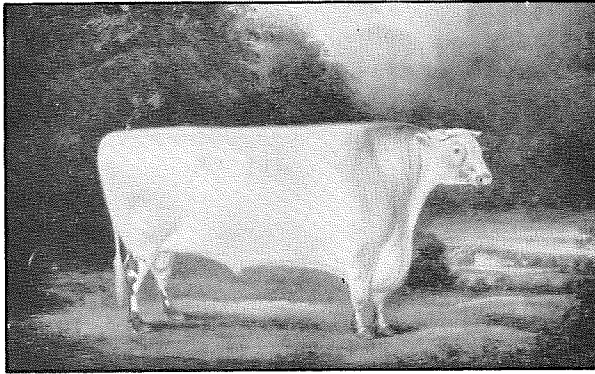


# SHORTHORNS

## TWO CENTURIES OF BREED DEVELOPMENT



Comet

If, on a day in or about the year 1822, there had been seen coming over the ridge into Wharfedale an old man on a white horse, it might have been George Coates, from Carlton, near Pontefract, with his satchel full of calf records and bull pedigrees. He would have been making his way most likely, to Greenholme, near Otley, where lived one Jonas Whitaker, where some fine Shorthorns had a home in the difficult and hard-up times which followed upon the Napoleonic wars.

Since the turn of the century many breeders of Shorthorns had been urging the obvious need of collecting and publishing pedigree records. At one of the annual gatherings of breeders at Wynyard, the home of Sir Henry Vane Tempest, Mr. Coates was asked to undertake the work; a task he accepted and later pursued with

boundless enthusiasm. Present at that auspicious meeting in 1812 were many well-known breeders including the Colling brothers, Thomas Bates and John Booth.

The death shortly afterwards of Sir Henry, who had generously offered to provide funds, delayed the work for 10 years, and the situation was further aggravated by the death of Robert Colling in 1820, who, in conjunction with Jonas Whitaker, had agreed to advance funds following the revival of the project at the Barmpton sale two years before. On that occasion Col. Trotter, one of the four buyers of the famous 1,000 gn. "Comet" bull, was the prime mover in the matter.

The undertaking meant many long journeys for George Coates and these were made on his white cob. It also meant long spells away from his

own beasts. However, with the help of Thomas Bates, who also went about amongst breeders, gathering particulars of pedigrees, sufficient material was collected to warrant the issue of a volume, and the work was eventually brought out in the Autumn of 1822 with funds supplied by Jonas Whitaker, without whose financial support there would never have appeared Volume 1 of the Shorthorn Herd Book. This was printed at the Wharfedale Stanhope Press, Otley, with drawings in stone of many of the noted cattle of the day. It was the first book of its kind, excepting only the General Stud Book of Thoroughbred Horses.

Apart from the importance of his herd, Jonas Whitaker's name will always be remembered for the leading part which he took in promoting and financing the early volumes of the Herd Book.

In that first historic volume 721 bulls were listed, accompanied by nearly 1,000 cows and their produce. The distinction of being the first bull in the book went to "*Abelard*" who was born in 1812, "*bred by Major Bower, got by Mr. C. Colling's Cecil, d. (Easby), bred by Mr. Booth, by his lame bull, g.d. by Mr. Booth's old white bull, gr.g.d. bought at Darlington.*"

George Coates wrote in the preface of the first volume:

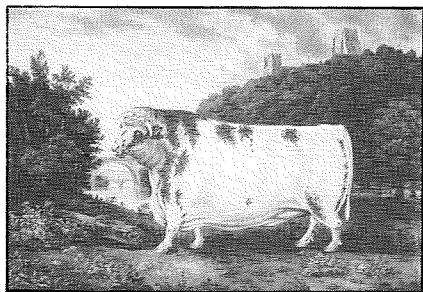
*"The universally admitted want of a work of this sort, by breeders and owners of short-horned stock, is the best (and, it is hoped, a sufficient apology for its publication... The author's present plan (if he continues to have health, and to enjoy the kind patronage of his present numerous Subscribers), is to republish*

*his work with additions, every three or four years."*

His son continued publishing further issues at intervals, recording births up to the year 1842 (Volume 5). After this volume the Herd Book was taken over by Henry Strafford, the famous livestock auctioneer, in whose office John Thornton worked as a clerk, and where he won the opportunity of acquiring his intimate knowledge of Shorthorns which helped him found his own well-known auctioneering firm that took his name.

