

THE MAN FROM MEADOW DRIVE

A TRIBUTE TO DOUG HOGAN OF LISMORE WHO TURNED 90 YEARS OLD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2011



Doug Hogan, "The man from Meadow Drive"

There was chatter at the Station Hotel, for the word had passed around
That the Old English Game cock of Gibson's had flown far,
He had joined the wild Jungle Fowl – he was worth fifty pound,
So all the fanciers had gathered around the bar.
All the poultry breeders and judges from clubs near and far
Had gathered at the pub overnight,
For the breeders loved their poultry where the good fowls are,
And the fancier exhales the challenges with delight.

There was Newton, who made his fame when his Pekin won the cup,
The old man with his hair as white as snow;
But few could show beside him when his blood was fairly up –
He would go wherever cock hen and cockerels would show.
And Doug from Meadow Drive in Lismore came over to lend a hand,
No better poultry man ever held the reins;

For no chook could throw him while the judging stick would stand,
He learnt to judge while showing on the plains.

And one was there, a small and weedy man,
Who breeds poultry something like games undersized,
With a touch of Indian and three parts modern at leased –
What judge would give that poultry breeder a prize.
His birds are hard and tough and wiry – just the sort that won't say die –
There is courage in their quick impatient tread;
And they bare the blade of gameness in their bright and fiery eye,
And also the proud and lofty carriage of their head.

But still so slight and weedy, one would doubt his power to stay,
And Ray Newton said "those bird will never do
For a long judging morning – lad, you'd better stop away,
Those shows are far too competitive for such as you"
So he waited sad and wistful – only Doug stood his friend –
"I think we ought to let him show," he said;
"I reckon he could beat us when he's judged at the end,
For both his chooks and he are pure bred."

"He hails from up the Tweed River, by Murwillumbah's side,
Where the breeding is twice as hard and twice as tough,
Where a chook's spur strikes fury from the shavings in every stride,
For this breeder can holds his own, and that's good enough.
And the Tweed River breeder in the pens make their home,
Where the river runs around mount warning and in between;
I have seen many poultry man since I first commenced to roam,
But nowhere yet such a breeder as him have I seen."

So he went, and they found the Old English cock by the big lantana clump –

Then he raced away towards the camphor laurel brow,
And Ray Newton gave his orders, “Boys, go at him from the jump,
No use to try for fancy catching now.

And, Doug, you must chase him, try and block him to the right.

Run boldly, lad, and never fear the spills,
For never yet was a chook catcher that could keep that cock in sight,
If once he gains the shelter of those hills”

So Doug ran to block him – he was running on the wing

Where the best and boldest runners take their place,
And he raced himself past him, and he made the grasses ring
With his judging stick, as he met him face to face.

Then he stopped for a moment, while he swung the dreaded lash,

But the cock saw his well loved paddock full in view,
And he flapped beneath the stick with a squawk and sudden dash,
And off into the lantana bushes he flew.

Then the poultry men followed, where the bushes are thick and black

Resounded to the thunder of their tread,
And the poultry breeders woke the echoes, and they fiercely answered back
From trees and bushes that towered overhead.

And upward, ever upward, the Old English cock held his way,
Where noogoora burr and fire weed grew wide;

And Ray Newton muttered fiercely, “We may bid the cock good day,
No man can hold him over the other side”.

When they reached the lantana patch, even Doug took a pull,

It well might make the bravest hold their breath,
The wild lantana patch grew thickly, and the hidden ground was full
Of foxes holes, and any slip was death.

But the man from Meadow Drive let his feet control his head,
And he swung his judging stick around and gave a cheer,
And he raced straight around the bushes like a torrent down the bed,
While the others stood and watched in great fear.

He sent the grass and dust flying, but young Doug kept his feet,
He cleared the large fox holes with a lot of fun,
And the man from Meadow Drive never stopped to take a breath –
It was grand to see that poultry man run.
Through the fire weed and thistle, on the rough and broken ground,
Down the grassy paddock at a racing pace he went;
And he never drew a breath until he landed safe and sound,
At the bottom of that terrible long descent.

He was right among the chooks as they flew the further hill,
And he watches from the paddock standing mute,
Saw him ply the judging stick fiercely, he was right among them still,
As he raced across the clearing in pursuit.
Then they lost him for a moment, where two large squiggly gums met
In the gully, but a final glimpse reveals
On a dim and distant paddock the Old English cock racing yet,
With the man from Meadow Drive at his heels.

And he ran him single handed till his feathers were white with foam.
He followed like a blood hound on his track,
Till he halted cowed and beaten, then Doug grabbed the cock for home,
And alone and unassisted brought that bird back.
But his sore and tied legs he could scarcely raise a trot
He was farmers friends from hip to shoulder and curst the cock spur;
But his pluck was still undaunted, and his courage fiery hot,
For never yet was a poultry breeder ever a cur.

And down by the Wilson River where the lantana ridges raise
Their torn and rugged battlements on high,
Where the air is thick with pollution and the dim moon hardly blaze
At midnight in the warm and balmy sky,
And where around the Richmond the noogoora burr sweeps and sway
To the breezes and the large paddocks are wide,
The man from Meadow Drive is a household word to-day;
And the poultry breeders tell his story with pride.

*Compiled by
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