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EARLY HISTORY

of

POLAND CHINA, DUROC-JERSEY, CHESTER
WHITE, AND HAMPSHIRE BREEDS OF HOGS.

by

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EARLY POLAND CHINA HISTORY

The Poland China is an American breed of hogs which was developed largely in southwestern Ohio, in Butler and Warren Counties. This rolling country, with its fine fields of corn and grass, and its good climate, is unexcelled by any other part of the United States in swine production. This region was also blessed by having Cincinnati as the greatest hog market of the time close at hand; and it was to this market that these early hogs were driven over-land in great numbers. These early Ohio settlers developed the Poland China from the Russian Byfield, Big China, Berkshire, and the Irish Grazier blood.

The Russian hog had great length and height with large but fine bone and quiet disposition. Its hair was long and coarse while the color was white.

The Byfield hog was of two types. One was quite large with long, flat sides and lopped ears; while the other was more refined with ears pointing forward. Both were white in color.

The Big China hog was brought into Butler County in 1816 by John Wallace, an officer of the Shakers' Society. This religious society, at the present time, does not exist. The Shaker Society people lived together in colonies, and practically all that they owned was owned together instead of having the system of private ownership. They were very conscientious and thorough in all that they did; and to them is attributed the honor of doing much of the early improvement of Poland China hogs. The Big China hog was crossed on the different types of hogs already mentioned. It was responsible for much of the early maturity and good breeding qualities of the present lard breeds of hogs.

The Berkshire was also introduced into Poland China breeding, and it was from this breed that the Poland China derives the black color and some of its good qualities.

Another hog which was responsible for good quality in Poland China hogs was the Irish Grazier. This hog, having been brought into Warren County by William Neff, was a hog of large size, long body, a good back, and fine quality of hams. Its color was white.

The first Polands were quite large in size and were spotted in color. As time went on, heavy corn feeding and selection for early maturity and solid colors, resulted in producing a hog which was early maturing, short, fat, and squatty with black color and six white points, (white points included face, feet, and tip of tail).

In recent times the fat, squatty, hog has lost its popularity, due to the fact that these animals had difficulty in raising large, vigorous litters of pigs, and that excessively fat meat is discriminated against by the consumer, and also there is not a good market for surplus lard. The breeders' of Poland Chinas

have, therefore, changed their type of hogs to the stretchier and more rangier build. This new type of hogs is producing more satisfactory litters, better meat, and a quantity of lard which has less tendency to be in excess of market requirements.

NAMING THE BREED

The early Poland China hogs went by various names, such as Polands, Big China, Warren County, and Magie. Mr. D. M. Magie, an improver of this hog, wanted the credit for originating the Poland China breed, and was desirous of having it named Magie in honor of himself. Mr. Magie did have splendid hogs for the time, and he was a good advertiser and salesman; but he was not the originator of Poland China hogs, by any means. In 1872 a National Swine Breeders' Convention was held in Indianapolis, Indiana, and in view of the confusion of names which existed, they had a committee appointed to investigate and select a proper name for the breed. At this particular time there were a number of good hog men breeding this type of hogs who claimed that they had what was known as the Poland breed, and that their good breeding animals were brought from Poland. The investigating committee, however, found no clue to this type of animals having been imported from Poland. The only approach to having an authentic claim for the word "Poland" attached to the breed name, was the fact that Asher, a Poland by birth, was breeding what was known as Poland hogs. The demand, however, for retaining the name of "Poland" as part of the breed name was quite insistent, and consequently the committee thought it wise to call the breed "Poland-China." At first they placed a hyphen between the word Poland and China, but later they omitted the hyphen so the present correct spelling is "Poland China."

EARLY HISTORY OF THE DUROC-JERSEY

In regard to the first importation of the red hogs, little is known. Red and sandy hogs existed in this country for many years. It is stated that the slave traders brought in red hogs from Eastern Africa in the early days. Even the old Berkshire, brought from England, had individuals with red color which, with the Tamowrth, was used to cross on the red African stock.

There were two types of early red swine. In New Jersey, the red hogs were massive and coarse. They had large lop-ears, with rather long, deep bodies, coarse bone, and bristly hair. Some of the barrows of this strain of early Durocs reached a weight over 1000 pounds. One case on record is of 30 head of barrows, 22 months old, which had an average dressing weight of 685 pounds. These hogs were known as Jersey Reds. Another strain of the early Duroc-Jersey was found in New York. The name given to this group was "Duroc." This name, however, has no special significance. It was given them by Isaac Frink who named the hogs after his famous stallion named "Duroc." This Duroc animal had finer hair, more quality and finish, and less size than the Jersey Reds.

Two great American Statesmen were also prominent in the early development of the Duroc-Jersey hog. In 1837, Henry Clay imported red hogs from Spain known as the Spanish Red Hog.

In 1852, Daniel Webster introduced red hogs from Portugal. This importation of red hogs was of the medium type and they tended to add quality to the New York and New Jersey crosses. The union of the blood of the various types of red hogs is credited to Colonel F. D. Curtis, Saratoga County, New York. This man was the foremost breeder of his time.

The first great showmen and type-setters of the breed appeared soon after 1890. The names of these breeders were Morton and Ira Jackson. They developed the great Orion family, the greatest individual of which was Orion Cherry King. Morton is no longer in the Duroc business as a great exhibitor, but Ira Jackson is still a great breeder, showman, and judge.

