



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Journal of the Department of Agriculture, Western Australia, Series 3

Volume 3
Number 1 *January-February, 1955*

Article 5

1-1954

Veterinary cadet's success - Gosnells man becomes first graduate

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(1954) "Veterinary cadet's success - Gosnells man becomes first graduate," *Journal of the Department of Agriculture, Western Australia, Series 3*: Vol. 3: No. 1, Article 5.

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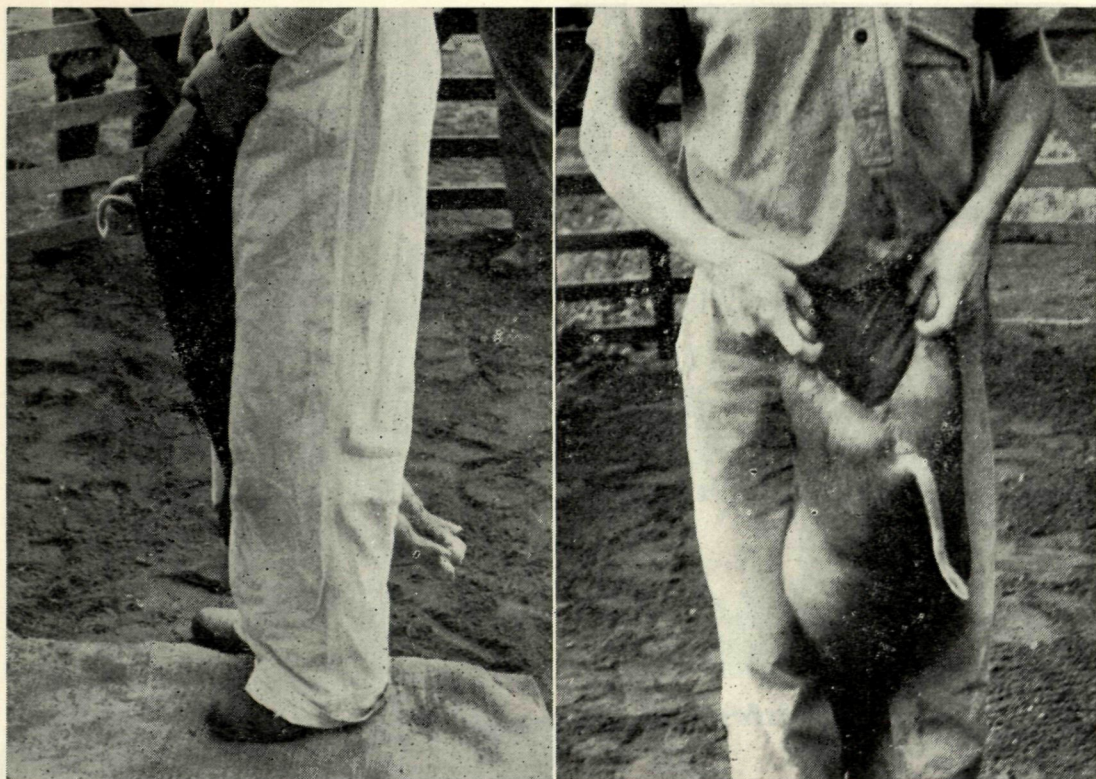


Fig. 1.—A useful method of holding small pigs for the operation. The animal is held by the hind legs and swung between the holder's legs where it is held firmly by pressure of the knees

CASTRATION OF CALVES AND PIGS

CONTRIBUTED BY THE VETERINARY BRANCH

THE routine castration of calves and pigs is in most cases carried out by the stockowners themselves, many of whom have attained a high degree of skill and perform the operation in a humane and hygienic manner. On many farms, however, the work is done crudely, and the purpose of this article is to give a brief outline of the operations so that they may be carried out expeditiously with the minimum of risk to the animals.