In 1872, a meeting to consider the formation of a Shorthorn Society was called. At another meeting two years later the formation of a society was formally recommended, and the Duke of Devonshire was elected its first President. When the Shorthorn Society of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was incorporated in 1875, the copyright, including the stock in hand and manuscript of the Herd Book, was purchased from Mr. Strafford for £5,000 and the Society published the Herd Book from Volume 21 onwards.

It is generally considered that the foundation of the pure-bred Shorthorn breed dates from an eventful day in 1785 when Mr. and Mrs. Charles Colling, with Charles' brother Robert, journeyed to Eryholm to visit their friends the Maynards, and when John Maynard, after firmly refusing to part with the grand cow "*Old Favourite*" and her heifer calf "*Young Strawberry*", was afterwards persuaded by his wife to sell both to Mrs. Colling.



Favourite

The cow, later renamed "*Lady Maynard*" was bred to "*Foljambe*" and produced the heifer "*Phoenix*", the dam of the closely inbred bull "*Favourite*" who sired the still more closely inbred "*Comet*" this last-named sire secured a permanent place in the history of cattle breeding when he became the Breed's first 1,000 gns. bull, following his joint purchase by four breeders - Col. Trotter and Messrs. Charge, Wetherell and Wright - at Mr. Colling's retirement Sale in 1810. "*Comet*" is recorded as living for 11 years having been calved in 1804. To-day, the Shorthorn Society has in its possession one of this noted bull's ribs, which, of course, can claim an even longer history than the original Herd book!

The two great houses Booth and Bates were represented amongst the buyers at Charles Colling's sale, each with a single purchase, Thomas Booth (father of John Booth of Killerby and Richard Booth of Warlaby) bought the bull "*Albion*" whilst Thomas Bates bought the two-year-old heifer "*Duchess*" by *Comet*.

Rivalry existed between Booth and Bates for many years, the general saying being "Booth for flesh and Bates for milk."

The original Thomas Booth was breeding Shorthorns at Killerby as far back as 1790, and noted Booth families included, among many others, the Moss Rose, Anna and Bracelet families which became famous throughout English showgrounds.

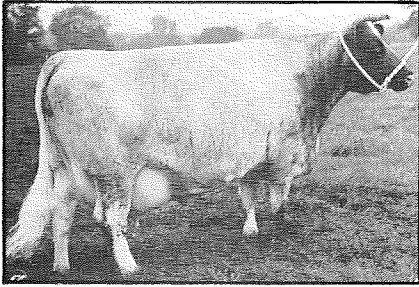
After Richard Booth's death in 1864, the Warlaby herd was taken over by his nephew, Mr. T.C. Booth, who, after his herd had suffered badly from cattle plague, replenished it by the purchase of 12 females at a cost of £12,122 at the famous Aylesby Manor sale in Lincolnshire in 1875, following the passing of Mr. W. Torr. The sale included 84 lots which averaged £510.

Born in 1776, Thomas Bates managed his father's estate at an early age, but not until 1830 did he move his herd to Kirklevington, near Yarm, Northumberland. At the time 50 females were daughters of the impressive sire "*Second Hubback*" including representatives of the Duchess, Oxford, Waterloo, Red Rose, Wild Eyes and Foggathorpe families.

The most famous of the Bates' families was "*Duchess*", which he founded from the heifer he bought at Charles Colling's sale for 183 gns. Bates used bulls of the same family with these Duchess females, being convinced of the value of animals carrying the blood of "*Hubback*" - a bull that was later considered to be the origin of modern Shorthorn excellence.

