt, and tug on it until I stop and pet her a little.

"I always like to bring a little something for them when I come to see them. I don't need any food to get them to come when I call them. It's just that I like to bring them a little surprise. I usually bring a small bowl of corn, between meals.

"Then I like to be sure they have plenty of water. They do like water. When it is real hot I just take the hose and sprinkle it right on them. They will get up from an afternoon nap for a little shower bath."

HER DUROC JERSEY stock, Mrs. McNeill says, are quite tame and domesticated from long years of careful breeding. She comments that "all pigs aren't nearly so nice as mine."

Besides a good ancestry, Mrs. McNeill sees that her pigs have a good address—or rather, lots of living room.

"You know it is just a shame the way some people insist on raising pigs," she says. "There just isn't any sense in keeping them all penned up in some

dirty little place where they don't even have room to stretch their legs. You will never find me keeping these poor little things all cooped up like that. Why, my pigs have literally acres of land to roam around in, and they appreciate it, too.

"All that talk about pigs being dirty—why, that's the worst kind of rubbish. They are naturally clean animals, and if given half a chance they are as clean as most people.

"Look how clean Rose Anne's ear is inside," and she caught hold of the sow's ear. "You see, as clean as a baby."

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NOT ONLY are Mrs. McNeill's pigs unusual, but this dear little lady, who lives on her 70-acre farm isn't what you might call the run of the mill variety. Not by a jugful. She is a first class farmer and has proven over the years to be a successful one, too.

She certainly ought to be.

Mrs. McNeill holds several degrees from various colleges; Earlham College in Richmond, Ind.; her bachelor of science degree at Chicago University; her master's degree from Cornell; and in 1912 a doctorate in Ecological Botany.

Currently she is writing abstracts for world research literature in plant sciences.

Like most young ladies, Mrs. McNeill doesn't broadcast her age. However knowing she was one of the first women university teachers at Tallahassee in 1909 might furnish a little clue.

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THE McNEILLS came to Florida many years ago and her husband, a former professor of Entomology, died in 1928. Since that time Mrs. McNeill has managed her farm alone, with assistance from a man who comes in for a few days every week to do the heavy work.

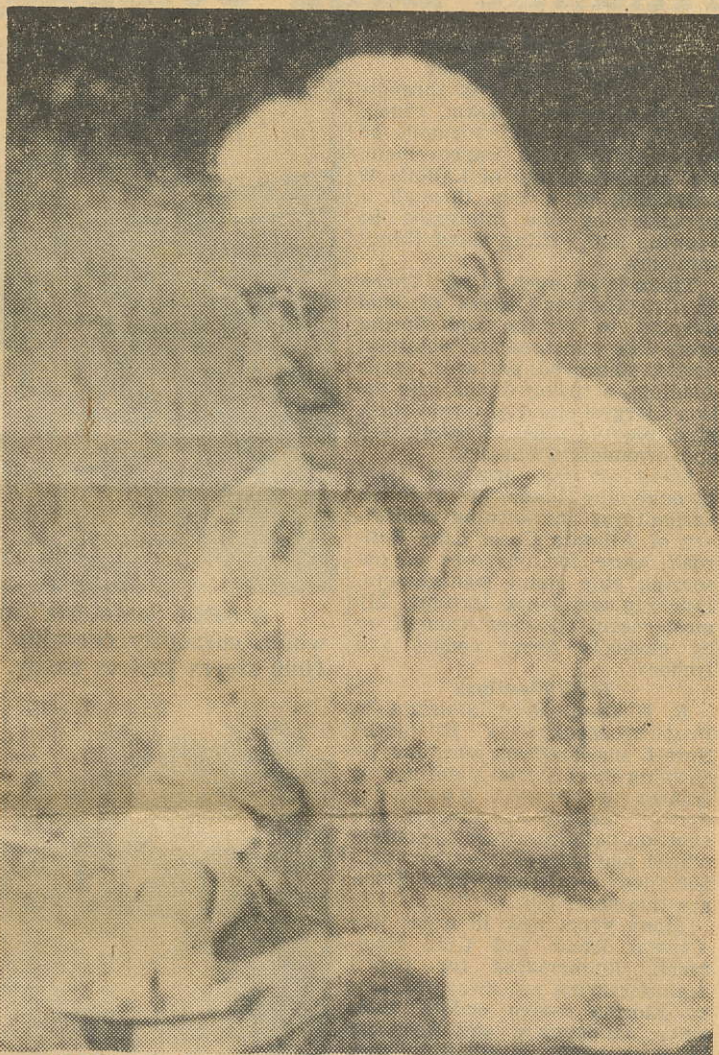
There is a grove consisting of about 15 acres, and a fine looking grove it is too. She hasn't sprayed her grove in over 30 years.