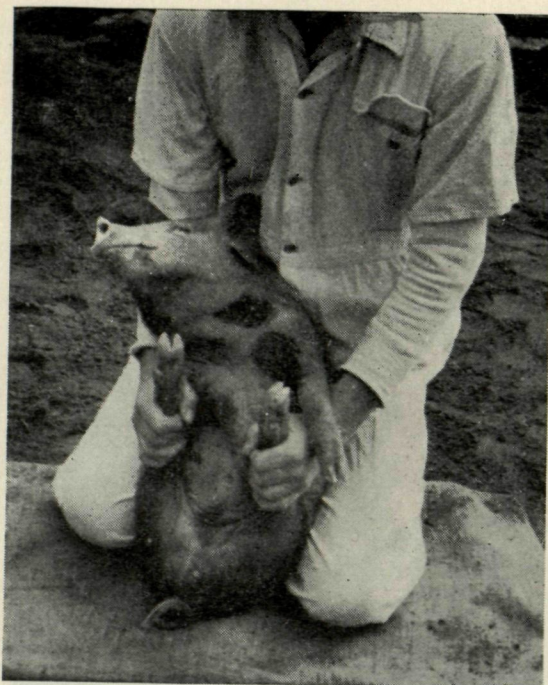
Calves are usually castrated at about five to six months old, although, where necessary, the operation may be performed later. With all animals, the castration is best carried out at an early age as shock is kept to a minimum and there is less risk of haemorrhage. As a result there is little check in growth.

Calves may be castrated in a standing position, in which case they are held firmly against a stout fence or the side of a crush. Alternatively they may be

laid^{on} their sides, care being taken to choose a clean site. This should preferably be an unfouled grassy area, and certainly not an old yard where the soil may be heavily charged with infective matter.

The only instruments required are a knife (preferably of the one-piece type) and an emasculator (Fig. 5).

These should be sterilised by boiling for ten minutes, care being taken to wrap the knife in a cloth to protect the blade. They should be boiled and left



Figs. 2 and 3.—Two other methods of holding the animal

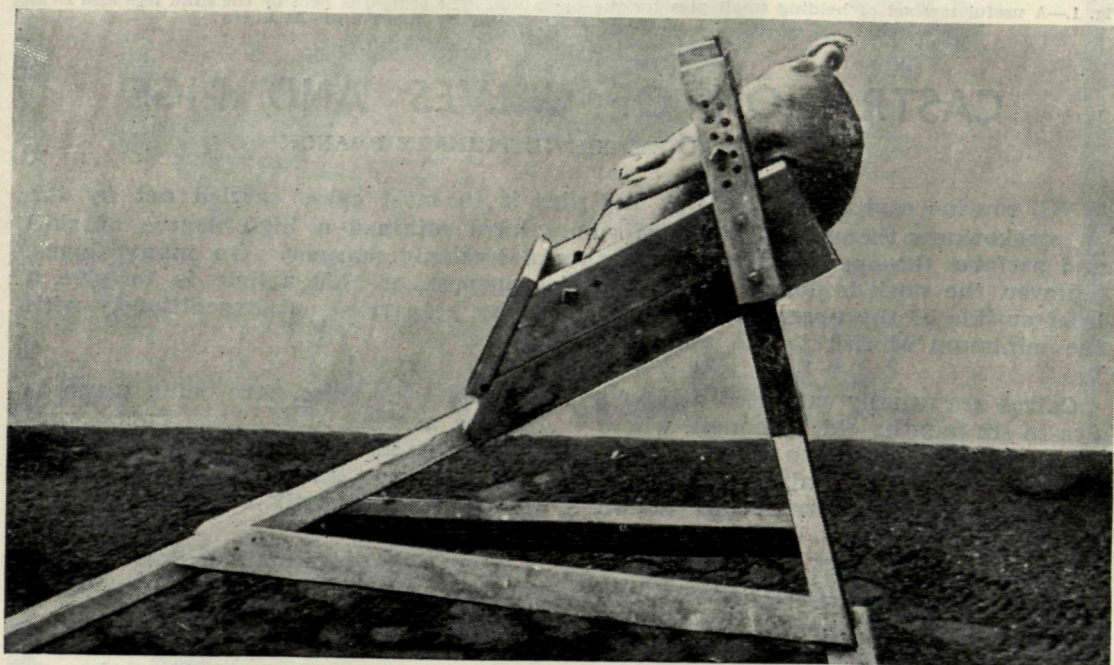
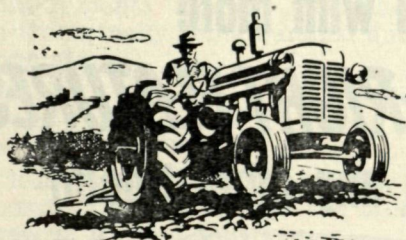


