



The Old System and the New, the Shock and the Silo, Seen Side by Side in a Famous Corn Growing District.

### How We Drain on Our Farm

James Holston, Oxford Co., Ont.

**A** TRIP through this country at the time of the last harvest would show our farming community securing the crop under great difficulties and with a variety of tools, from the old-style cradle and mowing scythe to the latest and improved binder. Some of our farmers tried placing a gasoline engine on the binder and report good results and a great saving on the horses. But with all our endeavor a great amount of grain was lost, and in some cases it was left uncultured for the cattle to pick over and tramp into the ground. This soft condition of the land called for much more labor in harvesting operations. With properly drained land, we believe this labor would have been avoided, as I have yet to see or hear of a binder unable to work on a tile-drained piece of land. In our own case our binder cut the crop where it was tile-drained as easily as any other year in which the crop was as badly down. It was not on the low parts of our fields that we had our trouble, but on the higher parts where spring freshets do not flood. Our lower parts are tile-drained, and are the first ready to work in spring, and produce heavier crops, and are surer of a crop in any year.

#### How We Tile

Our first step in draining is to secure a good outlet, then lay our trunk drain, then come on with the branches as opportunity permits. In the earlier draining days on this farm, that was reversed, and the tile on the higher lands threw the water on the lower lands where nature took care of it. But we have stone drains laid over 45 years ago as good as ever. Also pine board drains laid 50 years ago, and still on duty.

In regard to the taking of levels, the engineer gave us our levels on the main drains, and as our land is rolling we did not have much trouble in grading the branches. Where the fall was light, we have used the spirit level to get the grade. By using a straight edge board or scantling and getting it perfectly level (test our level both ways) we get the rise or fall of the ground along the proposed drain. With an assistant to set the stakes for us, we can soon find out how many feet of a fall we can get for our drain.

We then get our horses and plow and turn a couple of furrows. If sod, then turn both furrows the same way and lift the second one out with a fork, then take another round with the Shovel this out and we have a trench 15 to 18 plow as deep as the team and plow will permit.

inches deep. We have our depth at the outlet, and have found the depth possible or desirable. We drive a couple of stakes into the ground about three feet apart, one on each side of the ditch, nail a straight edge strip of board to these, five feet above the bottom of the drain, or where the bottom of the drain is to be. We go a few rods farther up the drain and repeat the operation, and tie a piece of white paper around the cross piece. Then with a five-foot stick, we get the depth along the drain. Great care should be taken in grading the bottom of a drain, as any unevenness in the grade lessens the flow of the tile.

Having the drain ready for the tile, we prefer laying them ourselves or having it done by an experienced and reliable individual. The covering of the tile again calls for caution, as a stone allowed to drop into the ditch may break a tile and clog the drain. In covering the tile, we aim to keep sand away from the tile, and where possible use clay or black mud. With the tile well protected, a team of horses that are not afraid of a ditch will now make short work of the job.

One thing more remains to be done. Draw a map of the farm, with all the drains marked. Also the size of each one. If we have done our work well, it will then be a pleasure to till the smiling soil, and our teams will say Amen.



"Pretty Fair Peaches, Eh?"

### Brine Curing of Pork

By Geo. B. Ellis.

**F**OR 30 years I have used a method for salting and curing meat that has been very satisfactory, and our meat has been complimented by a great many people who have eaten at our table. I do not think this is the only way, but it is surely a good way, and I will give it to you for what it is worth. Some people prefer dry salting, but I prefer the brine method, as it keeps the meat cleaner, and I think safer, in a very warm spell of weather.

It is necessary to have good healthy and well fattened hogs to start with, and to know how to properly divide and trim the carcass, but that phase of the question I will not take up. I would prefer to butcher when the weather is only moderately cold, and when it is just a little below freezing. If the meat is allowed to become frozen hard before it is put into the brine, it will not take salt readily. After the carcasses are cut up, spread the hams, shoulders and sides upon a table or boards in the smoke house, but where they will not freeze; do not pile them up. Rub a little salt on each piece, particularly the hams and shoulders, and let the meat cool out for 24 to 36 hours. Then pack closely in a clean barrel and cover with a brine made as follows:

Soft water, three gallons; good salt, two pounds; brown sugar or a good quality of sorghum, one pound. Make this proportion a sufficient amount to cover the meat well. The brine should be boiled and skimmed and cooled. It will require from four to six weeks, owing to the size of the hams, for the meat to be salted properly. The sides require less time—usually four weeks is sufficient for them, but the proper time to take the meat out of brine can be determined by sampling it.

For curing I use clean corn cobs or hickory and maple wood. I hang the meat in a dark, tight closet made in the coolest corner of the smoke-house. I put the fire for the smoke in a stove and conduct the smoke into the closet through a pipe, thus avoiding too much heat under the meat. It is best to take plenty of time to allow the meat to cure, and I would like to have a smoke under the meat about half the time each day, and it will require about three weeks. Then the meat should have a nice straw color and be sufficiently cured that it may be immediately sacked and hung back in the same place. The butchering should be done early so that the meat may be salted and cured before the warm weather in March sets in. I prefer meat cured in this manner to the packing-house product.