

The Colling Bros.

Inasmuch as the breeders of Shorthorn cattle have been taught to revere the names of Charles and Robert Colling as the first great improvers of the race, we have deemed it of interest to reproduce the engraving shown herewith from Vol. I of Mr. John Thornton's *Shorthorn Circular*, published in London some sixteen years ago:—

Robert Colling, the elder of two brothers, was born at Skerningham, in 1749, and when a youth was apprenticed to a large grocer; but his health being delicate he returned home and joined his brother Charles in partnership, until Charles went to Ketton, and Robert took the Barmpton farm in the spring of 1783. Having previously resided at Hurworth, he often visited Mr. Colley, and imitated many of his principles of farming, more especially turnip growing, and in later years his own farming at Barmpton became high and excellent in every degree. For many years his Leicester sheep, which were obtained from Bakewell, were more successful than his Sherthorns, and his ram shows or lettings were continued for many years.

Mr. Wiley, of Brandsby, took sheep of him for fourteen years in succession, and upon one particular occasion asked him what a good Shorthorn should be like. Pointing to one of his finest tups, called Shoulders (from the excellence of that point), Mr. Colling advised him to breed his cattle like that. A favorite expression of his was to liken his cattle to a barrel; he did not approve of the breast being very prominent, preferring it rather short but very thick and wide, especially between the fore legs, as he generally considered beasts with very prominent breasts had thin shoulders and chine, and lacked width and substance in their fore quarters. It appears that some of Robert Colling's earliest stock came from Millbank, of Barningham, about 1780. These were supposed to be the best Teeswater cattle, and noted for their excellent grazing properties. The original of the Yellow Cow by Punch came from this stock; and her descendants were Venus, lot 19; Clara, lot 29, and Diamond, lot 62—all sold for high prices in the 1818 sale. Of Diamond Mr. Dickson, in an essay on judging, said that he was small, of beautiful symmetry, and a perfect model, with a thick, fine coat. The Yellow Cow by Punch, bred a heifer by Favorite (252), which heifer was the dam of the celebrated "White Heifer that Travelled." No record gives the date of this white heifer's birth, (supposed 1806), but the fashion at that time of feeding to an enormous weight, and the success of John Day in his wanderings with the Durham ox, induced two butchers to purchase her for exhibition. Unlike John Day, they left no pamphlet of the "pure genuine breed," nor of their travels throughout the country. A small hand-bill alone told of the merits of the White Heifer, and ran as follows:—"To be seen at the stables of the Three Kings, Piccadilly, near the Gloucester Coffee House, the greatest wonder in the world of the kind, the wonderful Durham fat heifer, of the improved Shorthorn breed, which weighs 306 stone (8 lbs.), bred and fed by Robert Colling, of Barmpton, near Darlington, in the county of Durham. She is sister (half sister by the sire) to the Durham ox and favorite bull, Comet, which was sold for 1,000 guineas at the sale of Charles Colling, Esq., at Ketton, for which 1,500 guineas has since been offered. This heifer is now the property of Messrs. Robinson & Spark. It is particularly worthy of notice that this justly-celebrated heifer was a twin."

From Sir William St. Quintin, of Scampston, Robert obtained his Wildair tribe, from which he

believed the renowned Hubback (319) was descended. It was a favorite sort at Barmpton, and produced among other noted animals the bull Marske (418), used by Mr. Bates on his Duchesses.

The "American Cow," at the base of the Rose of Sharon and Cambridge Rose pedigree, was bred by Robert Colling, and got her name, it is said, from going out to America early in the century. When the stock of Red Rose and Moss Rose became of such note she was taken back by Mr. Hustler to England, and produced at Acklam, in 1811, Red Rose by Yarborough (705), for which Mr. Hustler is said to have refused \$2,000, and which Mr. Bates bought in 1819.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 29th and 30th, occurred the great Barmpton sale, when 61 head of all ages sold for about \$39,250, an average of say \$640 each, which although less than had been obtained at Ketton in 1810, there is every reason to believe it was a better sale. In 1810 things were at war prices and everything high, while in 1818 there was peace, and a general depression upon agriculture. The bulls are said by Mr. Wetherell to have been the finest lot he ever saw at one sale. They doubled the average of the cows, and, taking the highest priced family at Ketton against the highest priced one at Barmpton, we have the following result in favor of the Barmpton stock:—At Ketton, the Phoenix tribe, sixteen (including Comet), averaged \$1,105; at

to buy the cow and her heifer. After some haggling on each side the purchase was made, and Favorite, alias Lady Maynard, (Vol. 1, 2, 3, page 164) by R. Alcock's bull (19), and her daughter, Young Strawberry, went to Ketton. Mr. R. Colling told Mr. Wiley that his brother's and his own cattle were never better than anybody else's until they got Maynard's two cows; and Mr. Bates wrote that Mr. Maynard gave him a long pedigree of the cow Favorite (Lady Maynard), going back to the time of the murrain (1745).