Fig. 4.—A cradle which enables the operator to work without an assistant to hold the pig. The animal is placed head downward in the cradle and held by a long bolt which passes behind the hocks. A series of holes in the side-pieces allows the position of the bolt to be altered to suit the size of the animal



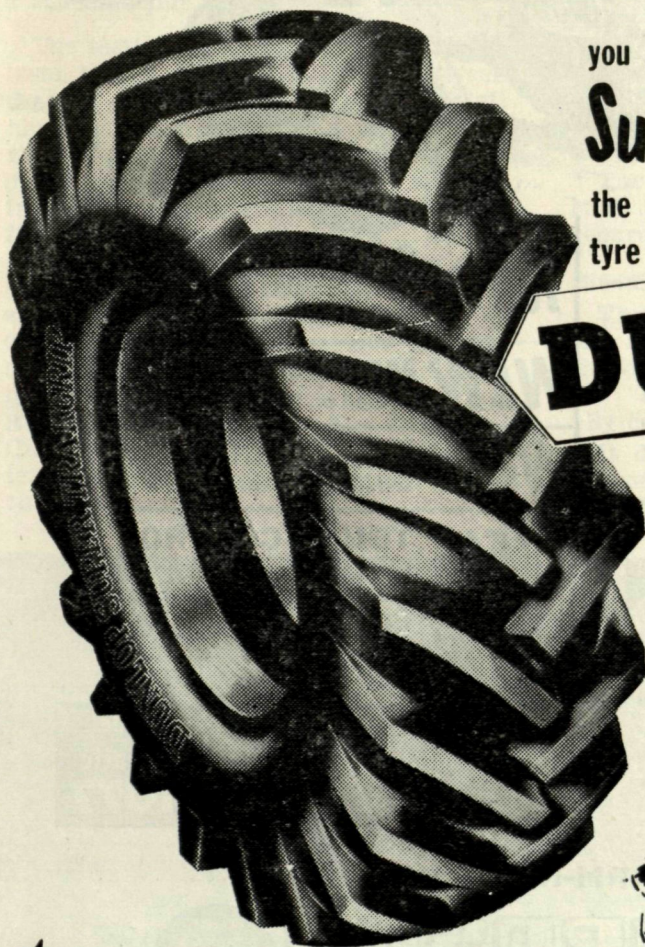
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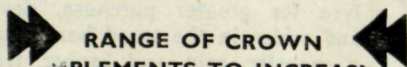
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in the water until cooled sufficiently for use. Lysol or Dettol (1 tablespoonful to 1 pint of water) may be added and the instruments kept in the solution when not actually being handled during the operation.

Method of Operation.

At least two persons are needed, one to operate and one to hold the animal to prevent it from moving.

The scrotum or purse is swabbed with a disinfectant solution. That described for the instrument bath would be suitable. The area is then dried off with a squeezed-out swab.

