

of Ireland. As showing the powers of prepotency possessed by high-bred Shorthorns one can quote the case of the Hereford and Shorthorn cross. The Hereford is as ancient and as pure a breed as the Shorthorn, yet if a Shorthorn bull is used on Hereford cows the produce will show much more of the Shorthorn than the Hereford in appearance and markings. This cross is very popular in middle England.

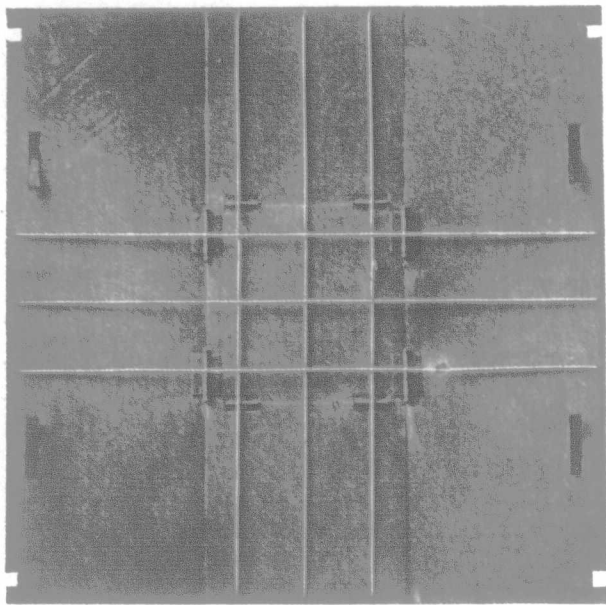


Fig. 1—The Folding Box Ready for the Fleece.

Three Types of British Shorthorns.

Now, let us analyze the British Shorthorn a little more closely. One of the peculiarities of the Shorthorn is that it has within itself animals not only of various colors, but also of different types and distinct characteristics. In regard to color there is the red, white, and roan, the three recognized standard colors of the breed, but these again must be subdivided into red and white, dark roans and light roans, and even the whites are not always of the same shade, some being of a more creamy hue than others. At one time there were practically only two distinct types of Shorthorn, the Bates and the Booth, but later on the Cruickshank or Scotch type was added, which was more or less evolved by a process of skilful breeding and selection out of the other two.

These three types of Shorthorn have in recent years been so intermixed that the distinguishing characteristics have to a great extent been lost. Still, close observers can see the thick, blocky carcass of the Cruickshank; the fiery head and eye of the Bates; and the Booth style of horn very often all appearing on the same animal. Then, again, whereas other breeds are noted either for beef or milk alone, as the case may be, the Shorthorn is bred on beef lines, on dairy lines, or on dual-purpose lines, so that in regard to color, type and general characteristics the Shorthorn is in altogether a different category to any other breed of cattle. All this must seem somewhat perplexing to those who do not know the story of the breed, and not only is it perplexing to the uninitiated, but these peculiarities render it extremely difficult to breed true to type in any herd without pursuing the system of line (or close) breeding.

Once the various types were sub-divided. Each of the most celebrated Bates families had characteristics peculiar to themselves. For instance, the Duchesses, were noted for their high-bred appearance and grandeur of carriage. "Character" was written all over them, and the pose of their head, the formation of their horns, their round, prominent eyes and altogether majestic appearance placed them at one time at the head of the breed. They broke the "world's records" in prices and as an outcome nearly "broke" the breed. Like the Duchesses, the Barringtons, which are the chief branch of the family, have always possessed characteristics peculiar to themselves and distinct from others of the Bates families. They have a certain strength of head and a sort of Roman nose peculiar to themselves, and the bulls of the Barrington tribe are almost invariably of strong masculine character, but to-day are losing their distinctive appearance.

Now, the Booth type was of quite a different stamp to that of Bates. A pure-bred Booth animal could always be picked out by the head and horn and noticeable character. Booth cattle had "triangular" heads. The horns were somewhat strong and coarse, with very often an upward tendency, and although the Booth cattle had not the style and grandeur of some of the best Bates sort they had longer quarters, thicker flesh and better-sprung ribs, and were altogether much better "show" cattle.

