

reading problems from the Common School Arithmetic, by John H. French, might confound our students today:

• "A fruit dealer bought 56 barrels of russet apples, 76 barrels of pippins, 69 barrels of spitzenbergs, and 83 barrels of greenings, how many apples did he buy?"

• "A grain buyer purchased a lot of wheat for \$1078.25, and the following week sold it for \$1219.125 (yes, 125). How much did he clear on the wheat?"

• "A Vermont farmer made 161,268 oz. of maple sugar. How many tons did he make?"

• "A drover bought a flock of 125 sheep at @\$2.5625. What was the cost of the flock?"

• "A tanner paid \$156.82-1/2 for 25.5 cords of hemlock bark. How much was that a cord?"

• "A man exchanged a horse worth \$187.50, and a watch worth \$64.875 (yes, 875) for a span of horses worth \$310, paying the balance in money. How much did he pay?"

• And one which totally baffles me: "A dealer in findings sold 13 bu 3 pk 6 qt. of shoe-pegs by the quart. How many quarts did he sell?" What were "findings" (leftover merchandise?) and "shoe-pegs?"

Eberhart forwarded this fascinating material in response to a column I wrote more than 10 years ago (his memory better than mine!) He recalls my lament about how difficult it had been to track down the meanings of old measurements—furlongs, pecks, etc.—for our son who needed them for a school project. The 120-plus-year-old arithmetic book overflowed with reading problems (remember how you hated those?) many of them using terms and measurements commonplace to the late 19th century.

While the math, er, arithmetic, hasn't changed, think how some of the terms in those-

Modems, bits and bytes. Chips. (Not potato). Pagers. Cellular. Compact discs, digital, laptops, desktops. What strange new words—and meanings to old words—were blithely scatter among our conversations. And in our rapidly changing society and its gee-whiz technology, some of the "old" words which once were commonplace to everyone are as meaningless to today's lingo as our electronic terms would have been to our ancestors a century ago.

A reader recently hammered home that point with a selection of page copies from an 1870s copyrighted arithmetic (math, today) book. Yorker James

This arithmetic volume was chock-full of fascinating information on measurements, terms, currency, etc., which not only helped to teach students how to figure, but taught them science and business-related information as well.

For instance, one table explains how to estimate the capacity of cisterns, reservoirs, and related liquid reservoirs. Did you know that 31.5 gallons make 1 bar., or bbl. (meaning barrel)? Or that 63 gallons make 1 hhd. (hogshead)?

A footnote adds that barrels and hogsheads used for commercial purposes were not fixed measures; a barrel could be from 30 to 45 gallons and a hogshead from 60 to 125 gallons. How would you know how much you were getting, anyway?

Another table explained the dry measurements of quarts,

pecks, and bushels, with another interesting footnote: "In measuring grain, seeds, peas, beans and small, fruits, the measurements must be even full. But in measuring large fruits, corn in the ear, coarse vegetables and other bulky items, the measure must be heaping full 4 heaped measures must equal 5 even measures. See Manual."

I hope the manual made more sense than some of today's computer ones.

When it comes to the new math, I was lost already back when our own kids studied it in school. But just in case "arithmetic" every comes back into style, I'm hanging on to this wealth of old-fashioned, book-learnin'.

You never know when you might need the data that 24 gr (grains) equals 1 pwt. (pennyweight).

Enter Cheese Carving Contest

CARLISLE (Dauphin Co.) – Finally a reason to play with your food - the Pennsylvania dairy industry unveils the Creative Cheese Carving Contest. Offering more than 600 dollars in prizes and a chance to be a winner at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, cheese lovers are challenged to come up with creative ways to express "Behold the power Of Cheese."

Ten finalists with the most creative carving ideas will participate in a Carve-Off at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in January. At this carve-off, the finalists will be provided with one five-pound block of cheddar cheese, one pairing knife for carving, a carving area, and "coaching" from culinary arts students or professionals.

A panel of local celebrity

judges will select the top three winners, who will be awarded gourmet cheese baskets and \$150, \$100, and \$50 respectively. All finalists will also receive prizes from the dairy industry.

To enter the Creative Cheese Carving Contest, send your name, address, phone number, and age, along with a description and photo of your creation, to Creative Cheese Carving Contest, c/o American Dairy Association & Dairy Council Mid East, R.D. 1, Box 166 Emlenton, PA 16373. For complete contest rules and regulations contact Cindy Weiner of ADADC Mid East at (814) 498-2058 or Jayne Sebrigh of ADA/DC Middle Atlantic at (717) 486-8590. All entries must be received by December 15, 1998.

Penn State Appoints Faculty Member

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) – Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences has announced the recent appointment of Peter R. Tozer to the position of assistant professor of animal science in the Department of Dairy and Animal Science.

Tozer, a native of New South Wales in Australia, comes to the department with a doctorate in agricultural economics from the University of Washington. He also earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from the University of New England

in Australia in 1992. Before joining Penn State, he served as unit coordinator for Farm and Resource Management A courses in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of New England.

Tozer will teach classes relating to all animal production systems. His research focuses on managing Pennsylvania dairy and other animal production systems to improve their profitability and sustainability.

He is a member of the

American Dairy Science Association, the American Agricultural Economics Association, the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society, and the Canadian Agricultural Economics and Farm Management Society. He recently co-authored "Strategic Alliances and Marketing Cooperatives: A Lamb Industry Case Study" in the Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics, and "Is Equity Finance in Agricultural Worth the Money in The Centre for Rural Development Discussion" Paper.

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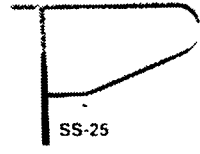
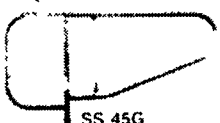
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