The testicle on the side farthest away from the operator is grasped between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand (assuming that the operator is right-handed) and a bold incision is made in the scrotum. The cut is made from the rear, downwards towards the front, and should divide the skin on the lowest portion of the scrotum so that good drainage is assured with the animal in a standing position. The incision should be deep enough to enter the fleshy portion of the testicle, thus liberating it from the envelope in which it is normally situated. The length of the cut should be such as to permit the testicle to be drawn out without difficulty.

As the testicle is drawn out, it will be seen that it is held by a fairly thick cord tapering off to a thin band of tissue towards the rear of the attachment. Divide the thin tissue with a snick of the knife and the testicle will hang limply, free from muscular interference.

If the emasculator is being used, the instrument is then applied to the cord with the crushing portion nearest the animal's body. The jaws are closed and held firmly for several seconds, crushing the tissues before severing the cord so that haemorrhage is almost negligible.

Where no emasculator is available, the cord should be scraped through with a knife, while a certain tension is maintained on the testicle. The cord should not be cut cleanly but the tissues frayed by scraping until the testicle is freed. A clean cut is liable to be followed by extensive haemorrhage.

The second testicle is removed in similar manner to the first, through a separate incision in the purse.

Bloodless Castration.

There are castrating instruments on the market which operate by crushing the cord without cutting the scrotum—the "Burdizzo method" as it is generally called.

It does away with much of the risk of infection, but is somewhat slower than the knife where large numbers of

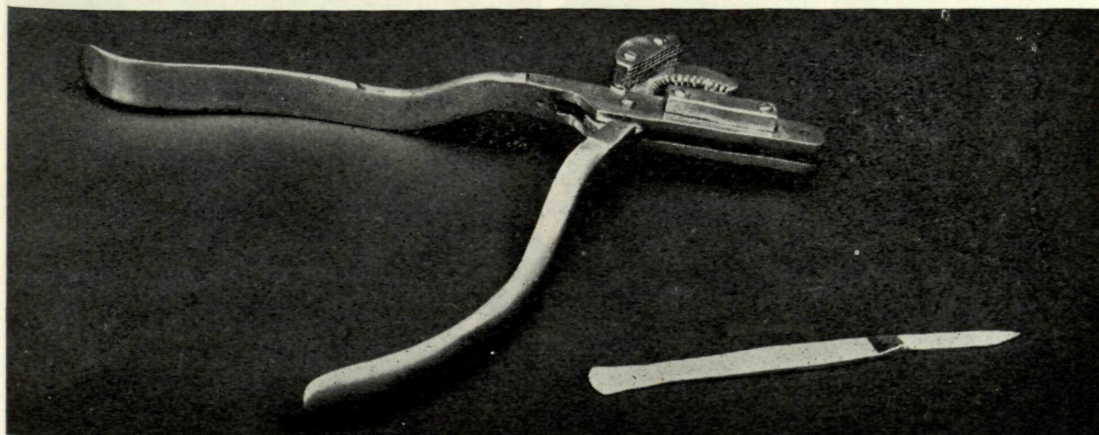


Fig. 5.—The triple-crush emasculators shown here are recommended for the castration of older animals. They crush the tissues before severing them, and tend to arrest severe bleeding. The type of scalpel or knife illustrated is ideal for desexing young animals. Being of one-piece, all-metal construction, it is easy to handle and may be effectively sterilised



Fig. 6.—Pressure of the thumb and forefinger brings the testicle into position for the operation

