

NEW SHEARING METHODS PRODUCE BETTER PRICES

First Year Under the Australian System Proves Satisfactory—Phamplet On Workings.

Sheepmen and stock growers generally throughout the Intermountain and Western States who have evinced interest in the work that has been carried on during the past year or more to insure the proper preparation of Western wool for the market will read with a good deal of interest the following excerpt from a pamphlet just issued by the Pioneer Australian Shearing shed, of which J. E. Cosgriff, president of the Continental National bank of Salt Lake City, is president, and which sets out in detail the results of the operation of the first Australian shearing sheds established in this country.

It was Cosgriff who a year or so ago brought the world expert, W. T. Ritch, from Australia and paid his salary and expenses for twelve months while Ritch journeyed among the sheepmen and woolgrowers of Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and neighboring states, telling them of the Australian methods by which wool is prepared for market at its source, the shearing pen.

Plant Is Fitting Finale.

At the conclusion of the year for which Cosgriff employed Ritch to help the Intermountain sheepmen solve their problem of a better price for their wool, Cosgriff decided that as a fitting finale to his year's work in this direction he would head a company to erect the first shearing plant in the United States. The Pioneer Australian Shearing shed was organized and offered by Cosgriff as president, T. W. Boyer as vice president, J. H. A. Boyer as secretary and treasurer, and Ritch as the wool specialist. Others interested in the company were J. K. Hart of Hawlins, Wyo., and D. A. Reavill of Rock Springs, Wyo. These men erected the first Australian shearing plant of the United States at Six Mile Ranch, six miles south of Hitter Creek station, Wyoming, where last season the herds of the Cow Creek Cattle company, the Pioneer Sheep company, Boyer Bros. Incorporated, and the Antelope Stock company were sheared.

The United States bureau of animal industry sent several experts to the plant to watch its operation. The majority of the crew of shearers were Australian and New Zealand experts, the other crews about the plant were comprised largely of students from the Agricultural College of Wyoming, and during the operation of the plant scores of prominent visitors were entertained from every section of the West, including observers from several state experiment stations.

The construction and operating features of the plant were described in The Sun's columns while the plant was in operation. Since the close of the shearing season Cosgriff and his associates have been besieged by requests from sheepmen all over the

country, asking for details of the results of the first season's operations of the Australian plant, inasmuch as it is the first of its kind erected in this country.

Pamphlet Is Descriptive.

Cosgriff found it impossible to personally answer these inquiries, and several days ago decided to put the result in pamphlet form. Therein he takes up in detail many matters of paramount interest to sheepmen and woolgrowers.

The following are excerpts from the pamphlet prepared and issued under the signature of the Pioneer Australian Shearing shed:

The plant is of a permanent nature, well constructed of heavy material and painted. It will last a number of years with little or no upkeep expense. As it was the first one constructed in this country the cost was considerably higher than a like plant should cost when constructed by an experienced contractor with ample time given him. On account of the plant being located six miles from the railroad, the cost was appreciably higher, due to the expense of hauling material and workmen. Sheepmen who are contemplating the erection of such a plant may have corals which can be utilized, as well as much lumber in the building now being used.

The Plant Cost Item.

Main building, \$2200; additional shelter shed, \$1485.50; painting, \$127; outside corral, \$414.10; machinery and equipment, \$3552.51; cost of bunkhouse, kitchen, dining room, sleeping rooms, office and laundry, \$1126.87; office furniture, \$287.15. Total \$8547.67.

It will be noted that there are buildings and appliances in connection with this plant which are seldom found in the ordinary Western shearing pens. It is unfortunate that we have heretofore never had due regard for the health and well-being of our shearers and helpers. In the ordinary shearing plant there is no opportunity for shearers to take a bath from the beginning of the shearing season to the close and the living quarters are of the most wretched kind. We can hardly hope to secure satisfactory service until the needs of the men are provided for.

The Cost of Shearing.

The cost of shearing, handling of the wool, and packing, including wool packs, handling point and material of every kind used in connection, was fifteen and four-fifths cents per head. This price included a large number of meals furnished each day to the visitors who came to the plant and the cost of taking them to and from the station in automobiles, all of which was done without charge. The company was pleased to have visitors see

the operations and offered every facility possible to enable them to visit the plant. In computing the cost of shearing, interest on the plant is not included, but this item probably could be offset by the expense incurred in providing for the visitors who came.

Three unusual items of expenditure had to be faced this season which will be absent next year—six extra men to make up for the loss of time caused by an amateur crew, extra cost of making wool packs from material of an unsuitable width, and extra cost of making the improved, hollow ground thick combs.

Will Be Normal Next Year.

Next season extra help will be unnecessary and the cost of making the standard wool packs and the hollow ground thick combs will be normal. The elimination of this extra expense will more than wipe out the fraction over fifteen cents per head. The fact must not be overlooked that we supplied these expensive combs to the shearers free of charge, when it is the usual custom for shearers to supply their own combs. Most of these combs, which were specially made to our own design, cost \$1.93 each, but manufacturers assure us that these can be made at the regular price next year. The pay of the fully qualified wool classer from New Zealand was only six dollars per one thousand fleeces, or a fraction over half a cent per sheep. When all these things are taken into consideration they amount to a strong argument in favor of the advantages of the new system when its superior organization is once established.