Now then let's get back to those pigs.

There was a time when Mrs. McNeill had a considerable number of hogs which she raises for breeding purposes.

She maintains that today it is becoming more and more of a problem to raise them profitably, since as she said, "farming as a business is good, providing it is run without interference from the government."

But no matter what the market situation, it's a certainty she'll always have a few pigs around.



PIGS' TREAT—Mrs. McNeill takes a bowl of corn out to the pigs for a between-meals snack.



GETTING A PITCHFORK—Mrs. McNeill is a scientific farmer. Her late husband was an entomology professor, and she holds a doctorate in botany.

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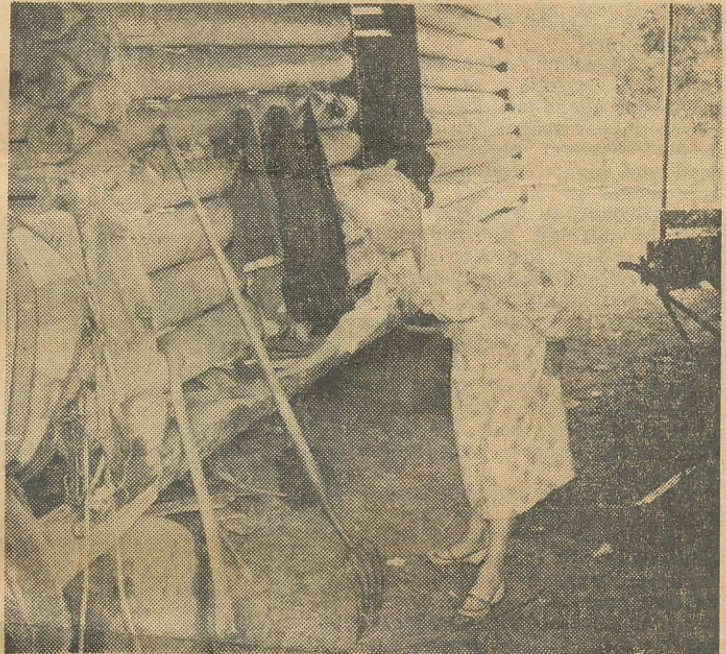
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would return to Bird Key, even if human beings left the island.

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JOHN BLOCKER, for 25 years attorney for the Pinellas Commission and ranked as one of Florida's top historians, told The Tribune it was his opinion that Hanna intended Bird Key as a permanent gift to the birds through Federal Government ownership.

He expressed the opinion that Hanna deeded the island to the Federal Government, but neglected to file the deed at the Hillsborough County Courthouse. Efforts to locate the deed on record have been unsuccessful.

But, The Tribune has received several reports from usually reliable sources that "the Bird Key deed is in St. Petersburg."

"I hope The Tribune smokes the deed out of some one's custody, and it can be filed at the Pinellas Courthouse," Mrs. Sample said.

The Tribune, meanwhile, has learned that the State Road Board's latest plan for the multi-million dollar Bay Way, will put a causeway over Bird Key, the birds' former sanctuary.

Also, the City of St. Petersburg has cast a covetous eye upon Bird Key, according to press reports. The chances of the birds getting their Bird Key back, appear dim today.



SYLVIA, SUSIE AND SARAH—Mrs. McNeill has pet names for her prize pigs—Rose Anne, James, Susie, Sylvia and Sarah.