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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Interest Continues In 9 Pigs, Four Pens

By NEIL A. MATHESON

I'M STILL getting letters and phone calls about that "nine pigs in four pens" puzzle. There had to be an uneven number of pigs in each pen.

The standard answer goes like this: there are three pens with three pigs in each, and a big pen around the three little ones.

Here it is:

(A Diagram of three small boxes with the number 3 in each surrounded by a large box is shown here.)

From the countless telephone calls and the letters and visits, I found many had the right answer and it was most enjoyable talking to so many of you.

Here are some of the right-answer people:

Kay Frizzell,, motor vehicle branch, City; Mrs. Weir MacLure, Montague RR 4; Mrs. Buddy MacEwen, Morell; Jack Hardy, Sherwood; Alfred Fisher, Bothwell; George Barrett, Upper Prince Street; an Egmont Bay man whose surname I couldn't quite make out – his first name is Peter.

Others were Percy L. King, Gaspereaux; Mrs. Wendell Weeks, Alberton; Glenda MacLeod, Montague; Susan Leard, Bedeque; Mrs. Birt Leard, Peakes; Maurice Coady, Hazelbrook; Lorne Lea, North Tryon; Ozzie MacKinnon – I have him from Murray Harbor, though I have a hunch I may be wrong on that; Patsy White, Bunbury – Patsy's grandfather is Capt. Percy White, Murray Harbor, a man I hope to visit early next summer.

Sacred Heart Home Gets It

A SACRED Heart Home Sister said Mary Gillis in the office worked it out correctly; Marlene Dollar, Winsloe; Gordon Dockendorff, City; Crawford Telley and the boys at the Radio Range Station at the airport; Gordon Rodd, North River Road. Mrs. Joseph Acorn, Bay Fortune is another with the correct answer.

I've been getting some arguments since I told the answer in this column last week. I said that is the standard answer. It's the one given by the people who make the place-mats that are used at some hotels and motels in the province. But there are other ways it can be done, though the general principle is the same.

It's not necessary, for example, to have three pigs in each of the three smaller pens. You could have five, three and one; or seven, one and one.

One man sent in a solution with one of the three smaller pens located inside a large pen, and the other two pens by themselves. You could raise a pretty good argument that this man is right also.

Congratulations to those who solved the puzzle. I know I have missed two names, one of them is a girl from Passmore Street and another is a man from the City. Sorry, I cannot find the slip on which I had your names.

Interesting Juggling

I GOT a tremendous kick out of the way some of the callers, and letter writers tried to solve the puzzle by juggling with figures. Bob Larter, City, drew four pens, but he had one common wall between the third and fourth pens.

Mr. Larter put one pig in the first pen, one pig in the second pen, five pigs in the third pen and two in the fourth. So he had one of the five pigs in pen number three scramble in an effort to get into pen number four, and get stuck halfway. So he had four and one-half pigs in pen number three and two and one-half in pen number four. Another letter writer had something the same solution.

A number of people tried putting four pigs in the first pen, one in the second and one in the third. Then they took three pigs out of pen number one and put them in the fourth pen. So, they contended, they had placed all of the nine pigs.

George Green, Albany was one of the several who suggested this sort of an arrangement. He had handled nine pigs, if you count second-handling, but this way you end up with one pig in pen one, one in pen two, one in pen three and three in pen four. But you only have six pigs in the four pens when you are all through.

'That Wouldn't Be Fair, Sir'

DAVID HOLLYFIELD, 11 of Charlottetown was one of the most eagerly interested telephone callers the day the column came out first. He had a similar arrangement, though he ended up with eight pigs.

This young lad called so often and showed such tremendous interest, I suggested I thought of telling him the answer. From this manly young chap, "But that wouldn't be fair, sir" came the quick reply.

Many interesting conversations developed from some of the telephone calls.

Crawford Telley called me shortly before noon the day the "riddle" column appeared. He told me where he works and added, "There hasn't been a bit of work done in this office since The Guardian arrived." I told him to forget the figures, that the gimmick was in the arrangement of the pens.

Crawford called back about 10 o'clock at night. He had the answer. He and his fellow workers combined their efforts to get it.

Another man called about ten o'clock one night and showed so much interest that he asked "how long before your telephone closes down?"

I told him I would be available past midnight, but he called back with the right answer by 10:30. I believe this is the man who had built four pens so that they enclosed a pen inside of their perimeters. But I told him he really had five pens that way.

Answer Is Disputed

HAROLD TOOMBS, Breadalbane disputes the answer I have given – I gave it last week really. My only reply is that I do not pose as a puzzle, or riddle expert. Indeed I haven't tried to work one out for many years. As I've explained, the three pens inside a larger one is the standard answer to the puzzle that is given by the people who make up the place-mats.

Mr. Toombs recalls being told some years ago “by a very clever man” that you can do things with figures, you juggle them around. One example he used goes something like this:

Five men arrived at a hotel seeking accommodation. They wanted a bed apiece. The landlady said “I have only four beds, but I can place you fellows”. And this is how she did it.

She put two men in the first bed, the third man was placed in the second bed and the fourth man in the third bed. Then she took one of the men out of the first bed and put him in the fourth bed and she had them all placed.

But I note she wound up with only four men placed in beds – work it out for yourself.

Another Solution Offered

A HILLSIDE MOTORS man put one pig in each of two smaller pens, put another pig in a third small pen and then drew a large pen around the third pen, and put six pigs in this large one. That gave him seven pigs in the large pen if you count the one in the small pen inside the bigger one. But he still had only six pigs in the large pen he drew around pen three, and that doesn't seem to follow the odd number in each of the four pens idea.

This has been a lot of fun, hope we can get back to another puzzle column later.