

### THE HOLM PLACE HERD

*“the dark, flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it was the marshes, ..... the low leaden line beyond was the river; and the distant, savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea”*

It is a wonderful place for wildlife and Sussex cattle. The Holm Place herd was founded in October 1971 with the purchase of four elderly, unregistered in-calf cows. John Dunn and John Holdstock inspected them for registration when the herdbook was opened. Three cows had recognisable tattoos and one cow was entered into the supplementary register. Our first bull, Chelsfield Keystone, was purchased in 1972 at the Spring Show & Sale and remained in the herd until 1979. He was used on Hereford X Friesians (real Friesians) as well as the Sussex. His last season of work produced 12 calves from 11 H X F cows in 14 days. Although we knew when he was on a promise we never saw him serve a cow.

While the Sussex calves from the H X F cows always came to more money than the pure Sussex, I always suspected that the crossbred cows cost more to keep. This was confirmed in the summers of 1975/76 when we had 16” and 14” of rain (in 2005 we had only 11.7”)

The H X F's needed supplementary feeding whereas the Sussex did not. From then on the crossbred cows were phased out and the policy changed from producing strong stores to quality breeding stock. Also at this time the change from spring calving to August/September calving was introduced.

Rule of thumb stocking rates for the marshes is 1½ ewes to the acre. You need three acres for a cow and calf and in a dry summer you need 10 acres. During the years when we lambed up 500 ewes the cows were in-wintered, fed straw and liquid feed and for ease of management they remained in yards until lambing was finished. Now, with no sheep, they spend all their lives outside.



Land was rented off the farm, at well below sea-level, where the weaned heifers were safe from “teenage pregnancies”.



During the Foot & Mouth crisis Tim, our stockman, attended these cattle and came nowhere near Holm Place. Similarly, I never went near the Heifers. Only an electrified railway line came between these heifers and a flock of slaughtered sheep. Had the Sheppey outbreak been later in the crisis, all the cattle would have been taken. People say that I aged ten years in six months and I empathise with those who endure repeated T.B. reactors.

We began showing cattle in 1997 as a practice run for the British held World Congress. Holm Place Premier 1<sup>st</sup> was shown as a yearling at the Congress and he enjoyed going to Kent Show for several years.

Known as Fred he became quite famous for having deposited the contents of his colon on the Min of Ag’s shoes. A kindly bull, he could be led by anyone and in his era his performance figures put him in the top 10%.



<b>LOT:</b>	<b>HOLM PLACE PREMIER 1</b>	<b>24-AUG-1995</b>	
	<b>KF070800217</b>	<b>TROTENDEN PREMIER 18TH HOLM PLACE DAISY 18</b>	
	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Above Average (Superior)</b>	
<b>Index 70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
			<b>110</b>
			<b>120</b>
			<b>130</b>
			<b>Index</b>
<b>Adjusted Weights (kg)</b>	100	200	300
	135	231	397
			492
			599
			<b>Scanned YES</b>
			<b>Sale Wt(kg)</b>
			<b>Withers / Rump Ht (cm)</b>
			<b>Scrotal Circ. (cm)</b>
			<b>Analysis date: 17/04/2015</b>
			<b>EBV Acc %</b>
			<b>Gest. Length (days) 0.5 84</b>
			<b>Birth Weight (kg) 1.5 95</b>
			<b>Calving Ease (%) 0.7 94</b>
			<b>Mat.Calv. Ease (%) -0.3 81</b>
			<b>200 Day Milk (kg) -7 91</b>
			<b>200 Day Growth (kg) 9 97</b>
			<b>400 Day Growth (kg) 30 97</b>
			<b>Muscle Depth (mm) 2.3 97</b>
			<b>Fat Depth (mm) 0.0 95</b>
			<b>Beef Value 23 97</b>
			<b>Calving Value 2 93</b>
			<b>Maternal Value -2 82</b>



Holm Place Major was a bull of modest appearance but outstanding performance and sponsored by MLC, his genetics were used widely in the breed.

