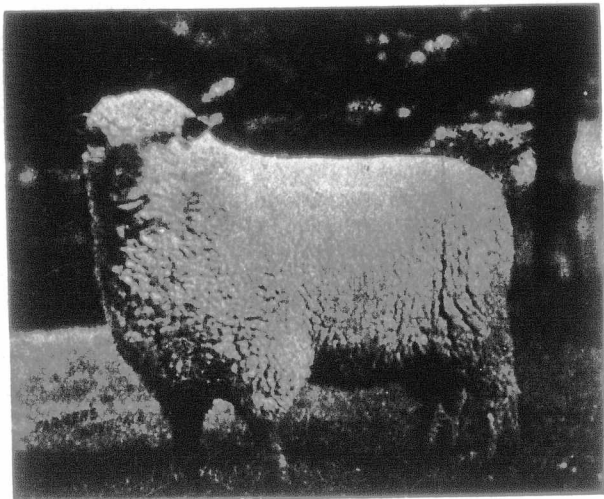


in the neighborhood of the town of Witney, so celebrated for the manufacture of blankets. Forty years ago the writer visited this town weekly, attending the grain market held there, also enjoying the privilege of looking over the flocks and partaking of the hospitality of nearly all the gentlemen named. And well do I remember the expression of a leading butcher on examining some fat wethers exhibited for sale on the market in the town of Bampton, Oxfordshire: "These are the sheep for the butcher."

Mr. Tuynam, of Whitechurch Farm, Hampshire, took a prominent part in pressing the claims of this new breed of sheep upon the public. In the Farmer's Magazine



EARL OF FAIRFIELD 2nd No. 21368.

Typical Oxford Down yearling ram, in breeding condition. Bred by J. T. Hobbs, Maisey Hampton, Fairfield, Eng. NOW OWNED BY AND AT HEAD OF THE FLOCK OF MESSRS. HENRY ARKELL & SON, TRESWATER, ONT.

of 1840, he issued a challenge to breeders, offering to submit 25 wether lambs drawn from a flock of 300 to an impartial trial for nine months for the purpose of testing the value in both mutton and wool of the different breeds. He proposed to stake £25 sterling money on the issue, believing that his Oxfords would beat all comers. His challenge does not appear to have been accepted. In the same communication Mr. Tuynam stated that his breed of sheep, originating in the improved Cotswold ram and the fine-bred Hampshire Down ewe, had been established for nine years, which would place his earliest efforts in 1830 or 1831.

In the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society for 1853, Mr. Samuel Druce, of Eynsham, writing in May of that year, said it was then nearly twenty years since he had begun crossing between the Southdown and the Cotswold, and he published a table showing the superiority both in mutton and wool value of the then new breed over Cotswolds, Leicesters, Hampshires, and he even adds Southdowns. His figures are endorsed by the high authority of Mr. Philip Pusey, a gentleman who spared neither money nor pains in agricultural experiments and pursuits, upon whose grounds the great world's trial of agricultural implements was held in 1851, and who afterwards became an ardent advocate and breeder of Oxford Downs. Mr. Pusey remarked that the great difference in favor of the Oxford Down arose from their superior quality and therefore higher price per pound of the mutton as compared with the long-wooled sheep and the greater weight of wool and mutton as compared with the short-wooled sheep. "The advantage of the breed both then and now," says one of the most prominent breeders in the Old Land to-day, "could scarcely be stated more concisely than as thus expressed by Mr. Pusey." A most successful Gloucestershire farmer of my intimate acquaintance, writing me in May last, says: "I purchased ram lambs from Mr. Tuynam in 1838 and 1840, and the breed is holding its own here (England) to-day. I may add my own testimony that they are not only holding their own here in my own neighborhood and Province of Ontario, but are steadily gaining ground wherever they have been intelligently handled. The great drawback in introducing and using this and all other established breeds is that men will use a grade sire after the first cross, which is a backward rather than a forward step; but when pure-bred sires are continually used, there is progress and success. Sheep-men in the West are beginning to realize this. The demand for the Oxford Down is steadily increasing, to be used as a cross with fine-wooled ewes for mutton purposes. A friend of mine writes me from Wyoming (U. S.) that he had gone out to the mountains to see some cross-bred Oxford lambs, the produce of some rams he had sold and sent out there a year ago. He says they are beauties, many of them weighing from 90 to 100 pounds each, while his neighbors who kept the fine-wools have lambs weighing from 40 to 60 pounds each. The cross-bred or grade Oxfords sold there (Wyoming) for \$1.40 each; the fine-wools had to be kept over until another year. For many years the new breed was known under various names; that first in use for a time was Down Cotswolds.

It was the year 1857, at a meeting of breeders held in the City of Oxford, that the title Oxfordshire Downs (now shortened to Oxford Downs) was adopted. It will be observed that in the two methods of crossing previously given, there was a slight difference: Mr. Druce using the Southdown and Cotswold, Mr. Tuynam the Hampshire and Cotswold. Mr. Druce used, no doubt, the coarser type of Southdown, and Mr. Tuynam the finer type of Hampshire. The Messrs. Gillett used, I believe, the Southdown, as did also Mr. Blake. The success of their labors may be gathered from a report of Mr. Clare Sewell Read, on "The Farming of Oxfordshire," published in the Royal Agricultural Society's journal in 1854. He refers to the Oxford Downs as "The glory of the country, the most profitable sheep to the producer, the butcher, and the consumer." He gives an interesting account of the breed and summarizes its chief recommendations in terms which hold as well now as they did thirty-five years ago. Such, at least, is the opinion of another prominent breeder, Mr. George Adams, of Pidnell Farm, England.

