

Morris Otsego Co. NY. Jan 28, 1853

Dear Sir,

A Letter from the son of my friend Arvine Wales needed no apology; in reply I shall be most happy to give you all the information I can, and render you any assistance in my power, to say nothing of that very inexpensive commodity advice.

I therefore suggest that you come here in person and see for yourself; I shall be grateful in the opportunity such a visit will afford me of returning some portion of the hospitality I many years since rec'd under your good father's roof.

South Downs have of late come much into notice and since the cost in England and the expense of import has been more generally ascertained by the late importations they are held at very high prices. ---- For many years I stood almost alone as a Southdown breeder --- mutton was not a favorite food and wool commanded better f???'s and \$15 was very usual price for many draft ewes. \$12 to \$20 for buck lambs and from \$7 to \$10 for ewe lambs. I last year thought I'll introduce a change of blood into my flock and the lowest price asked for a buck lamb was \$50! and in some cases \$100!! and in one instance I was offered the fifth choice for \$100!! Everything is not sell(?) and I did not want --- so much for field bred Downs. But there is in this vicinity a flock of Grade Downs that have been breeding up on the bucks side for some dozen years that are very good sheep, and might afford down ewes at a very reasonable price say perhaps at \$8 a head – They might perhaps suite the.  
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the [double word?] market better, with you, than more expensive animals however the quality and the purity of your purchases must be mainly governed by your future(?) views and ultimate intentions – I very much question if twenty five So. Downs even could be purchased in the East(?) not but there is ten times that number in this state, perhaps, but they can not be purchased at any price.

I have done something to block the wheels of these extravagant prices as not being necessary to afford a handsome profit to the Breeder, and as having a tendency to circumscribe the diseased(?); and have kept down my own prices – the consequence is that I am always sold out very close.

In November I shall sell a few favorite old ewes, no more than half a dozen, which will be readily sold at \$20 a head; and I have remaining half a dozen ram lambs which if kept like these will get @\$30 a head.

I shall not have an ewe lamb for sale as I am anxious this year to increase my flock.

As starters see that perhaps your best purchase'll be of a dozen ewes from the Grade Flock, which, have now acquired all the appearance of South Downs and a couple of lambs now about 9 mo(nth)s old @ 18 dollars deliverable in the Spring.

I only guess at the price of the Grades.

The sheep might be driven or waggoned 40 miles to the rail and then sent forward, as you might direct, to Buffalo, thence over water water to Cleaveland(sic), where you might yourself easily take them charge of them or they might go for Erie rail –.

We are equally distant from Cortland(?).

Good Shorthorns and Devons are sold here; and as a sort of average I should say calves six months old of unquestioned purity may be had @\$100.

Sometime since a calf went from here to Maddillon on speculation it was a trading transaction I believe between the parties ~ in from that section you might know something of expenses. It is however very low on the rail when you take a car which is never necessary as the cattle cars go west almost empty but you are charged so much per hundred pound weight [end page 2]

This is not a very busy time with farmers and perhaps you may think it worth your trouble to attend the N York State Assoc meeting in Albany on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Feb next and return with me to the Grove where I will show you what we have here, and here about.

Our session in Albany I presume will be more than usually interesting, as an attempt will be made to lay down some positive[sic] rules by which animals for premiums(?) are to be judged \_\_\_ Breeders will then know what to breed for and how they are to be judged.

Much of this labor devolves on me and will keep me pretty busy till I leave Albany which I shall do on the 12 Feb and be at home that night.

With best regards to your father I am

your obedient servant (?)

[signed]

Francis Rotch