

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, Tasmania, to His Excellency the GOVERNOR, Tasmania.

(Memorandum.)

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 28th March, 1876.

In compliance with His Excellency's wishes, as notified in the Private Secretary's memorandum of the 23rd instant, the Colonial Secretary has the honor to transmit the undermentioned documents relating to the destruction of rabbits in this colony:—

1. Memorandum by Mr. W. P. Latham, Council Clerk and Secretary to the Hamilton Rabbit Trust.

2. Acts of Parliament—35 Victoria, No. 13; 38 Victoria, No. 21; 39 Victoria, No. 18; 33 Victoria, No. 8, "The Cross and By-Roads Act, 1870."

3. Hobart Town *Gazettes* of 28th May, 1872, and 18th June, 1872.

The operation of the laws in force for the destruction of rabbits has, on the whole, proved of great service in keeping under this serious scourge to the farmer, but it requires united action and the cordial co-operation of all in the infested localities to secure practical results of a durable character.

His Excellency the Governor, &c., &c.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN.

Sub-Enclosure 1 to Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Mr. LATHAM to Mr. CHAPMAN.

Hamilton Rabbit District.

THE Hamilton Rabbit District was proclaimed in April, 1872. A meeting (public) of ratepayers was held on the 6th day of June following, when five Trustees were elected, in accordance with "The Cross and By-Roads Act, 1870," which must be read with the Rabbit Acts, 35 Vict., No. 13, and 38 Vict., No. 21, by which it will also be seen that the ratepayers have the power to elect seven Trustees, if they deem it expedient.

After the public meeting the Trustees met, when they appointed a permanent chairman, treasurer, and secretary, the latter to be also collector; they directed the secretary to provide a minute and a cash-book, &c. They fixed a rate of 3d. in the pound for the year ending the 31st December, 1872, according to the Municipal Valuation Roll. The following prices were decided on for rabbit skins, viz., 2s. per dozen for large paling-stretched or pegged-out skins; 1s. per dozen for small ditto ditto. A Trustee in each section of the district was appointed to purchase skins, as was also the secretary.

The Trustees met the first Tuesday in each month, when those gentlemen (Trustees) who had purchased skins were paid for them by cheque—i.e., the accounts first having been examined and passed by the Finance Committee.

No other rate was levied until the 7th of April, 1874, when 6d. in the pound was fixed for the year ending the 31st December, 1874. Hence there was only 9d. in the pound levied and collected in three years.

During the three years ending the 31st of December, 1874, there were 347,860 rabbits killed and paid for by the Trustees.

Receipts.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Amount of Rates levied and collected.—Total—						
1872.—3d. in pound	214	14	7			
1874.—6d. " "	414	0	7			
					628	15 2
Received on account of skins shipped to England					1,238	4 6
Total					£1,866	19 8

Expenditure.

	£	s.	d.
Total paid for skins	1,488	18	11
" overdraft	389	9	8
Collection (5 per cent.), interest, books, stationery, &c.	59	2	5
Total	£1,937	11	0

Deficiency £70 11s. 4d., against which there are 2½ bales of skins to be shipped, which will considerably reduce that amount.

The skins should be perfectly dry when purchased, sprinkled with diluted carbolic acid on the fleshy side (if not, the weevil will so damage the fur as to reduce the value to half), placed carefully one upon the other, and weights put on them. As soon as there are sufficient, they should be put into a wool bale and pressed. When there are two or more bales ready, they should be shipped through an agent to England, who will give an advance on them, say two-thirds, which would give funds to go on with; it depends on the London agent to put them in a good market, or they can be sold to a local merchant, which I should advise if practicable.

The Act here has worked well, although at first a grave error was committed in paying too much for the skins, and receiving and paying for ones not half-grown, also in neglecting to have skins properly dry, and not protecting them against weevil, all of which should be guarded against to insure a good sale.