

## Stratford Boys' and Girls' Useful Clubs Awarded Their Prizes

"100 per cent American" is the sign on one of the Stratford children's war gardens. And that slogan could well apply to them all.

Tuesday was a big day for these little citizens, for on that day prizes were awarded for the best garden, the best single row, and the best pig.

Robrt [sic] Scoville of Hartford, Federal food administrator for Connecticut, was one of the judges; Mrs. Harry Burnes of Stratford and Mrs. Frank Fickett of Bridgeport, the other two, William Sheehan, director of education for the food administration, also a citizen of Hartford, was an interested spectator.

The \$10 prize, awarded for the best garden, the neatest, the best planned, according to second crops, etc., and the most faithful workers, went to the Juniors - the Billie Sunshine Useful Club.

Isabel Sniffen, acting president of this club, received the prize for her club, making a very effective speech. This is what she said:

"This money is going to make jam for the soldiers."

That patriotic idea was the children's own, decided upon at their last meeting. Whichever club received the prize was to give it for jam for the soldiers.

The prize for the best single row in all of the gardens was awarded to George Labounty. This prize



THE PRIZE WINNERS  
Front Row (left to right)—Edna Totams, Eleanor Welman, Isabel Sniffen, Susan Freeman  
Back Row (left to right)—George La Bonty, Walter Goddard.

consisted of seven and a half in gold. George said, too, that his money was going for jam. The seventeen and a half dollars worth of jam ought to be some of the best the boys in France ever ate. It represents a great amount of effort, of time and of loving sacrifice by the little children.

The second prize, five dollars, for the best row was given to Susan Freeman of Club 4, the "Colored Kids' Club," the others call it. Susan looked at her money and couldn't decide on the spur of the moment. "I reckon I'll decide later" she remarked.

There was a special prize offered for Club number 3. This is the Louis Bristol Blighty Garden, named for Louis Bristol, a boy now in France in the trenches. His home is near the garden and his mother offered a ring for the best row in that garden. It was won by Edna Totama.

And as a third prize, Mrs. Flickett gave a box of chocolates. Eleanor Welmann being the fortunate winner.

Walter Goddard received \$2.50 for the best pig.



Federal Food Commissioner Robert Scoville, Judging Pigs



The Hillie Sunshine Garden

Ten dollars of this prize money was given by First Selectman James Lally, and other friends contributed the rest. All of Stratford is interested in this army of young gardeners and indeed they have a right to be.

Before the presentation of prizes Mrs. Richard Howell explained to the children that it is a hard job to decide on the best among so much good work and that nobody must be unhappy, because everybody could not get prizes. Then Selectman Lally, who is a special friend of the children, told them that Stratford was proud of them and hoped that next year they would do even more.

Mr. Scoville called their attention to a blackboard in the back of the room [sic]. Across the top was written, "A Message to the Kaiser," and since coming into the room, "Dad" Barber had drawn a picture of the boy and girl gardener. That, said Mr. Scoville, was the message. That was the thing that was going to decide the war in our favor. Then he awarded the prizes. The children all applauded cheerfully and generously for each one, and ended up with the yells that they have adopted as best expressing their own ideas of themselves:

One, two, three,  
 Who are we?  
 We are the members of the S. U. C.  
 Are we in it?  
 Well, I guess;  
 Ask Captain Howell, she'll say  
 "Yes."

And again:

Rickerty, rickerty russ.  
 We're not allowed to cuss;  
 But nevertheless, you must confess,  
 There's nothing the matter with us.

We all confessed it heartily. And indeed, those children have been doing great things in the garden line in Stratford.

"We've had to fight against everything, drouths and pests and bugs and blight," said their captain, "and yet we've accomplished quite a lot."

The "Colored Kids" Club have gathered six bushels of beans and four of tomatoes and have as many more tomatoes to gather.

"The beans are all gone," said Susie, "but they WUZ some good beans."

The children work two days a week and generally early and late on account of the heat. According to this same Susie, "they enjoyed it, however."

"Sometimes we has mo' fun than work; but we gets it done," she observed.

Useful Club No. 2 had their rakes and hoes on the spot and were hard at it. They are the ones with the sign 100 per cent American, and they deserve it. Another club, No. 3, announce themselves, "The Hope of America." If the Kaiser could see them, he would give up hope. These children have caned seventy-seven pints of beans and sold three and a half bushels.



The Judges, and The Captain of The Workers. Mrs. Richard Howell, Captain, Stratford. Mrs. Harry Home, Stratford. Robert Scoville, Federal Food Administrator For The state of Connecticut. Mrs. Frank Fickett, Bridgeport.

And the little ones, the prize winning Billie Sunshine crowd, lined up all in a row like soldiers, each one in front of his individual garden to welcome the judges. The other children say that babies always have the advantage.

“Dad” Barber gave them a party on his houseboat an’ everything,” said one boy. But the little fellows don’t “get by” on their size. Nobody that ever saw their garden would think that for a minute.

One of the Useful Club girls, Justinia Stavola, had put up, all by herself, 204 cans of vegetables. How’s that for a youngster? Oughtn’t it to make some of us grown-ups a little ashamed?

Another interesting sight among the Stratford Young America are the pig raisers. There are five of them. Two are community pigs, presented to the seniors and juniors by Mr. Lally. Their names are Yankee and Doodle. The other three are the proud possession of three children, Walter Goddard, whose pig, Tommie, won the prize, has built the pen all by himself, and has the complete care of his pig. And a fine, fat fellow he is.

Adeline Hammond owns a pig and takes care of him, too. On the front of his pen, you can read this legend, “Petey, my pig.”

As “Captain Howell” said, they have scrapped and fussed and played and worked and had a lot of

fun and done a lot of things. But, not even excepting the valuable work one in putting up cans of vegetables, not even excepting the actual contribution to the soldiers that these young patriots have made, it seems to me the greatest good they have done is to give themselves and their community a lesson [sic] practical political economy, in every day social questions solved by mutual helpfulness.

America will not go back to her old careless way of living after this war, and the reason that she will not is right here: the work, the training in community spirit and unselfish helpfulness that the children of the generation are receiving.



Useful Club No. 2—The 100 Per Cent Americans