

# A day with Squire Eaton



*Cyrus Eaton introduces Scooter, his new riding horse, to visiting Russians Ralph Tsvilev and Yuri Vasiliev.*



● I would have bet a million, I was that sure, straining on my tiptoes to get a glimpse of President Truman on the platform of his train down by the firehouse. But when it's 1948 and you're playing hooky for the first time to see your first president, things are very basic. Like surely nobody would vote for a man with a mustache. He'd look too shifty. I would have bet a million.

A couple of weeks later, the former Missouri haberdasher was in New York City, depressed but still hanging in, a sure loser, according to the polls. His campaign was broke and he had a train waiting to take him to St. Louis in his home state for one final speech. Some of his people went to Cyrus Eaton's hotel and explained Truman's plight. Would Eaton come up with \$6,000 to pay for the train? We've about given up on winning but, you know, as a friend, So Eaton picked up the train tab, Truman made his speech, went to bed a loser and woke up a winner. Now it's 1972 and we've got another tremendous long shot and neither

candidate has a mustache and I wouldn't bet a nickel.

"I'd bet on McGovern if the odds were right," said Cyrus Eaton. "I'll tell you what. I'll take McGovern if you give me 10 to 1. I'll put up \$10,000 and you put up \$100,000." His twinkling blue eyes scanned the table, taking in the chuckles from his wife Anne, Mr. and Mrs. Cy Jr., his aide, Betty Royon, and two visiting Russian economists, Yuri Vasiliev and Ralph Tsvilev. Then he told the Truman train story as an illustration that nothing's sure.

The lunch — consommé, rare roast beef, baby potatoes and spinach souffle — was for the Russians who are studying management techniques in this country. Vasiliev has already written four books on U.S. companies that have sold 50,000 copies each in the Soviet Union. This trip he is writing one on Eaton's Chesapeake & Ohio and Baltimore & Ohio Railroads and on Control Data Systems in Minneapolis. He is an old friend of the Eatons, having met them 12 years ago when he was chief economist for the Russians in Wash-

ington. The Eatons visited with him on one of their Russian trips and Mrs. Eaton said Vasiliev's wife and she are look-alikes. "We had a ball putting people on."

Over the chocolate mousse, Eaton teasingly asked Vasiliev if he would be the front man in developing Siberia's vast diamond reserves. In very precise English, he begged off, explaining that it was too cold in the winter and in the summer the mosquitoes are only slightly smaller than bears and twice as ferocious. Still the Mrs. Eatons, senior and junior, thought it would be pleasant to have a diamond mine or two in the family.

It was bright and warm in the white dining room, gray and drizzling outside where we had slobbered around earlier, touring Arcadia Farms. This is a Sunday morning ritual with Eaton.

There was a cheery fire going in the big living room where he greeted us, over six feet tall and arrow straight. His gray pants were tucked into rubber boots and he wore a blue cardigan over a white nylon shirt. "It's pretty wet out there. We'd