The usual cost of shearing and packing in the old way in pens in the locality of Hitter Creek was 17 and 16/100 cents the past season.

Machine Shearing Only.

The sheep at our Hitter Creek sheds were all shorn with machine shears, the shearers using thin or thick combs as the owners requested. The thick combs leave a stubble as long as may be desired. Over half of the sheep shorn were what might be termed merino blood and the rest principally crossbreeds.

The practical sheepman will quickly realize that the cost of shearing and packing in the new way must have been considerably higher the past season than it would be if experienced operatives could be found. In fact, the same crew would perform the work at a lessened cost another year due to the experience alone. If a number of sheds were in operation so that the same crew could obtain work for a long season, the cost per head would be materially reduced.

Misleading Statements.

Many misleading statements regarding the cost of shearing have been made by persons who knew nothing about the actual cost. No doubt many of the readers of this article will wonder at the comparatively low cost of shearing, classing and packing the wool. We call their attention to the fact that system and order always bring better results at lessened cost. In fact this can hardly be appreciated except by those who have had experience with the new system and compared it with the old order of things. Twenty shearers sheared on

an average about thirty-two hundred sheep per day. This is a higher average than is performed in the same locality under the old methods. Each operative about the sheds performs more work with no more effort and yet in a more satisfactory manner than under former conditions. While an increased number of operatives are required to skirt and handle the fleeces, the number required for packing the sheep and in other places is correspondingly reduced.

Freight Rate Reduced.

The freight rate upon baled wool is approximately 15 per cent lower from intermountain points to the Atlantic seaboard than it is upon wool in sacks. In many places this saving amounts to more than two cents per fleece. When we take this into consideration, it materially reduces the cost of shearing in the new way as compared with the old.

In explaining the advantages for the shearers we think it well to give the views of one of the shearers at our sheds. He said: "The advantages to me in shearing here are as follows: I can catch a sheep easily around the neck in those catching pens, because there are no shorn sheep in front of me. This is a saving in time, because by dragging a sheep out by a grip on the leg, I must then take her up by the neck in order to bring her into proper position, thereby losing time."

Good Light Also Helps.

The sheds are well lighted from the roof and only a rapid shearer will appreciate what good light means to those endeavoring to shear rapidly and evenly without injury to the sheep. The floor is even and clean and I am not obliged to tie the fleeces, which is a saving in time. The sheds are well ventilated and with an absence of cold draughts. This is important to a man heated by rapid work. Finally there is system, order and cleanliness, which brings out the best there is in a man. When every facility is provided for convenience and comfort, including labor saving devices, intelligent operatives quickly appreciate your efforts and take more interest in their work, which results in complete satisfaction for all concerned.

We suggest to the sheepmen that when they hear adverse criticisms of the new method of shearing and packing they inquire as to the motives which actuate those self appointed judges, many of whom never herded a sheep a day in their lives, never owned a herd of sheep, and never sold a clip of wool.

Tactics Are Changed.

Often when an important and necessary bill is introduced in a legislature those whose selfish interests are opposed at once suggest amendments and modifications. These suggestions are often only veiled efforts to defeat the bill. So, too, we find many suggestions of changes and modifications in the system which we have adopted. We, as sheepmen, have been told for years by the buyers that our wool was of far less value than the Australian wool because the latter was skinned, classed and ready for use. But now we are advised not to adopt the very system which was held out to us as a model.

"If it not appeal to the thinking sheepman that it is logical to prepare our wool along the line of the most marketable wool that is sold at the auction sales in London, so that in the event that the home market is depressed we may send it to London?"

Standard Must Be Met.

To the man whose wool is prepared under the best wool method, London quotations mean something; prepared in other ways they mean comparatively nothing. The possibility of Western wool being packed in such a condition that it is fit to take its place alongside similar wools from New Zealand and Australia in the world's markets may be a source of anxiety to some people but the intelligent sheepman who studies his own interests cannot fail to see the advantage of adopting up to date methods. It is unfair to advise the American sheepmen to cling to an obsolete system when their wool is faced with the competition of properly prepared foreign wool imported duty free.

Regarding the prices which were obtained for the wool shorn at our shed, the owners of the clips are entitled and qualified to say what they were and whether or not they were satisfactory.

MEDAL FOR MOAB BOY

John P. Larson Grower of the Biggest Corn Yield Per Acre.

A medal of merit for John P. Larson, a boy of Moab, grower of the biggest corn crop per acre in Utah during 1910, was received at the office of Gov. William Spry Saturday from C. C. Moore, president of the Panama-Pacific International exposition, with a request that the governor present it to Larson.

The medal was awarded by the Universal Corn convention, which met at the San Francisco exposition. Young Larson grew a hundred and fifty-six bushels of corn to the acre, a new record for Utah. In sending the medal to the governor, President Moore declared that Larson's achievement was of more worth to the state and to the nation than that of the champion baseball player of the country. He asked the governor to emphasize the importance of the achievement in presenting the medal. It is probable that the governor will arrange for a formal presentation of the medal in connection with the next farmers' institute at Moab.

The medal is a heavy bronze metal bearing on one side Larson's name as the champion corn grower of the state for 1910 and on the other the insignia of the Panama-Pacific International exposition.

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