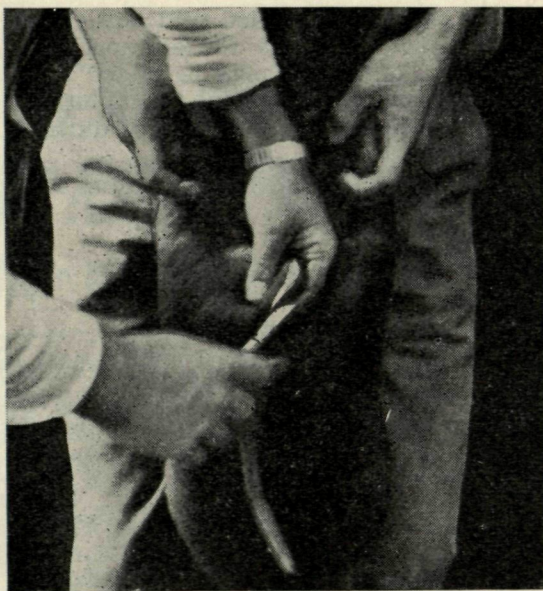


Fig. 7.—A bold incision is made commencing high up towards the hocks so that there will be free drainage when the animal is in the normal standing position

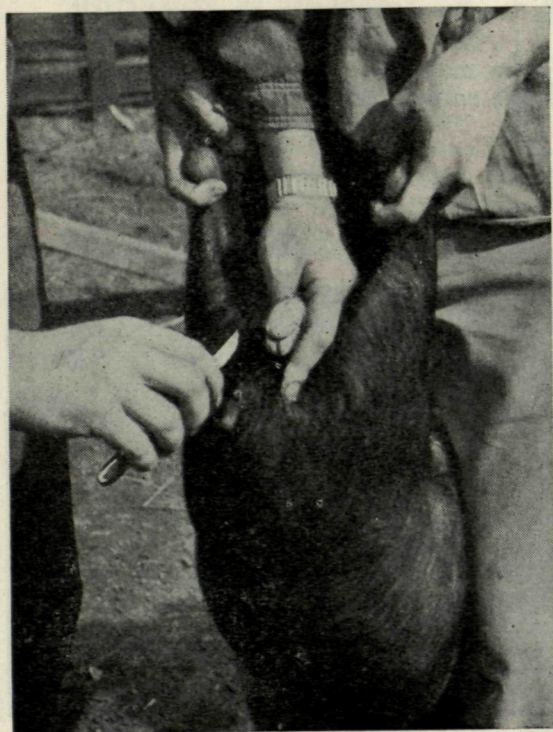


Fig. 8.—Pressure causes the testicle to pop out

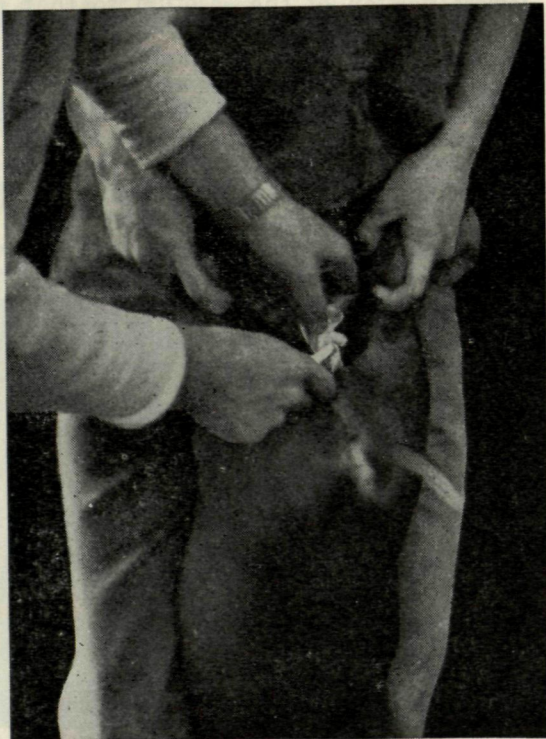


Fig. 9.—The thin band of tissue—which is at the rear of the testicle when the animal is in its normal position—is severed by a touch of the knife