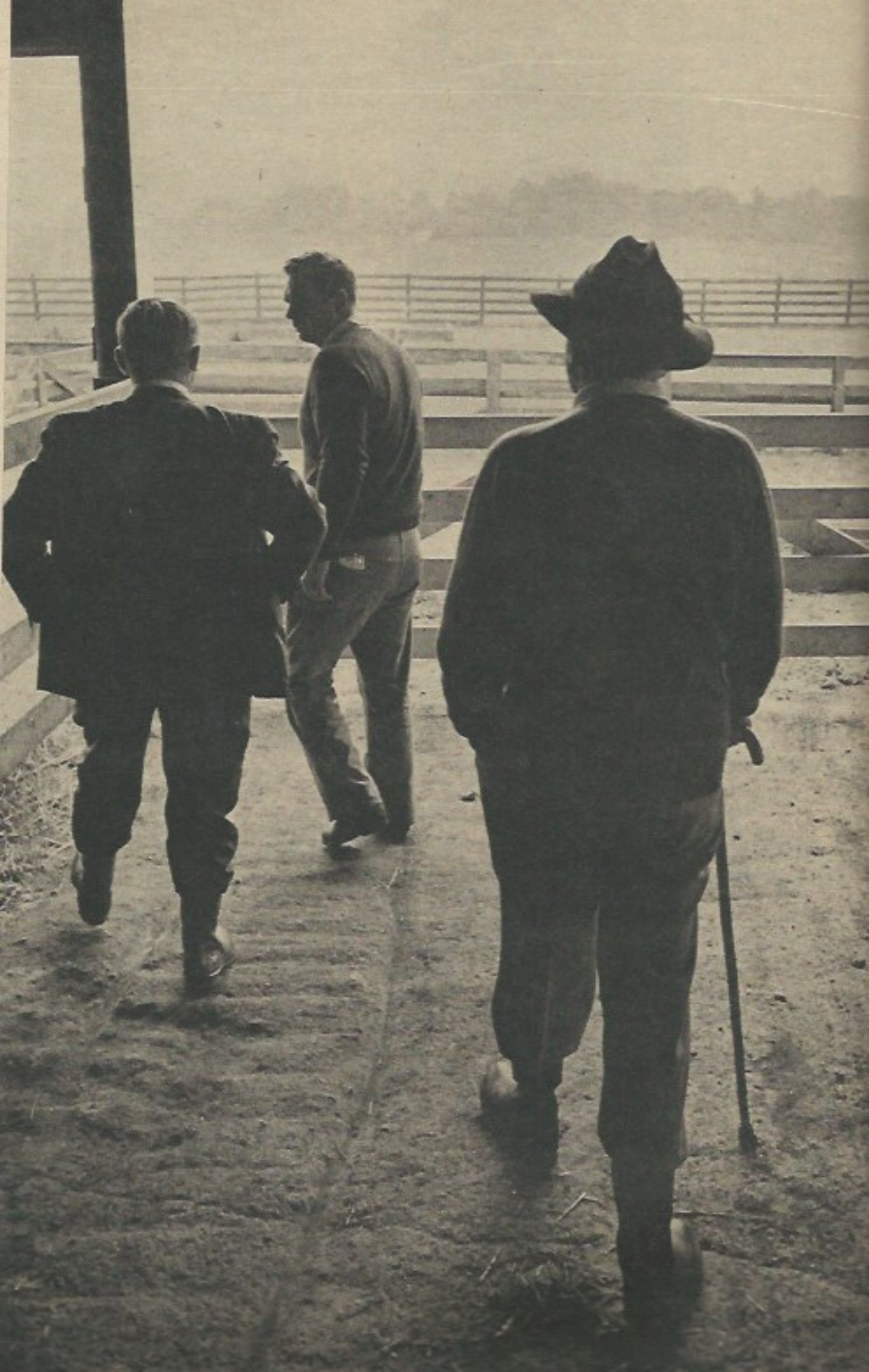
better get you some boots."

The butler brought out heavy wool socks, boots and raincoats and handed Eaton a cane and a floppy, wide-brimmed hat. The chauffeur met us at the door with the black Cadillac limousine.

Eaton is extremely proud of his short-horn cattle and has almost single-handedly upgraded the quality of Soviet stock. Last year, Truman Kingsley, Eaton's farm manager, picked out 500 head of breeding cattle for the Soviets to buy. Many were from Eaton's own herds. "I had to convince them that they had to breed two different kinds of animal, one for milk and one for meat. It's starting to work."

But this day our first stop was at a horse corral to learn about another kind of U.S.-Soviet peaceful coexistence. Eaton opened a gate and called over a quarter horse mare. She came with another mare and their colts to have their noses rubbed by the boss.

"See how much larger this colt is, compared to the other one?" Eaton asked. "And they're the same age.