Some account of the history of the breed in the show-yards of the Royal Agricultural Society of England may be gathered from the list of prizewinners which appears in the present volume of that Society. It was not until 1853, at Gloucester, when a special prize was offered by the Hon. R. H. Clive for Shropshires or any gray- or black-faced short-wools that there was any favorable opening for Oxford Downs in the prize list. At that show the first prize for aged rams was won by an Oxford Down. Again at Warwick in 1859, in the class, "Short-wools not Southdowns," the first prize was won by an Oxford Down. In 1862, at the first great metropolitan show, the breed was for the first time placed on its rightful footing in distinct classes, and since that period the Oxford Down section has always formed a prominent feature of the Royal Show. In the same year, 1862, the Smithfield Club (Fat Stock) also provided separate prizes for the Oxford Downs. For twelve years, at their annual meeting, a silver cup was offered for the best pen of Oxford Downs, Shropshires or cross-bred wethers. This prize was won five times by the Oxford Downs, once by the Shropshires, and six times by cross-bred sheep of various descriptions. In 1872 and again in 1875 and 1887 Oxford Downs won the fifty-guinea cup for the best sheep in the show. In 1893, Mr. Brassey won the sweepstakes over all breeds at the Royal Show with a yearling ram.

Then we may follow their record in the showing both in the United States and Canada. At Detroit in 1892, Mr. Arkell, of Arkell, Ont., Canada, won the \$100 prize for the ten best mutton sheep with fifteen entries, all breeds competing. In the same year Mr. Arkell won the champion cup over all breeds with Minnie Mills at Detroit, and in 1893 the Cooper Cup at the Fat Stock Show held at Guelph, Ont., Canada. We might continue to give instances of how that in later years the Oxfords have won honors both in the show-ring and at the experiment station.



A FARM HOMESTEAD IN CARLETON CO., NEAR WOODSTOCK, NEW BRUNSWICK.

but the reputation and attention which they won wherever they have gone has made that task unnecessary. In the more carefully-nurtured flocks of the breeders of the east or upon the rough ranching lands of the West they have become as firmly established and as favorably known as any other breed.

A. H. Smith, Simcoe, Ont.: "The 'Farmer's Advocate' has been a constant visitor to our house for a great many years. We would not like to be without it."

## GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

### Successful Gardening.

BY EDGAR E. MACKINLAY, HALIFAX CO., N. S.

The readers of the "Farmer's Advocate" who were interested in the account I gave of my last year's gardening experience, in Feb. 1st issue, would probably like to hear something of my success this past summer, having grown the first and special prize collection and 14 other prize exhibits at the late N. S. Provincial Exhibition, and the experiments tried and their results.

You will remember that my plot of ground is situated in a very unfavorable locality for the growth of many vegetables and fruits which the Nova Scotia coast is considered to be poorly suited for, but by perseverance and close attention I have grown all the staple products and many novelties and curiosities, much to my own pleasure and the astonishment of the natives, as the saying is.

The four city lots, or about half an acre, in the suburbs of the City of Halifax, which compose my garden were dug up last spring with a four-pronged digging fork, and all the stones and rubbish raked off. I then laid it off in long, straight rows, a foot apart for root vegetables and correspondingly wider for cabbage, tomatoes, etc., manuring principally in the drill with old, well-rotted manure or compost, using a small quantity of phosphate or wood ashes, worked under the surface before sowing the seed.

As soon as the plants were well up, I broke the crust between the rows with a garden rake. This killed the weeds that were coming through, and helped to hold the moisture. After the plants were thinned and had grown quite stocky, I used the hoe or the "Crescent" hand cultivator whenever cultivation and weeding was needed. Of course, if I had plenty room, I would not have to crowd the plants as much as I do, but by the system of double cropping I save much time and space. For instance, lettuce, radishes, spinach, early turnips, peas, etc., I usually sow in ground that I intend to set late tomato, celery and cabbage plants in, and if the right sorts are planted early and well attended to, the crop will be out in plenty time for the one following. I raise all my plants, such as tomato, cabbage, and other tender vegetables in a hotbed or cold frame, the construction of which your readers are probably aware of. The earliest plants I find are those which are disturbed the least while growing. Tomatoes grown in the cold frame were as large plants when set out as those started much earlier in the hotbed and then transplanted into the cold frame before setting out, and matured their fruit earlier, but early cabbage were much benefited by the transplanting. Although only a small grower, it pays me much better to raise my plants than to buy them. This past spring, I had from a 3 x 6 hotbed, \$15 worth, at market prices, the labor and expense amounting to \$3. Besides, I knew what

I was getting, and was able to test a number of varieties side by side, taking far more interest than if the plants were a lot of nameless and spindly articles. When setting out the cabbage plants, I tried an experiment which I find to work well. I set out two early pointed cabbage plants and then one late flat kind in the row as far as it went. I started to use the early cabbage the middle of July, and now the late ones have taken up the room, and I have a good crop; whereas, if they had been all the one kind I would have likely lost a large percentage of them. The tomatoes I set out 25th of May, when about 8 in.