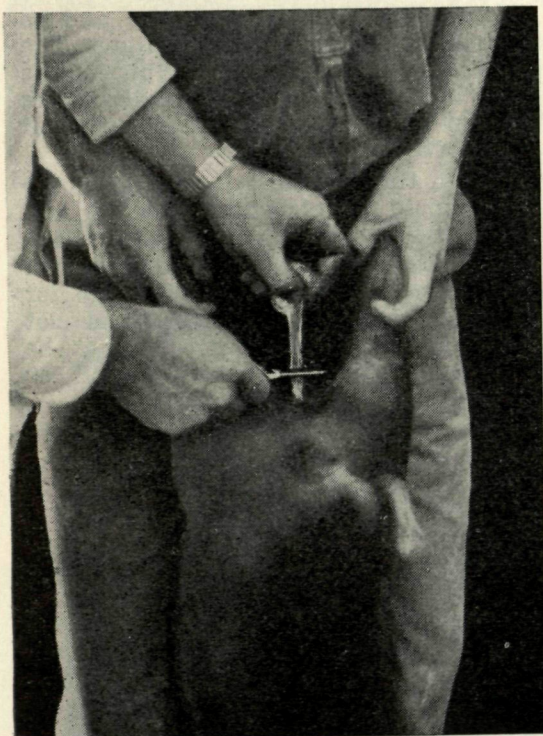


Fig. 10.—The cord is not cut cleanly as it contains large blood vessels, the rapid severance of which could lead to serious bleeding. Slight tension is maintained and the cord is frayed through by a series of scraping movements

animals are to be treated. It is less positive in its action too as any carelessness or lack of skill on the part of the operator may lead to the cord not being properly crushed. Should this occur the testicles would remain at least partially active instead of becoming atrophied.

Another method, elastration, is preferred by some farmers. A rubber ring is fitted over the purse by means of a special instrument. The ring acts as a tourniquet and cuts off the blood supply to the parts which eventually slough away.

PIGS

The castration of male pigs is an important operation on farms where pigs are raised for market as well as on stud farms. It enables the farmer to control the breeding operations on his property and the castrated animal yields a carcass with flesh of a much finer grain and quality and free from sexual flavours and odours.