Hubback (319) was quite probably the first bull that Charles Colling used at Ketton. The mass of conflicting evidence for and against this bull, published in the *Farmers' Journal*, about 1820-21, would fill a small volume. It is difficult to get at the truth of his history. Mr. Wright says that Charles Colling, going into Darlington market weekly, used to notice some excellent veal, and upon inquiry ascertained that the calves were got by a bull belonging to Mr. Fawcett, of Haughton Hill. This bull was Hubback (319), who was then serving cows at a shilling each. Mr. Waistell and Robert Colling bought the bull together for ten guineas, in the spring, and in the October or November following (accounts vary as to 1783 or 1785), Charles Colling gave eight guineas for him. At the end of two years the bull was sold to Mr. Hubback, Northumberland, after whom he was called. He died about 1791.

Hubback was said to be a small yellow, red and white bull, and the quality of his flesh, hide and hair seldom equalled. He was bred by John Hunter, of Hurworth, in 1777, and got by George Snowden's bull out of the daughter of a cow bought from Mr. Stephenson, of Ketton, from whose stock Foljambe's dam came. Mr. G. Coates, who saw Hubback, mentions him as a yellow red bull with a little white, head good, horns small and fine, handling firm, shoulders rather upright, girth good, loins, body and sides fair, rumps and hips extraordinary, flank and twist wonderful.

Foljambe (263) succeeded Hubback, but after all Favorite (252) was the sire most used. He was by Bolingbroke (86) out of Phoenix by Foljambe, daughter of Mr. Maynard's cow Favorite. Mr. Coates thought him a large beast, light roan in color, with a fine bold eye, body down, low back, and other parts very good. Mr. Waistell said Favorite was a grand beast, very large and open, had a fine brisket, with a good coat, and was as good a handler as ever was felt. His dam, Phoenix, was a large

open-boned cow, and coarser than her dam, while her son (Favorite 252) partook more of her character, and possessed remarkably good loins, long level hind quarters, his shoulder points stood wide and were somewhat coarse and too forward in the neck, and his horns, in comparison with Hubback's, were good and strong. His sire, Bolingbroke (86), was by Foljambe out of Young Strawberry, the heifer bought of Mr. Maynard; in color he was a blood red with a little white, and the best bull George Coates ever saw. Favorite (252) (born in 1794, died in 1809) was used indiscriminately upon his own offspring even in the third generation.

Robert, the elder, died unmarried in 1820, aged 71 years. Charles died, without issue, in 1836, aged 86. In a comparison of the two herds, a well-known judge who knew and saw both, has said that Robert's cattle were not so good as his brother's. Although they were large, even larger than the cattle of the present time, they lacked that superlative quality which distinguished the herd at Ketton.

The Collings and their great master, Bakewell, like many other pioneers, builded wiser than they knew. Their experience and results have been the "stepping stones" upon which subsequent breeders have perfected the breed of Shorthorns. —[Breeder's Gazette.



CHARLES AND ROBERT COLLING.

Barmpton, the Red Rose tribe, eleven (including Lancaster, \$3,100), averaged \$1,350, and the thirteen favorite Wildairs averaged \$710.

Mr. Robert Colling has been described as a stately, reserved man, the opposite to his brother Charles, kind in his manner and straightforward in all his dealings, keeping a good house and high company, and was liked by all who knew him. Robert was one of the earliest disciples and most intimate friends of the great Bakewell, and there is little doubt that Bakewell's great principle of in-and-in breeding was carried out most successfully by the Collings. Father to daughter and mother to son, were the principal direct alliances, and the system was continued so long as robustness and form were upheld.

Charles Colling, "father of the Shorthorn breed," was originally in partnership with Robert, but they afterwards separated, Robert going to Barmpton, and Charles to Ketton, in 1783. Gabriel Thornton, father of Robert Thornton, Stapleton, Yorkshire, went with Mr. Charles as farm manager, having previously lived since 1774 with Mr. Maynard, at Eryholme. Some remarks of Thornton's concerning Mr. Maynard's cattle led Mr. and Mrs. Charles Colling to ride over to Eryholme that same year. When they arrived, a handsome cow that Miss Maynard was milking attracted their notice, and Mr. Colling offered to