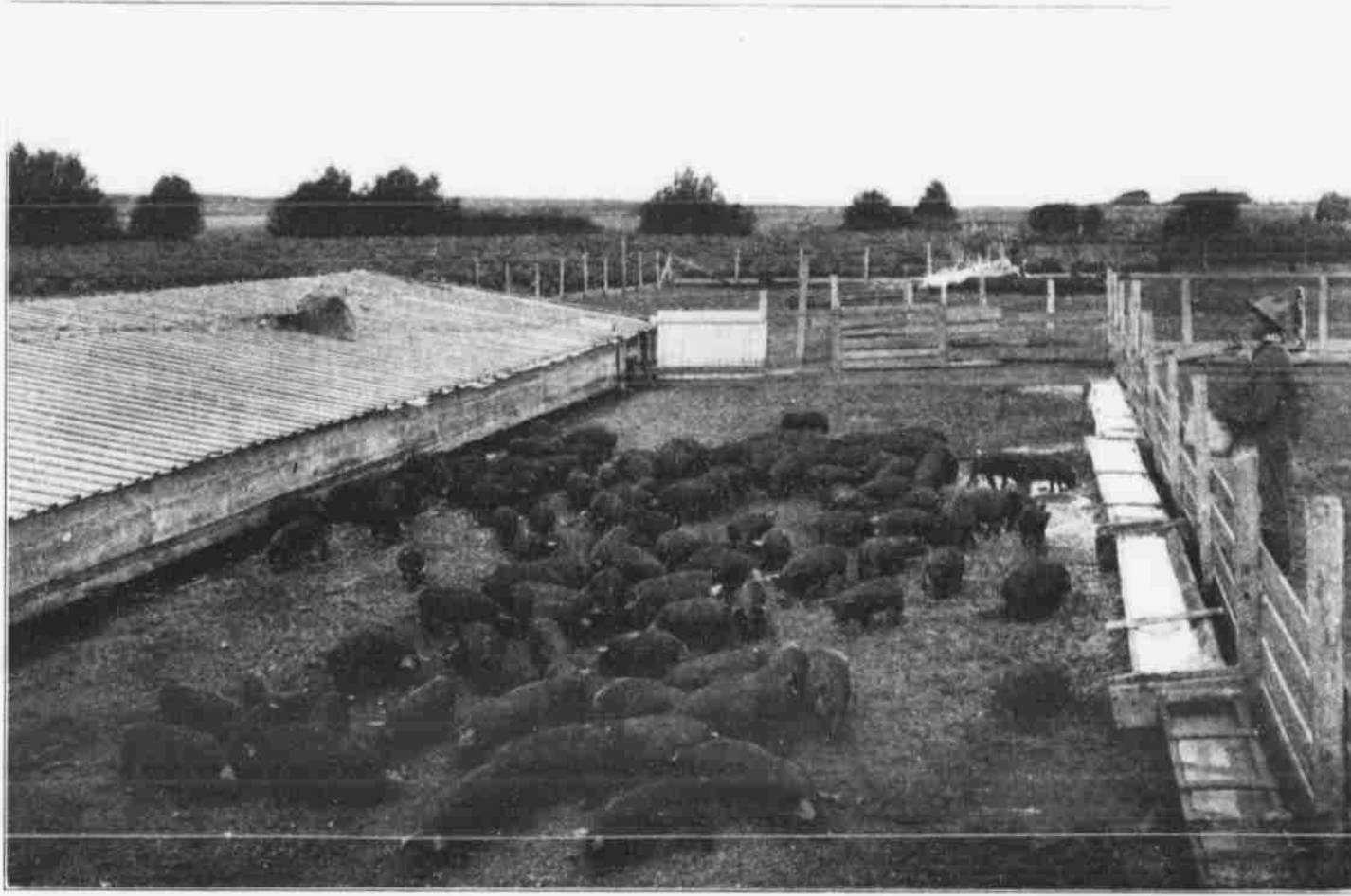


Handling Hogs for Metropolitan Markets



WEIGHMASTER AT WORK—Photo by a Staff Artist.