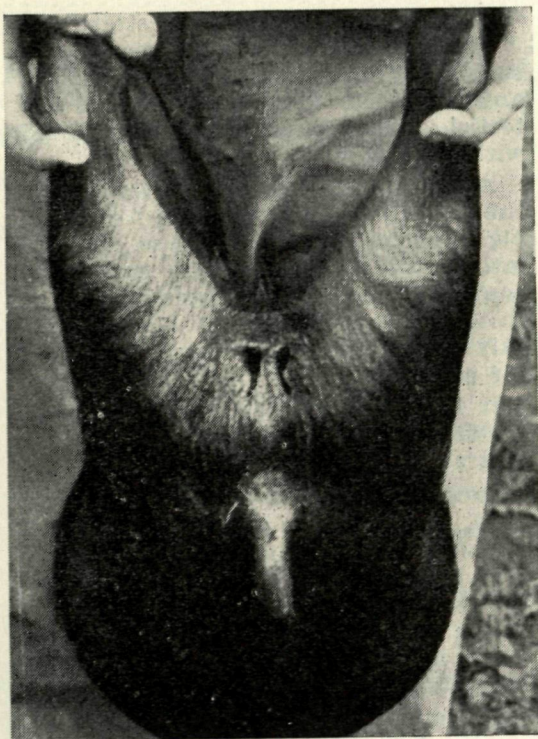


Fig. 11.—The operation completed

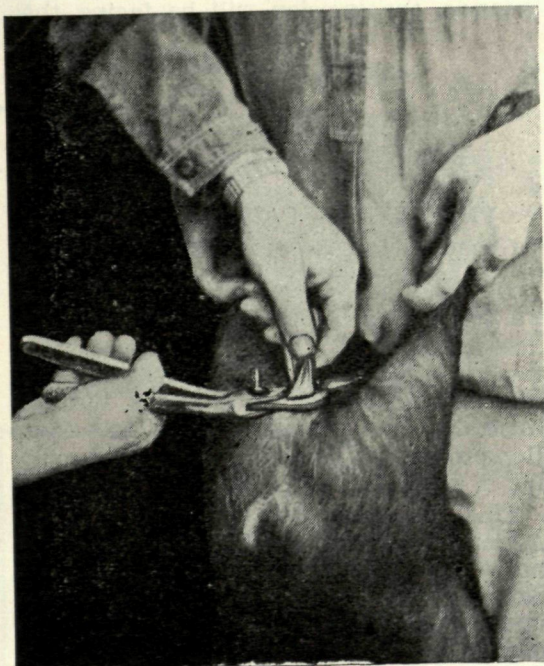


Fig. 12.—Using the emasculators. The crushing portion of the instrument is nearest to the pig

The best age at which to castrate pigs is from four to six weeks whilst still suckling the sow. At this age, the animals can be handled easily and the testicles are large enough to be removed without difficulty.

A knife, as previously described, is the only instrument required for young pigs, but for older animals an emasculator is also necessary. The same precautions regarding sterilisation of instruments apply as in the case of calves and a dry cool day is preferred for carrying out the operation.

It is desirable to starve the animals for at least 12 hours (overnight) before castrating them.

Except where the cradle (Fig. 4) is used, two persons are required, one to operate and the other to hold the pig. When handling large numbers of pigs, the holding method shown in Fig. 1 will be found both speedy and convenient. Other methods of holding are shown in Figs. 2 and 3.

The operation is essentially the same as in calves, an incision being made in the scrotum and into the testicle so that it pops out. The incision is made in such a position that when the animal stands, the incision will be facing the

ground to facilitate drainage, and so lessen the danger of complications. The cord is severed by scraping, but in the case of older animals the emasculators should be used to obviate the risk of haemorrhage.

When the operation is completed the pig should be placed on the ground, forelegs first if possible, in a clean paddock. If the animals can be placed on fresh green pasture and left there for an hour or so until a firm blood clot develops over the wound, they may be taken back to a clean dry sty with far less risk of infection.

The pigs should be carefully watched and if any infection does occur at the site of the wound, the animal should be caught and the area fomented with warm antiseptic solution such as 2½ per cent. Dettol solution (1 tablespoonful to 1 pint of water). If the abscess is large it should be opened at the lowest point with a knife and washed with the warm Dettol solution two or three times a day until healing occurs.

The castration of pigs with hernia (rupture) is more difficult and should be carried out by a veterinarian. It is usually more economical to have the animal slaughtered.

VETERINARY CADET'S SUCCESS

Gosnells Man Becomes First Graduate

ADVICE has been received from the Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, at the University of Sydney (Professor H. R. Carne) that Mr. John Morrison Armstrong, of Gosnells, Western Australia, has graduated with 2nd Class Honours, passing in all subjects and gaining a credit in veterinary jurisprudence.

This was announced by the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. E. K. Hoar) who said that he wished to congratulate Mr. Armstrong on being the first successful candidate under the State Government's veterinary cadetship scheme.

When the scheme was inaugurated in 1949 said the Minister, it was hoped that

it would provide two veterinary surgeons annually for the Department of Agriculture over a five-year period commencing in January, 1954.

Owing to a series of failures in the annual examinations at the Sydney University, these hopes have not been realised.