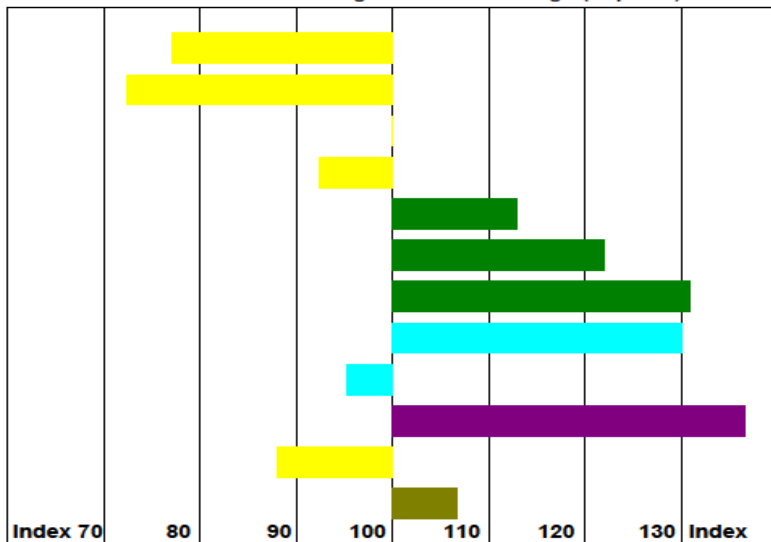
Breeding better cattle has long been the prime motivation of herd policy and the only objective way of assessing cattle is to measure. We are paid in pence per kilo and the quicker cattle put on kilos the sooner we can cash them in. Hence weight recording has been practised for well over twenty years. It is not a chore because other tasks (worming, fly control etc) can take place at the same time and there is a thirty day window of opportunity.

*Sire of UK260841/100728 Holm Place Wellington 5th*



**LOT:** **HOLM PLACE** 29-AUG-2013  
 UK 260841/100728 **HOLM PLACE WELLINGTON 5T HOLM PLACE POLLY 14** *Signet*

Below Average      Above Average (Superior)



	EBV	Acc %
Analysis date: 17/04/2015		
<b>Gest. Length (days)</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Birth Weight (kg)</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Calving Ease (%)</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Mat. Calv. Ease (%)</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>200 Day Milk (kg)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>200 Day Growth (kg)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>400 Day Growth (kg)</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Muscle Depth (mm)</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Fat Depth (mm)</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Beef Value</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Calving Value</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Maternal Value</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>

Adjusted Weights (kg)	100	200	300	400	500	Scanned
	188	0	461	540	634	YES

Sale Wt(kg)	Withers / Rump Ht (cm)
	Scrotal Circ. (cm)

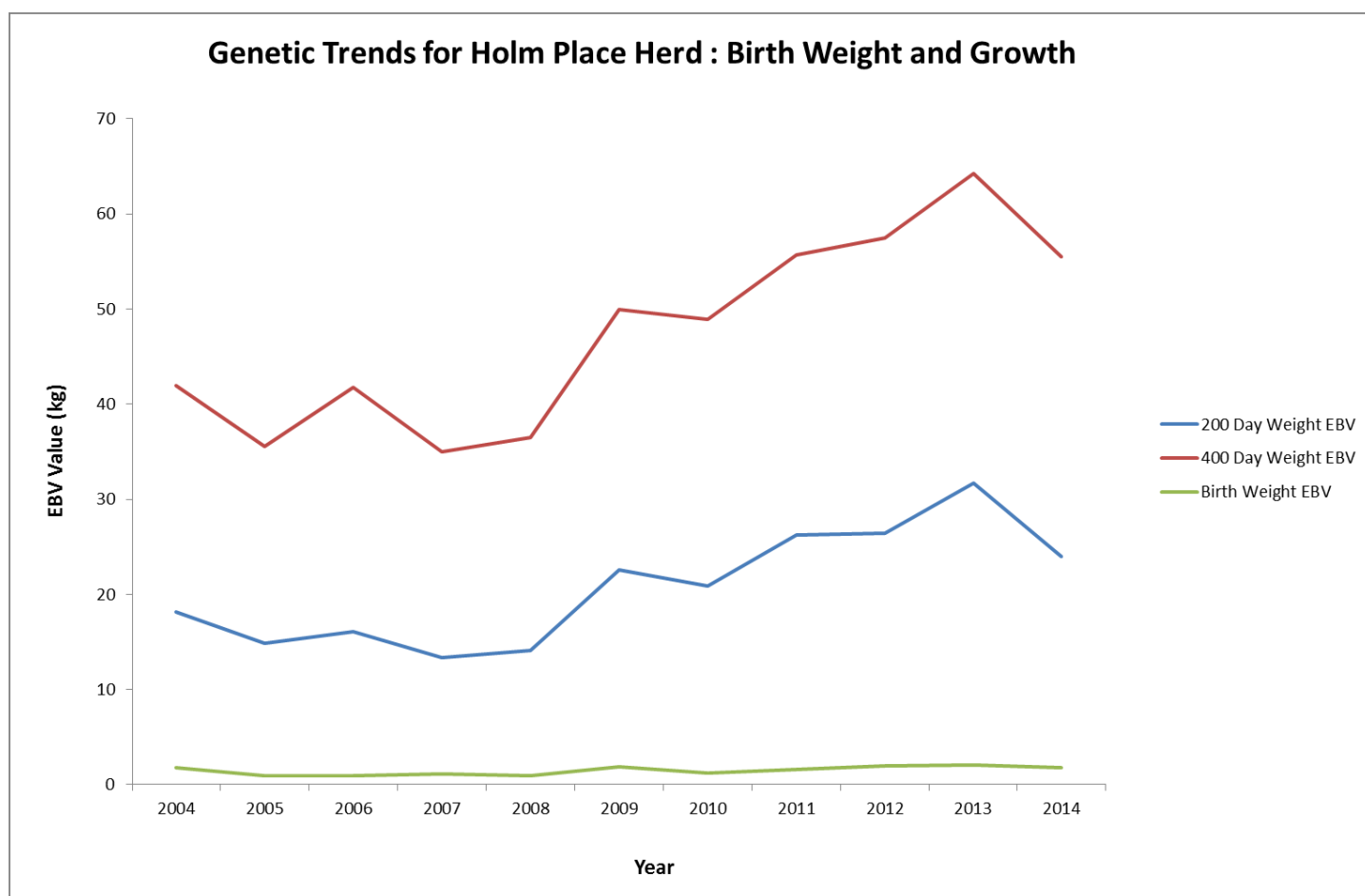
Conformation is another important aspect and for many years eye muscle and backfat have been measured via scanning (conducted on a weighing day). As the figures accumulate over the years they become ever more useful. The data analysis fee is covered by Levy (EBLEX) and with Society discounts is extremely good value.