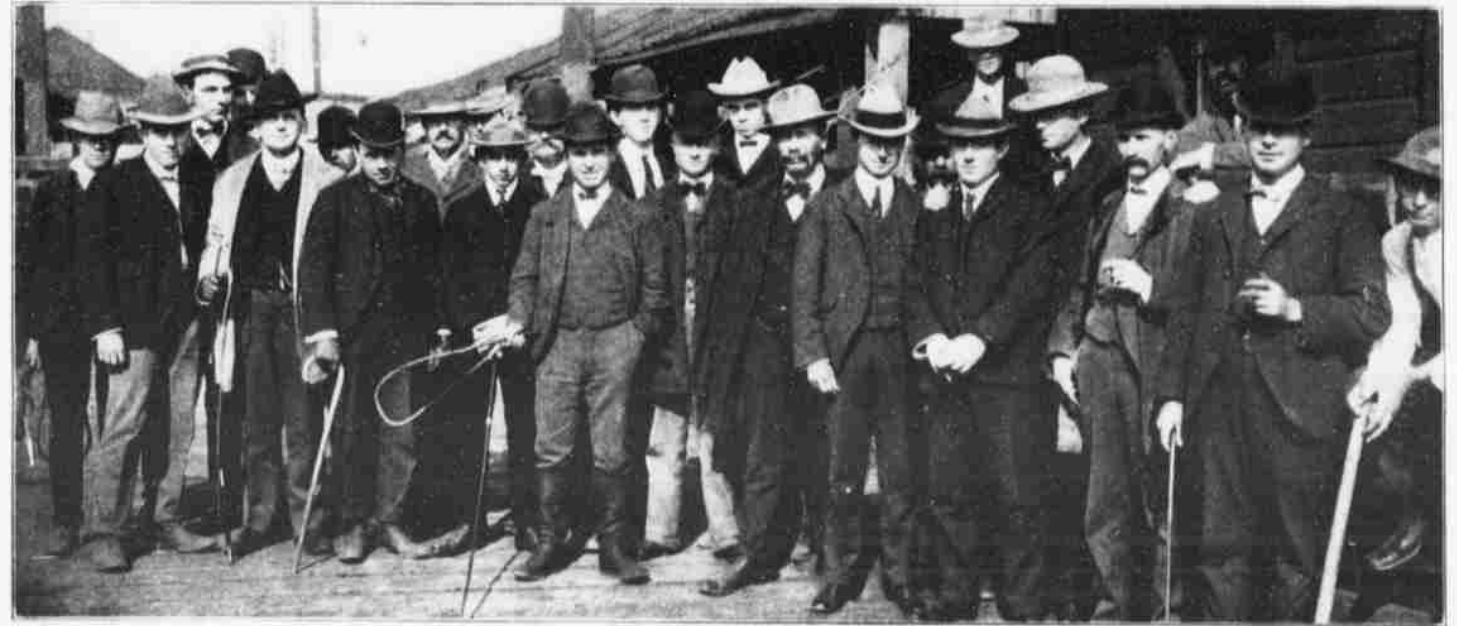
HIS HIGHNESS THE HOG AT HOME—SCENE ON THE RANCH OF OBERFELDER BROS. AT SIDNEY, NEB.—Photo by Stimson, Cheyenne.



DRAWING RATIONS FOR THE HOGS—Photo by a Staff Artist.



ON THE ROAD FROM CARS TO PENS—Photo by a Staff Artist.



BUYERS AND SELLERS OF HOGS AT SOUTH OMAHA STOCK YARDS—Photo by a Staff Artist.



ON THE ROAD TO THE SHAMBLES, LEAVING THE SCALES AFTER BEING WEIGHED—Photo by a Staff Artist.