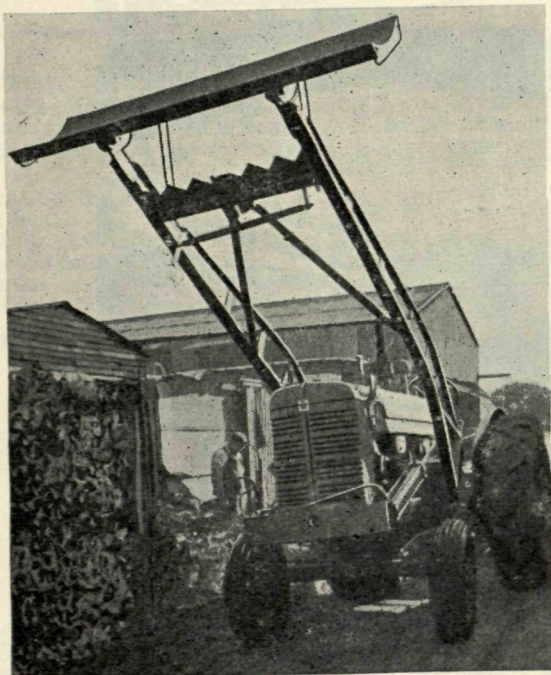
Mr. Armstrong will join the Department of Agriculture as a veterinary surgeon early in 1954 but no further graduates will become available until 1957.

The Minister said that the Government's cadetship scheme could materially assist young men desirous of entering the veterinary profession. Details of the scheme could be obtained from the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Department of Agriculture (Mr. C. R. Toop).

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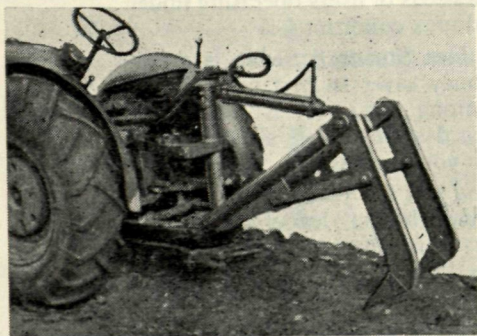
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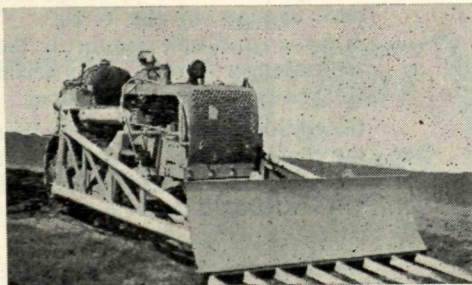


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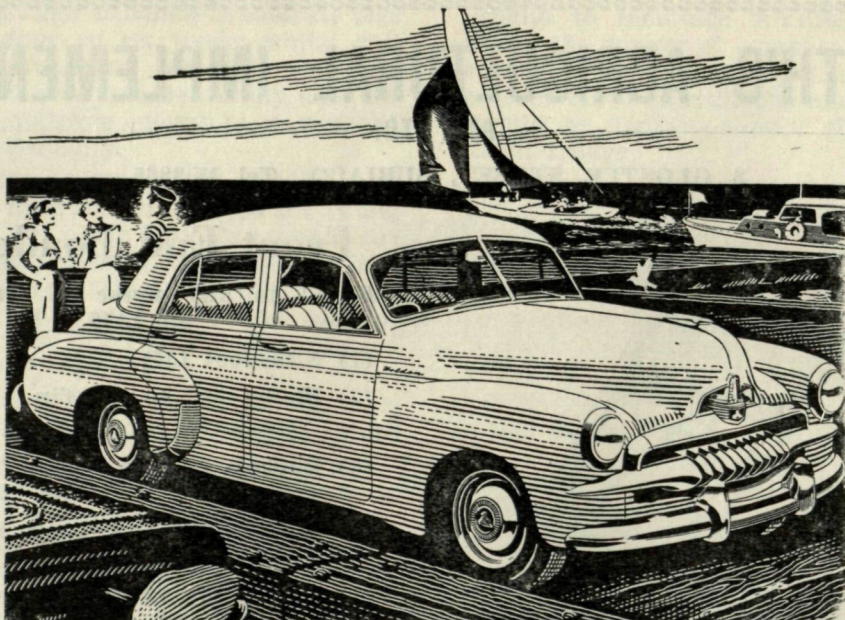
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