Cruickshank cattle, however, changed everything and created a mixed type. A good deal of the style and high-bred appearance of the old-time Shorthorn has been lost, but shorter legs, thicker and more blocky carcasses, and quicker feeding propensities have been gained, but in those herds in which heavy milking qualities have been made, Scotch blood has been used very sparingly and a good deal of the older type has been maintained as the outcome. It is the height of folly to use to any considerable extent Scotch bulls on milking Shorthorns. Perhaps for one generation a Scotch bull may be used, for the purpose of establishing a certain robustness of constitution, but if the Scotch

blood is persisted in in the second and succeeding generations away flies the milk supply.

Thus it should be realized that the milking Shorthorn is really distinct from the beef type, albeit there are to be found within the Shorthorn breed itself, a number of animals of a genuine dual-purpose type. The Milking Shorthorn is being raised in ever-increasing numbers in Northern, Middle and Southern England. Families such as the Ringlets—are springing up into new fame. Reliable records, surpassing the thousand gallons in a

lactation, are now kept and preserved. Cumberland and Westmorland counties are full of cattle eligible for "The Book", but hitherto left outside of it by their owners who have "never bothered" about keeping pedigree charts until they observed that there was a genuine and long-continued call for their cattle. They are now "getting together" and stock which can pass the qualifications as to ancestry and yield, are bounding upwards in monetary value, which is as it should be.

ALBION.

Caring for the Season's Wool Clip.

There can be no question as to the importance of wool at this time. The civilian population of this country cannot fail to notice it in the occasional purchases of wearing apparel and similar necessities. Ordinary clothing is becoming a problem, but there are millions of men in uniform who have prior claims to such comfort as wool provides. The man who cares for his clip as a patriotic duty is doing something for the Great Cause, and, at the same time, bringing to himself a greater reward for time and labor expended.

Many flocks have, no doubt, been shorn ere this, but in the great majority of cases wool is still on the sheep's back. In this condition, and later when shorn, it requires certain care to make it most acceptable to the manufacturers, and most valuable as a commodity for which the grower expects the highest market price. A fleece full of burrs and dirt, tied with binder twine and kept in a damp place is not such as will command the same valuation as clean wool properly folded, tied with paper twine and kept apart from excessive moisture until placed on the market. Formerly wool was wool,

with a large blanket or piece of canvas as an improvement on the hard floor. The relative comfort enjoyed by the sheep will cause them to remain more quiet and thus facilitate shearing.

Before rolling the fleece, shake it lightly so as to remove all loose dirt. All heavy tags or badly-discolored locks should be removed and never included with the fleece. Always pack these separately, for when mixed with clean fleeces the color of the good product is damaged. Spread the fleece, skin side down, on a swept floor; the outer edges are then folded over, and after that, commencing at the tail and neck ends, the fleece is rolled up compactly. Never use binder twine in tying the fleece. The sisal from such twine becomes incorporated with the fibres of the wool, but it does not take the dye in the same way, so cloth containing this sisal is very much lessened in value. In some cases the neck-piece is pulled out and twisted into a band. This, however, is inadvisable, for the rope thus made is very difficult to untwist, and consequently this method of tying depreciates the value of the wool. There is a paper twine which is very well suited for the tying of wool. All the co-operative associations require its use, and it is easily obtained through the executive of these organizations.

The wool should be tied in all cases; when untied, fleeces fall apart in shipping or handling, and far too great a portion of such wool is put into the low grades, because it cannot be kept in condition to classify properly.

Anyone shipping wool in large quantities should obtain wool sacks, the standard size of which is around 7½ feet long and 40 inches wide. These will hold in the neighborhood of 200 to 240 pounds. One of these sacks will hold about 20 fleeces. Where a farmer has a small number of fleeces, say from

five to twelve, clean jute bags are sometimes used. Care should be exercised, however, to see that these bags are turned inside out and properly shaken, so as to avoid the chance of loose fibres along the seams mixing with the wool.

The wool box for shaping and tying a fleece of wool, illustrated herewith, helps considerably in putting the fleece into proper condition and in tying. Pamphlet No. 14, of the Live Stock Branch, Ottawa, describes the folding and the dimensions of this box in the two following paragraphs. The illustrations are taken from the same pamphlet.

Description of Fleece Folding Box.