EARLY-morning scenes at the Union Stock Yards of South Omaha are scenes of great activity. As the trainloads of cattle, hogs and sheep come rolling in day after day from all directions one must realize to some extent the immensity of the country tributary to Omaha and the wealth of livestock it contains. That is especially true in the fall of the year, when not only hogs but western cattle and sheep are also being marketed. The bulk of that business is handled from the middle of August to Thanksgiving time and every state west of the Missouri and from Kansas north is drawn upon. During the remainder of the year Iowa and Nebraska furnish the great bulk of the receipts. The movement of western cattle and sheep so far this year has been the heaviest on record and 500 cars of stock in one day is nothing unusual, while over 600 cars have been received in a single day. In figures that amounts to over 12,000 head of cattle, 1,500 head of hogs and 27,000 head of sheep, or a total of over 49,000 head.

Statisticians tell us that Americans are becoming the greatest meat eaters in the world, and that is easy to believe when it

is remembered that not only Omaha is slaughtering cattle, hogs and sheep by the thousands daily, but that Chicago, Kansas City, St. Joseph, St. Paul, Sioux City and several other places are doing the same thing to a greater or less extent. Neither does that take into consideration the amount of stock that is slaughtered in the country by small houses and by private individuals, which in the aggregate mounts up into big figures.

The work of receiving and selling stock in the big livestock centers has come to be a science. It has taken years to systematize it, but now that it has been accomplished it is an interesting sight to see with what ease 600 cars of stock can be handled without getting the different shipments mixed or confused in any way. The trains arrive at all times of the day and night, but most of them reach the yards in the early morning. The stock yards company has men on watch all night to receive and care for the stock that arrives, so that no time is lost in getting it out of the cars and into pens, where it can rest and be put in good condition for the market. The yards are all lighted, so that the night is turned into day.

As soon as a train arrives it is switched

onto the tracks owned by the stock yards company, which lead to the chutes or unloading pens. Of these there are eighty-three, so that theoretically that number of cars can be unloaded as quickly as one car. While that is not actually accomplished, still it takes but a very short time for a train to discharge its cargo and pull out of the way for the next train. The chutes are simply pens large enough to hold a car of stock and they slope down from the height of the car door to the level of the stock yards. When the stock is in the chutes the work of yarding begins. Each car of stock is, of course, consigned to some commission firm and the employees of the stock yards company make a record of every car unloaded, giving the name of the consignor and the consignor. The stock is then driven up one of the various alleys, the hogs going to the hog division, the cattle to the cattle division and the sheep to the sheep barn. When a carload is put in a pen it is locked up and a record made of the block and the number of the pen, the yards being divided into blocks, which are lettered, and the pens numbered. When that is completed the stock yards company is through, so far as the receiving part is concerned,

and the stock is then in the care of the commission man to whom it is consigned. These records made by the stock yards company are entered in books and the representatives of the commission men go there to find out what stock they have to sell. It then devolves upon the commission men to see that the stock is properly fed, watered and sorted so that it will make the best possible appearance. Each pen contains water troughs and the stock yards company has corn and hay ready for distribution, so that feed and water is abundant. There is no set time for the market to open. In the winter time trading frequently begins as soon as it is daylight, but the time at which the market opens depends upon how anxious buyers are for supplies and upon how long it takes buyers and sellers to get together on prices. In the hog division there is one particular corner around which most of the buyers and sellers congregate. It is there that the shanties, as they are called, of the different packers are located. The shanties contain telephones, so that the buyers are in direct communication with their respective houses. Each packing house is represented by two

buyers, the head buyer and his assistant, and it very frequently requires the combined efforts of both to get the number of hogs they have orders for without being obliged to pay too much for them. There is no place in the whole stock yards where more shrewdness is displayed than in the hog division.

It sometimes happens that there are not enough hogs to fill the orders for fresh meat which the different packers have and when that is the case a lively market is experienced. It is the object of the buyers, of course, to get their droves as cheaply as possible, and in order to do that they must keep the sellers from finding out that they want the hogs. The salesmen, of course, are always alert for the best interests of their patrons and the way in which they squeeze a packer whenever they can catch him short shows that they have no conscientious scruples against getting all they can for their hogs. It is not the packers, however, that always get squeezed, for it would take a wise salesman indeed to be able to tell just how many hogs the different packers want

(Continued on Page Eight.)