## Sussex GENETIC TRENDS FROM 2004

Signet Member Number: 12260  
Trading Name: J C & C Lewis

Herd Mark: 260841  
Herd prefix: HOLM PLACE

Year	No Animals	Gest Length	Calve Ease	Birth Weight	CALVING VALUE	200 Day Milk	200 Day Growth	400 Day Growth	Muscle Score	Muscle Depth	Fat Depth	Beef Value	MAINT VALUE	Longevity	Age at First Calving	Calving Interval	Maternal Calving Ease	MAT. VALUE	Maternal Prod. Value
2004	64	1.46	-0.35	1.74	0.39	-1.48	18.14	41.91	0.85	2.85	-0.02	29.16	0.00	0.24	-0.03	0.07	0.27	5.09	12.17
2005	59	0.57	-0.15	0.97	1.46	-0.59	14.88	35.54	0.67	2.24	0.06	26.63	0.00	0.20	-0.03	1.26	0.11	2.64	9.56
2006	62	0.28	-0.39	0.89	1.52	0.82	16.08	41.73	0.72	2.25	0.19	30.44	0.00	0.25	-0.01	-0.07	-0.10	5.05	11.69
2007	46	1.00	-0.10	1.10	0.93	1.39	13.39	34.96	0.75	2.27	0.06	27.33	0.00	0.24	-0.02	2.83	0.10	2.96	10.67
2008	21	0.57	-0.06	0.91	1.38	0.14	14.14	36.52	0.66	1.97	0.05	27.10	0.00	0.25	-0.04	1.85	0.13	4.57	10.43
2009	46	1.28	-0.82	1.84	0.17	-1.28	22.57	49.98	0.91	3.18	0.13	32.96	0.00	0.25	-0.05	-0.06	0.24	6.91	13.61
2010	48	0.55	-0.36	1.22	1.27	1.23	20.92	48.92	0.79	2.80	0.24	33.04	0.00	0.29	-0.02	0.70	0.01	6.54	13.71
2011	57	0.90	-0.74	1.60	0.70	0.39	26.23	55.67	0.99	3.91	0.21	37.19	0.00	0.36	-0.06	1.02	0.21	10.18	20.19
2012	55	1.26	-0.92	1.97	0.09	0.49	26.44	57.44	1.03	3.83	0.18	37.27	0.00	0.32	-0.03	0.40	0.12	8.05	16.71
2013	42	1.14	-0.86	2.07	0.26	0.36	31.67	64.24	1.07	4.48	0.15	40.07	0.00	0.33	-0.04	0.95	0.18	8.26	17.86
2014	34	1.24	-0.31	1.74	0.62	1.62	23.94	55.53	1.06	3.65	0.12	37.00	0.00	0.38	-0.04	1.25	0.14	9.24	19.71



Being aware of diseases carried by insects, cats, dogs, wildlife etc. it was decided to establish the health status of the herd. Having been closed (except for the purchase of bulls) for many years the prospects looked good and after two years of blood-testing elite health status was achieved. All in all the herd is in a happy place.

John of Gaunt once owned the land we farm and in Shakespeare's Richard II he refers to

*“this Sceptered Isle, ---- this precious stone set in a silver sea”*

I am sure he had the Isle of Sheppey in mind.

**John Lewis**