This bull was found originally by Robert Colling after he had noticed the quality of some of his calves exposed for sale in the local markets.

He purchased Hubback for a mere 8 gns. Later on, Charles bought



Histon Waterloo 24th

Hubback from his brother and used him for two years.

The very close system of in-breeding which Charles and Robert Colling employed has now become legendary in cattle breeding circles (it resulted in the production of "Comet"). It evolved from a visit they made in about 1783 to Robert Bakewell, who had discovered a way of fixing type by close in-breeding, working with Longhorn cattle. After studying his methods, the brothers applied Bakewell's system working with Teeswater or Durham cattle in their district of Darlington.

To return to Bates, he practised in-breeding with his Duchess line quite as closely as the Collings had done with their cattle. It is to Bates that we mainly owe the development of the dual-purpose Dairy Shorthorn we know today. In his own time, though Bates' reputation as a breeder was much enhanced by his sweeping success with his cattle at the first Royal Show at Oxford in 1839.

Bates' cattle were bought by many English noblemen and landowners, and overseas breeders in Canada and

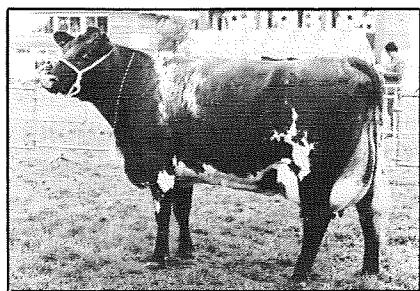
U.S.A. At the Kirklevington dispersal sale in 1850 - a year after Bates' death - buyers' names included Messrs. Morris and Becvar from New York, Amos Cruickshank and Jonas Webb. Earl Ducie secured the best of Duchesses and Oxfords which, after his death three years later, were sold at Tortworth when they went to American buyers at enhanced prices.

Prices for Bates' cattle soared throughout the next two decades, the climax being reached at Sam Campbell's New York Mills sale in 1873, when English breeders, determined to bring home the best of the Duchesses, secured animals realising 6,000, 7,000 and 8,000 gns. Fifteen Duchesses and Dukes averaged £3,679 and eight Oxfords £826.

Captain Barclay, of Ury, Aberdeenshire, about the year of the first Herd Book, was probably the first breeder of Shorthorns north of the border. However, Amos Cruickshank of Sittyton, was the man who really created the Scotch Shorthorn when, in 1837, he and his brother, Anthony, became tenants of an Aberdeenshire farm.

In the 1870's Bates and Booth cattle were selling for many hundreds of pounds whilst Cruickshank's bull calves sired by his "*Champion of England*" were still going to his neighbours as crossing bulls. Irish breeders of store cattle and American buyers, both from North and South, were beginning to appreciate the value of heavy fleshed Cruickshank bulls. Meantime, new herds were being built up in Aberdeenshire with Cruickshank sires by Marr of

Uppermill, William Duthie of Collynie and others. In fact the Uppermill herd still flourished today with the Durno family.



Maxton Snow Queen 22nd

In 1889 there was consternation amongst Scottish breeders when it was learnt that 82-year-old Amos Cruickshank had sold the Sittyton herd for export to the Argentine. A financial crisis in that country, however, eventually cancelled the deal. Part of the herd went to found J. Deane Willis' noted herd at Bapton in Wiltshire, and part to enrich the already famous herd belonging to William Duthie at Collynie.

The wave of popularity for the Cruickshank strain did not reach its height until the so called "daft days" which followed the First World War. In 1920 at the annual sale of bull calves from Collynie, 24 head reached the astounding average of £1,400.

Mainly through the influence of Richard Stratton and the help of George Taylor and John Thornton, the Shorthorn Society, in 1905, instituted prizes at county shows for pedigree Shorthorn cows having milking characteristics, and in the same year the Dairy Shorthorn Association was formed, with Lord

Rothchild as the president and Fred Webb, agent at Barbraham, as secretary.

