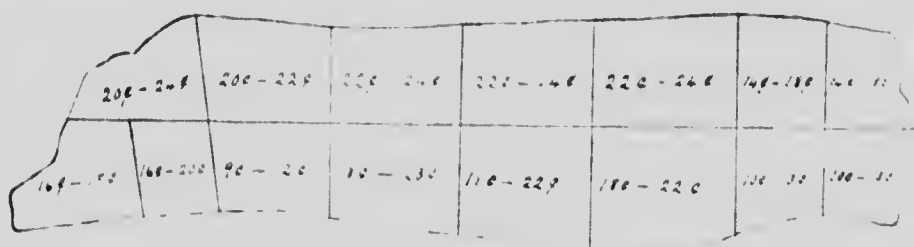


PART II THE CANADIAN EXPORT TRADE

In the United States there is an immense home market for lard and oleomargarine (artificial butter). In Canada we have no trade in oleomargarine and a very much smaller home market for lard. The American packer, therefore, can sell very fat hogs, immediately rendering lard and oleomargarine from the fat and placing only the leaner carcasses and the lean parts of the fat carcasses upon the market to be consumed as meat. On the other hand, practically all the Canadian hogs must be consumed as meat; and as there is a very limited and decreasing demand for fat pork the production of a leaner class of hog has become a necessity in Canada. Great Britain is the home of the export trade in pork products of both Canada and the United States, the latter country exporting vastly larger quantities than Canada; and to keep out of a hopeless competition with the Americans our packers have been forced to cater to an entirely different class of customers. Thus it comes that the lean and carefully prepared bacon of Canada is taken by the large cities and retail to the well-to-do classes, while the American product goes mainly to a less fastidious class of customers at a lower price. Canadian bacon, therefore, does not come into direct competition with the bulk of the American product in Great Britain; and a very little consideration of facts outlined above should convince any thoughtful person of the importance of avoiding American competition as far as possible. As a matter of fact, we are compelled to go out of the fat hog business, owing to the vast advantages possessed by the Americans in the way of markets for their products.

The kind of bacon of which Canadian packers make a specialty is what is known as the "Wiltshire side." Denmark and Ireland are our main competitors; but their conditions are somewhat similar to our own, and the competition, therefore, is not a hopeless one. At the same time, we need to make forth every effort if we are to hold our own in the British market; and hence we require to give the subject of bacon production most careful study.

To make Wiltshire sides, a hog is required weighing from 160 to 220 pounds live weight. These are not cast-iron limits, though 160 pounds is rather light for making the best side. The most suitable weights are from 180 to 200 pounds. The diagram which follows shows a retail dealer's method of cutting a Wiltshire side and the approximate retail values in Great Britain.



A Wiltshire Side,
Showing retail dealer's method of cutting, and approximate range of retail values in Great Britain.

The diagram shows that the most valuable meat is found along the upper part of the side as far forward as the shoulder. When the shoulder and neck are reached there is a very material drop in the value. This teaches that the hog with a heavy, rough shoulder produces a very undesirable side, because it gives a side which is heavy at the cheap end. It teaches further that the hog should have good length from the back of the shoulder to the ham, because this is the most valuable part of the side of bacon. It will be noted