It is necessary to keep the fleece as intact as possible during shearing. Fold sides and ends of fleece to centre with clipped or skin side out; then place on folding board after paper twine has been threaded on the board, as shown in the accompanying illustration. The sides and ends of the box should then be brought into the position illustrated in figure 3, and held together by means of wooden cleats.

Material required will consist of a board 9 feet long by 1 foot wide and 1 inch thick, which may be cut into two pieces 3 feet long and three pieces 1 foot long. The pieces should then be hinged in the manner shown in the illustration of the open box. For convenience it is advisable to use springs to hold the end board upright when compressing the fleece. The foregoing description represents the size most suitable for all grades of fleeces, except Coarse or Lustre. The latter will require a box of greater proportions. Two inches added to all dimensions will make it sufficiently large to contain, without difficulty, fleeces of the average size of these grades.



Fig. 4—Proper Method of Folding Fleece.

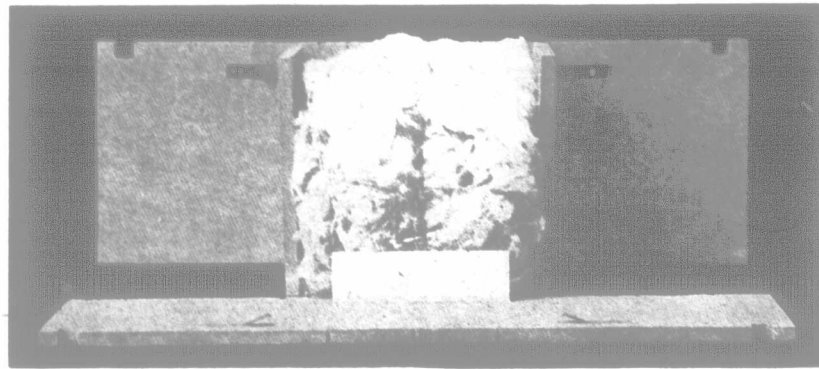


Fig. 2—Fleece-folding and Tying Box; Fleece Tied.

but now with a thorough grading system in vogue, conducted by the growers themselves, quality is recognized and appraised at its actual value.

Care Prior to Shearing.

Poorly-fed sheep possess a harsh fleece which lacks oil and which frequently is made up of weak fibres. Periods of sickness or unthriftiness cause weak sections in the wool where breaks occur when any strain is exerted on

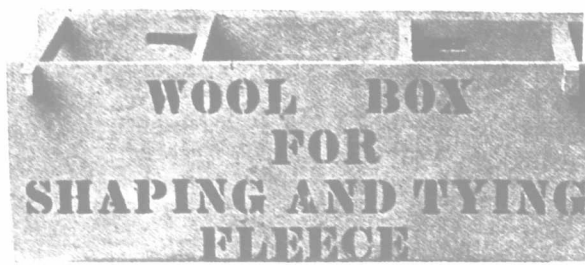


Fig. 3—The Fleece-folding Box.

them. Proper feed racks should be used in order to keep hay and chaff out of the wool, and burrs should be avoided. Sheep running on plowed land before shearing are likely to get dirt incorporated with the fleece, and this is objectionable. Keep the wool clipped behind at all times so as to prevent the formation of dung locks. Never use oil-paint or tar in marking sheep. These are insoluble and must be cut from the fleece, for they will not scour out. There are proprietary materials on the market which give a fairly permanent brand under ordinary conditions, and yet scour perfectly in the mill. Do not wash the wool on the sheep's back. If washing is practiced at all this is, perhaps, the best method, but the buyers prefer to have wool in the grease. The weight lost in washing will not be compensated for by sufficient increase in price, so the wool should be marketed in its natural condition.

Precautions at Shearing Time.

Never shear sheep when their wool is wet or damp. The fleece should be dry and kept dry after shearing. Damp wool will ultimately take on a yellowish color, which decreases its value, for it cannot then be used in the manufacture of white yarn. More than that, it may be attacked by mildew which will impair the tensile strength of the fabric. Thus, of course, all has a direct bearing on the price.

When beginning operations at shearing time, select a smooth, clean surface, free from all dirty or chaffy material. Straw in the wool is not only valueless, but it materially decreases the value of the product. A bundle of hay or straw spread on the cleared surface and covered

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