We bred this mare with Kupol, the Orlov stallion from the troika." (The troika was a gift from the Russians several years ago.) The quarter horse is a fine, gentle animal that can run very fast for short distances. The powerful Russian horses were bred by crossing Arab and Frisian and Arab and English studs for speed, strength and endurance. They can run 10, 20 miles at top speed.

The Russians translated Kupol as dome. Truman Kingsley thought a minute and then made a dome with his hands. "That's right, Kupol is the center horse and the biggest of the three."

Then he explained the idea behind the breeding. "We're losing bone and hooves in our horses. These Orlovs have sure, strong feet and legs. I think eventually they will contribute to our horses. Into Standardbred and Thoroughbred. We've had inquiries about hunters. And polo people have looked at these and thought they'd be great for that game."

Kupol posed and pranced on the other side of a fence like the noble Cossack he is, muscles rippling with every move.

We met the other members of the troika and Big Red, the 16-year-old Eaton has been riding for years and is now out to pasture.

**T**hen we drove to a high pasture on the other side of old Route 8 in Northfield. Kingsley led the way in a pickup and a cowboy rode cross-country. As they rounded up and drove a small herd toward us, Eaton used his cane for a sweeping gesture. "This is why we have good cattle. First is breeding, then good grass and good water." He pointed to a pond in a valley below.

"Are there fish?" Tsvilev asked. Then again because Eaton's hearing is bad.

"Yes, some bass, although the neighbors keep it pretty much fished out." And he chuckled.

Kingsley and the cowboy had the herd on the crest of the hill and Eaton pointed out several of his champion cows and their offspring. He pointed out their huge size and weight at such an early age. Also that the cows are bred at the earliest possible age.

After another short ride we met a giant bull who looks like a 2,300-pound standing rib roast lying on its side. Because of its unusually long back, where the loin comes from, he was named "Filet." Almost



*Kupol, the powerful "dome" in the center, leads the troika as the Eatons go for a ride. He is siring a powerful new breed at Acadia Farms.*

## Squire Eaton

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both. One wall of the barn is covered with blue ribbons, to the roof.

"Now this barn," Eaton said to the Russians, "is a very simple, economic construction. Open sides so the cattle can get in out of the weather. Nothing fancy but it does the job very well. We paid about \$5,000 for this where some dude farmer would pay maybe half a million for a show-place." You could sense his contempt.

As we walked through another pasture, Kingsley had to explain to the Russians the difference between corn-fed beef and corned beef.

Then we met Scooter, a three-year-old bay gelding with a scar on his left shoulder where another horse nipped him when he was a colt. He is a very intelligent, well-mannered horse that is being trained for Eaton's personal use. As Eaton put it, "a new mount for an 88-year-old jockey." Scooter will replace Big Red.

"That's one of the reasons for my good health," Eaton said, stroking Scooter's shiny neck, "riding in the fresh air."

Back at the big old farmhouse ("see how simply a tycoon lives"), Eaton changed into a tweed sport-coat and showed his library. "These

are my intellectual ancestors," he said, pointing out pictures of Thomas Huxley and John Tyndall, Charles Darwin, Bertrand Russell and others. "You should read Tyndall, he's one of my favorites."

(Tyndall was an Irish-born pure scientist and philosopher who made brilliant experiments elucidating the blue of the sky. The money he made lecturing in America in 1872-73 he put into trusteeship for the benefit of American science.)

Among the pictures and books in the library were medals from different nations, bestowed on Eaton for his peace-seeking efforts.

Over sherry (for the Eatons, orange juice for the visitors), Vasiliev enlarged on his mission. "We have built many factories but now we feel more and more a necessity for management to conduct what we have built. We are just starting to learn. If you could export your knowhow in management, it would be wonderful."

"We'll make this deal," Eaton said. "We'll teach you all about management if you'll teach us how to do away with crime. To restore law and order."

Then they went into lunch to joke about diamonds and election bets. ☐