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Appendix 2

**Complete Text of “Why Short-horns Are the Best Cattle for Indiana Farms” by Virginia Meredith**

I will name twelve reasons why short-horns are the best cattle for Indiana farms—others may be easily given.

First.—Because the farms are comparatively small, with a rich, fertile soil, well adapted to the heavy beef breeds, and well watered.

Second.—Our farmers are generally engaged in general purpose farming—they are not dairymen nor feeders.

Third.—The best beef markets are near by; Chicago, Louisville, Cincinnati, Pittsburg, Indianapolis.

Fourth.—Many railways render shipping easy.

Fifth.—Better feed for making beef and milk is produced nowhere; bluegrass, corn, oats, clover and—alfalfa, shall we add?

Sixth.—The old time high grade short-horn of Indiana was profitable before the dairy cross was made.

Seventh.—A better farmer’s cow does not exist than the short-horn—heifers for milk, steers for beef.

Eighth.—A better steer than the short-horn has never been bred.

Ninth.—High class herds are well established in the State, making breeding stock easily accessible.

Tenth.—Indiana bred prize winners have in every principal exhibition of the country demonstrated that conditions here are favorable to the breed.

Eleventh.—The Indiana farmer lives near the great school of beef production, and may attend the International and learn its lessons.

Twelfth.—The short-horn breeders of the State are liberal in encouraging the local development of the breed by offering special prizes for Indiana bred cattle exhibited at the State Fair.

The business to be profitable requires an investment in courage and patience as well as investment of money in cattle. The cattle must become part of a plan of

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farming for a long period of years. One must farm as if one expected to live forever. Farming goes on forever, and our part in it must be carried on with fidelity. I was in a $5,000 home not long ago that had been paid for by the maturing of a 15-year endowment policy in a life insurance company. A comfortable home, but can you not believe that it took courage and fidelity to a purpose to pay those fifteen successive premiums out of a meager salary? An investment in cattle must have the element of time provided for, if success is to come—it is the accumulated benefits that count. Beef breeds of cattle can not be profitable except they have good pasture—and good pasture is itself a matter of years—of a long period of time.

If one asks what is the trend of the beef markets today—asks what is the outstanding point in the situation—the answer comes clearly, unmistakably—the demand for the ripe yearling—and he ought to be profitable, for a penny saved is two pence earned and the steer that does not go to the market until two or three years old often has pounds laid on and then lost. When these pounds are laid on for the second time each pound represents the cost of making two pounds. There is then a practical argument in favor of the ripe yearling pushed from birth to block. Can any animal sell anywhere for six or seven cents, unless he carries the blood of some pure breed? Assuredly not. Can the farmer—should he—raise the calves which later he markets for beef, or would he better allow the man on the ranch to raise the calves, while he feeds and finishes them for market?

Perhaps after all the essential question is—what kind of farmer are we thinking of? One of our agricultural journals recently displayed in its columns this suggestive question: “Are you a farmer or a soil robber?” The answer will be yes or no according to the ratio between the acres and the cows of the farm. But it is not enough merely to keep cows; the kind of cow determines the direct profit—of course the indirect profit of improved soil is important—but we want both the direct and indirect profit.

What does the farmer invest in his cow? Feed, shelter, care and a purchase price. The purchase price usually indicates the quality of the cow, that is, the amount and kind of pure blood she carries. It would be easily demonstrated that the ratio between the purchase price and the amount invested in feed, care and shelter is a shifting one. At the end of five years, ten years, the greater part of the investment is in feed, care and shelter—but unchanging and immutable is the potency of her breeding, her quality as represented in the purchase price, as a factor in profit and loss. Our farmer will find then, if he invests $1,000 in feed, shelter and care, that the supremely important thing in the transaction is the purchase price of his cows; and it is for him imperative that he know positively which breed is best for him on his farm. Quality inheres in breed, and can not be found apart from it. No seven cent beef is sold anywhere except it carries the blood of some pure breed. The margin between the three cent steer and the seven cent steer is wholly a matter of
pedigree. The profit which the farmer expects on his investment in feed, shelter and care depends upon his judgment in paying the initial purchase price for his cows and the sire of their calves.

In this connection I recall something I once heard Mr. Billingsley say in an [a farmer's] institute: “Go home, marshal your live stock in a procession, and as it passes before you ask yourself this question, ‘Does this live stock represent my intelligence?’”

In order to induce the farmers of Indiana to keep short-horn cows, pure bred or high grade, we must preach the gospel of their quality, their ability to make baby beef of high quality at an economical cost. We must preach the gospel of continuing with the cattle, courage and patience. We must learn and give out generously the truth about feeding and care.

The most practical plan presented in regard to co-operation among farmers was published in the *Breeder's Gazette* of December 7 and proposed by Mr. John Thompson, of Iowa, and I hope that our American Short-Horn Association may find it possible to do some effective work along the line suggested by Mr. Thompson.