As with the Poland China, the Duroc Jersey, was the result of a mixture of blood of the type of hogs of that particular time. The early hogs varied somewhat in type, conformation, size, and color. As time went on, however, heavy corn feeding and selection for early maturity and medium color, a hog was developed which was short, fat, squatty, and had early maturing qualities and more of a uniform color.

In recent times the short, fat, squatty hog has lost its popularity, due to the fact that these animals had difficulty in raising large, vigorous litters, and to the fact that excessively fat meat is discriminated against by the consumer, and also that there is not a good market for surplus lard. The breeders of Duroc-Jerseys have changed their type to the stretchier and more rangier build. This new type is producing more satisfactory litters, better meat, and a quantity of lard which has less tendency to be in excess of market requirements.

EARLY HISTORY OF CHESTER WHITE SWINE

Most authorities recognize these three strains of Chester White hogs, the origin of which is briefly as follows:

1. The original Chester White was founded in Chester County, Pennsylvania, from which County it derives its name. It appears that the earliest settlers, such as William Penn and the Quakers of that County, brought white hogs with them. Somewhere near 1818 there is a record of Captain James Jeffries importing a pair of white pigs which were spoken of as both Bedfordshire and Cumberland breeds. The Boar of this importation was especially of good type having been a prize winner in England. Mr. Jeffries used this good boar on native white pigs of the district with good results. Later it is stated that Chinese hogs were also imported to Chester County. These pigs, although having a tendency to be low in the back, with short legs, were early maturing animals. The crossing of this type of early maturing hog on the coarse swine of the time had quite a refining influence on the breed. The general mixing of all of these blood lines resulted in producing the early Chester White breed.

2. Todd's Improved Chester White is a more complicated strain in its development. Sometime near the year 1827 there was an importation of Thin Rinds into Connecticut. These hogs were black dotted with white or white belted with black. They were likewise short legged and blockey in type, but nevertheless they were vigorous individuals. Two brothers, named Todd, bought a boar of that importation and a white native sow known to be of the Grass breed (no doubt an Irish Grazier) and took them to Ohio where these animals were bred together with much success. To this combination the Byfield, Normandy, Grass, and other crosses were added to improve the breed. The Todd family and descendents did much in building up the Chester White breed, and their strain of white hogs was known as "Todd's Improved Chester White."

3. The third strain of Chester White is known as the Ohio Improved Chester Whites. The founding of this strain is due largely to the efforts of L. B. Silver, a person who lived at Salem, Ohio. In 1865 he made a trip through the Eastern States to study the pure breeds of swine. The Chester White breed appealed to him most, so he purchased breeding stock, largely of Todd's breeding, and set about to establish a uniform type of hogs of large size and good quality. From his successful breeding, the Ohio Improved Chester White strain has its origin. They are sometimes referred to as "O. I. C." hogs.

All of the three bloodlines or families given represent the same breed; and they differ only in minor details.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HAMPSHIRE HOG

Belted hogs have been described by Professor David Lowe as early as 1842 when he was at the head of the Animal Husbandry Department of Edinburgh Agricultural College, Scotland. He refers to them first as being prominent in Scotland and later as being prominent in the pork producing regions in England. The name "Hampshire" for the American breed of hogs does not come from Hampshire, England, because the English already had a black hog by that name. The present English hog which corresponds to the American Hampshire, is the Wessex Saddle Back. It is the belief of E. C. Stone, Secretary of the American Hampshire Record Association, that the American Hampshire and Wessex Saddle Back hogs came from the stock which Professor Lowe, the livestock historian, refers to as the old "English Breed." Be that as it may, it would appear that the American Hampshire came from some belted breed imported from England. According to Harger, the American history of this breed traces back through Canada and Massachusetts to Hampshire and Essex, England. About 1820 to 1825, MacKay imported Thin Rinds from Hampshire, England to Boston, Massachusetts. Later these hogs found their way to Kentucky and thus started the American history of the breed."

These hogs referred to as Thin Rinds were the early Hampshire breed. At first the Thin Rinds, or the American Hampshires, were bred in a limited way in Kentucky, Southern Illinois, and Southern Indiana. They were then considered a bacon type of hog.

Later they were taken into the corn belt section; and, due to greater corn rations, they grew **wider** backs and developed more into a lard type to the extent at least that they are now classified as a lard breed of hogs.

In 1893, the enthusiasts of this breed of hogs met at Erlanger, Kentucky, in order to organize a record association for the breed. This association was named the "American Thin Rind Record Association." It was agreed that no hog should be eligible to record unless known to be from pure blood Thin Rinds, that had largely been bred in Boone County, Kentucky from the time they were imported from England to the New England States, and then into Kentucky by Major Joel Garnet. The name of this breed of hogs was changed to Hampshire by order of the American Thin Rind Record Association in 1904.

At about the same time new life was injected into the old Record Association (which at the time was practically dead) by the election of E. C. Stone as Secretary. The meeting for his election took place in Erlanger, Kentucky, on April 20, 1903. Mr. Stone, with a lively bunch of associates, has been a great booster for the breed, and we find not only a tremendous spread of Hampshires, in the few years elapsing since then, but also a great improvement in the Hampshire hog as well.