The Dairy Shorthorn Association was probably the first to begin a milk recording scheme in the country, and the first to make milk yield qualification a condition for showing. The Association was amalgamated with the Shorthorn Society in 1936.

*Coates's Herd Book* has never been closed to new pedigrees, and it has always been possible, by the use of registered pedigree bulls, to grade up and so build up pedigrees which were acceptable after four generations for entry in the Herd Book. In 1918 it was stipulated that such pedigrees should be entered step by step in a Grading Register.

Breed Development over the years gave the Shorthorn two very distinct strains, emanating from the foundation work of Booth and Bates. At various times suggestions were voiced to divide *Coates's Herd Book* into two sections - Dairy and Beef. Some breeders, particularly beef breeders, were not anxious to divide such an illustrious, ancient and common heritage. Dairy men who also endorsed this view felt that it would not happen so long as the supporters of each type worked harmoniously together on a common council.

However, by 1958 it was appreciated that breeders had clearly made two paths along which the Shorthorn types were to travel, and Council decided that each branch of the Breed should have its own Herd Book. The division was made from Volume 106 onwards. *Coates's Herd*

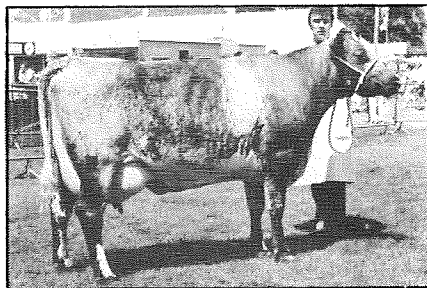
Book remains in two sections today, but during recent years dual-purpose Dairy Shorthorn blood has cautiously but increasingly appeared in the Beef Book. Appendices to the Beef Book have also been opened, namely the Register of polled Cattle and Experimental Register. The Poll Shorthorn Herd Book is also published in its own right.

Meanwhile the dual-purpose Dairy Shorthorn Herd Book had opened its leaves to Northern Dairy Shorthorn entries and appendix registers. A Poll Register appeared, and Council ratified their acceptance of hybrid registrations in 1962. It authorised the setting up of an Experimental Register for the growing number of breeders wishing to use blood of outside red breeds. Since the first Experimental Register was published along with Volume 113 nearly 2,000 hybrid cattle have been registered.

*Coates's Herd Book* registrations reached an all-time high in 1949 when 25,781 cattle were registered in Volume 96. That same year the grading Register also reached its peak with 20,859 entries. Registration of both Pedigree and Grade cattle declined every year, excepting 1952 and 1954 when slight increases occurred for *Coates's Herd Book* pure-bred entries.

In the year during which the Shorthorn Society celebrated the 150th Anniversary of its Herd Book it was particularly pleasing and encouraging to record an increase in registrations in virtually every department of *Coates's Herd Book*. The annual decline of some 10% for the

past decade was arrested with a 2.2% growth in registrations. Once again there was a swing to Shorthorns.



Orchardhome Anne 12th

The years which followed saw a development of the Experimental Register through the successes of the Blended Shorthorns and a continuing improvement in the performance of the pure bred section of the Dairy side. Both the Beef Shorthorn and the Dairy Shorthorn changed radically during this period to meet the modern requirements of smooth fleshing, taller cattle on the Beef side and smooth fleshing combined with substantially increased yields of milk and fat, on the Dairy side.

These improvements led to a slow but steady increase in demand and interest in the breed which was assisted more recently by farming trends to more extensive systems and less reliance on concentrate feeding, combined with the need to diversify and therefore switch to suckler herds.

While the Dairy Sector of the breed was involved in experimental programmes the Beef Sector was doing similar work, using the Maine Anjou from the continent and containing 63.5% Shorthorn breeding to produce animals of larger scale, height and a departure from the type

required in the 30's and 40's and this work was so successful that many cattlemen consider the Shorthorn of today to be the most improved of all British Breeds.

