



Leicester

The Improved Leicester, whose qualities as a feeder and producer of wool are so well known, is a sheep whose type was set and molded by that most famous of all breeders, Mr. Bakewell. The work was begun about 1750, and by careful selection of quality, regardless of size, close relationship, and some say even of color, he worked out his problem, the establishment of a breed, ideal in all he wanted, early maturity, quality of wool and mutton, with ability to take on flesh. The importance of this work can only be realized when we consider how much the improved Leicester has had to do with the development of nearly all of the modern mutton breeds. The Leicester belongs properly to the larger breeds of sheep. Their face and legs are white, the head is small and clean, with a small tuft of wool at forehead, the ears are of a little more than medium size, well set back, the neck is not heavy, but well set on square, deep shoulders, the back is broad and straight, the hind quarters not quite so square as the Cotswold, but well padded and full in the twist, and the legs are clean and fine boned. The fleece is classed among the long wools, combs from six to eleven inches and shears eight or nine pounds. It is remarkable for its lustre and quality and can be used for finer and more expensive fabrics, such as mohair.

Cheviots

The Cheviots are a breed of mountain sheep, well known for their hardiness and ability to do well on scant pasture. They are of the long wool variety, shearing from six to eight pounds, and the ewes weigh from 150 to 200 pounds. They are thick and deep, rather light in shoulders; strong quarters, the head is large with strong nose, entirely bare of long wool on forehead, ears medium length, well set forward, legs short, bone of good size, clean and strong. A very fanciful tradition regarding the Cheviot sheep is that at the time of the threatened invasion of England by the Spanish Armada the vessels when wrecked contained some sheep, which swam ashore and escaped to the Cheviot hills. The wool is fine and is largely used in the manufacture of Scotch

About the Breeds of Sheep

The Sheep's Early History—How the Different Breeds Originated

tweeds and Cheviot cloths. They are good feeders, will fatten well without grain, and for rough countries their hardiness makes them a suitable breed, which has been found to their advantage in the newer settlements of America, and as the country became more improved a cross with Cotswold or Leicester gave them improved quality, while retaining their natural hardiness.

Horned Dorsets

have a history as old as any, having lived in Dorsetshire, Eng., as long ago as there is any record to be found. Some outward resemblance to the Merino has brought about the surmise that they have descended from the same parent stock, but all other characteristics of the two breeds are so different as to almost preclude the



Shropshire

possibility of this. The breed is remarkable for its fecundity, the ewes being good milkers, and it has been proved possible to produce two crops of lambs a year, but has not proved a profitable plan. They are sheep of medium size, white in face and legs, head narrow and rather long with curling horns white or straw colored. The shoulders are rather low, but broad, the chest is deep, the back straight and the loins are broad and strong, bone rather light, fleece short but fine, yielding an average of from six to eight pounds. Their points of excellence is their early and prolific breeding, ability to fatten and early maturity.

Southdowns

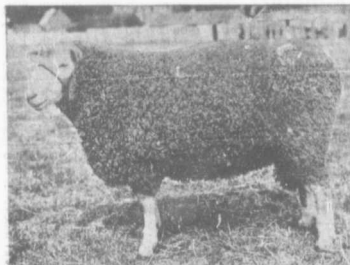
Among the mutton sheep is first to be considered the Southdown. It is a descendant of the old Sussex Down. About 1775 appeared on the scene John Ellman, who during over half



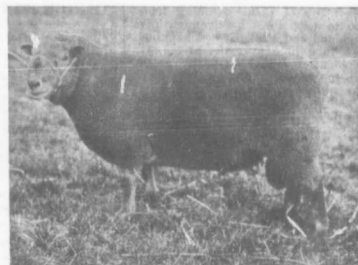
a century endeavored to improve the qualities which he thought the most desirable, and without accomplishing such remarkable and immediate results as did Mr. Bakewell, it is possible that his attainments were even more comprehensive and ultimately successful, for he accomplished his aims without resort to the in-breeding which characterized the methods of the latter, and he fixed his type on a basis of soundness and health, prolificacy and vigor, which have made them such a profitable animal under varying conditions. The Southdown is one of the medium breeds, wethers sometimes reaching a weight of 225 pounds, the face and legs are a uniform light brown, forehead and cheeks well covered with wool, forehead broad, eyes wide apart, ears small, wide and well set, neck short and fine, sitting finely on broad deep shoulders, the back and loin is broad and the ribs well sprung, the thigh well fleshed low down, underline straight, bone of good proportion to the animal, and the whole appearance of the animal is smooth and handsome, with a clean-cut attractive appearance. They are very strong favorites in many parts of England and America.

Shropshires

The Shropshires have long been a popular sheep in England and America. They are traced directly to the old Cannock sheep, crossed with spotted faced sheep of Morlie Common, a horned race, brown or spotted in color, noted for the quality of their wool and their general immunity from disease or sickness. The sheep of Cannock Heath were hornless, had greyish faces and legs and were of great size, attaining to great weights. From these two the Shrops. has been evolved, outcrosses with various other breeds have been claimed, but this is not charged upon any authority, but the breed has been so improved that it is fast becoming a leading variety, and a strong competitor for any other breed of mutton sheep. The face is dark or greyish brown, well woolled over, the forehead, cheeks and often the face below the eyes, the legs are a darker brown



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Southdown