Concurrent with these improvement schemes, the Irish Improvement Scheme regained many breeders and also identified a considerable number of cattle for which registrations had not been kept up in the preceding years. The majority of Shorthorns in Ireland in recent years have provided suckler cattle rather than dairy cattle, particularly in Southern Ireland, and it was these which provided the strength of bone and correctness of leg so appreciated by the American Breeders and, in fact, also assisted the American Shorthorn to expand more rapidly than in almost any other area of the world.

Notwithstanding this, exports continued from Britain and Ireland, to Russian, China, America, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, with a steady flow, demonstrating the universal demand for the invaluable genes within the breed.

In recent times the Society moved to the centre of agriculture in England at the Royal Show Ground, to a building largely funded by the Members; demonstrating their faith in the future. The administration was trimmed and the Experimental Register, changed to the Supplementary and Red & White Cattle Registers. Membership and Registrations in these sections and the main Herd Book showed a 10% increase at the time of the reducing

national all breeds herd.

From the earliest account to the present time 1800,000 bulls and females have been given registered status in *Coates's Herd Book*; Grading Register entries since the turn of the century bring the total to nearly 2 million. Having re-shaped the Breed in both the Dairy and Beef Sectors and also introduced the Supplementary Scheme, the popularity of the breed continues to grow on a worldwide basis, particularly in Australia and America where the attributes of the Shorthorn and Red & White cattle in general are making their mark. Farmers appreciate the benefits of adaptability and characteristic docility of temperament, inherited resistance to disease particularly those related to skin, eyes and climatic diseases and freedom from foot and leg problems. But above all their easy calving. Proven by many unbiased trials the Shorthorn has the lowest incidence of assisted calvings of any breed. It also has the highest ratio of percentage protein to butterfat; which is so important in the late 1990's and a small fat globule making it an ideal cheese making breed.

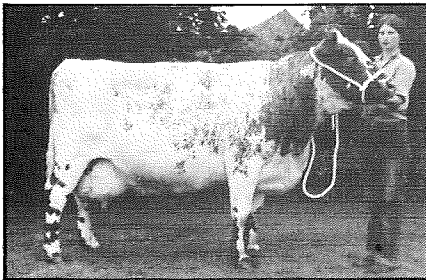
Following the many pre-war successes in the Show ring, in the period of five post-war years Dairy Shorthorns were first at the Royal Show on Inspection on no less than four occasions and, in 1954 and 1955, they won the Blue Ribband First and Champion on Inspection. In 1954 the breed attained a feat which will probably never be equalled by any other, winning the Burke Trophy for the Best Male and Female Pair in both

the Beef and Dairy Sectors. Winning the Dairy Sector again in 1964 and 1989 and, in the same year, the Royal Highland Interbreed was won by the Beef Shorthorn Sector.

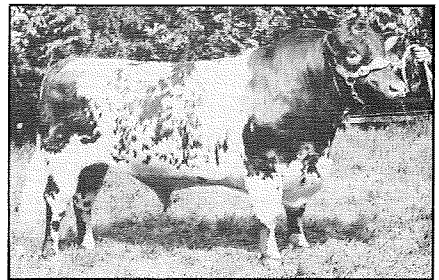
In Dairy Events, in recent years, the Dairy Sector have also been successful, winning four times against All Breeds being 2nd twice and 3rd and 4th twice in the Economic Trials.

The Society is acknowledged as the oldest, but it is also one of the most progressive with its approach to modern requirements nationally and internationally and, in 1974, a Shorthorn World Council was formed with representatives from Canada,

America, Argentina, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uruguay, Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, Scotland and England, with the aims of furthering the breed and consulting on all aspects of the breed with Conferences every third year in differing continents. The inheritance of a Shorthorn born today is 200 years of specialised development and over 170 years of recorded ancestry - a unique claim in the world of cattle breeding, and all due initially to names such as Whitaker, Tempest, Colling, Bates, Booth, Trotter and that ageing figure on a white cob, George Coates.



Ormbridge Diana



Balmyle Warpath

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## **The Shorthorn Society of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland**

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