

SAWDON: RUN No. 75.

This run is admittedly dangerous country. It is situated in the neighbourhood of Burke's Pass, the latter being the key to the entrance to the Mackenzie country, and subject to heavy snowfalls. The distance from Burke's Pass to the rail-head at Fairlie is fourteen miles. The main road to Mount Cook Hermitage intersects the run. A small portion of Sawdon Run lies towards Fairlie; the remainder flanks the Mackenzie Basin, about 13,000 acres being actually on the Mackenzie Plain. The total area of the Sawdon Run is 27,100 acres, which is classified as follows: 10,400 acres of very good grazing-country; about 7,500 acres of good flat; about 2,600 acres of dangerous country; and about 6,600 acres of poor flat. We estimate the fair carrying-capacity of this run is at about 8,000 sheep, including breeding-ewes. Except when subjected to a disastrous snowstorm, this run maintains its flock. The average percentage of lambs for the last five-year period (exclusive of the snow losses in 1908, which amounted to 2,100 sheep out of a flock of 7,200) was 61 per cent., and the death-rate 10 per cent. Taking into consideration the proximity of this run to Fairlie—an advantage which admits of the removal of stock to the low country during an exceptionally heavy snowstorm, and the general distribution of the winter country, it is considered advisable to subdivide it.

We recommend that Sawdon Run be subdivided into two pastoral runs, to be known as Sawdon Run and Sawdon No. 2, the former having a carrying-capacity of 4,000 sheep, and the latter having a carrying-capacity of 4,000 sheep; the upset rental for each run to be fixed at £200 per annum.

WHALESBACK: RUN No. 74.

Whalesback Run includes both watersheds of the Dalgety Range, and also the country lying between that range and Burke's Pass Road. The greater portion of the run is outside of the Mackenzie country. The run contains 32,500 acres of well-grassed and comparatively safe country. It is classified as follows: 3,800 acres of well-grassed spurs, extending westerly from Dalgety Range (good ewe country); about 5,000 acres of the Dalgety Range (sunny faces), rising from the Mackenzie Pass; about 14,400 acres (being the central and southern portions of Dalgety Range) of principally summer country; and about 9,300 acres of poor, cold flat. The Hakataramea Pass, which is at the south-western boundary of the run, is about thirteen miles from Albury Railway-station. We estimate the carrying-capacity of Whalesback at about 8,400 sheep. There is no doubt that this run can be profitably subdivided. The Hakataramea Pass, at the southern end of the run, and the Mackenzie Pass, at the northern end of the run, liberate the country from isolation, and facilitates subdivision.

We recommend that Whalesback Run be subdivided into two runs, one of them to be known as Whalesback Run, and the other as Whalesback No. 2 Run. The carrying-capacity of Whalesback is about 3,700 sheep, and of Whalesback No. 2, 4,700 sheep. The annual rental of the former to be fixed at £280, and the latter at £320.

GRAMPIANS: RUN No. 72.

About thirty-one miles from Fairlie by main road. The Grampians Run is reputed to be the best run in the Mackenzie country, and the quality of the pasturage and lay of the country go far towards establishing the correctness of that opinion. More than three-fourths of the run lies between the main Grampians Range and the Mackenzie Plains, with, for the most part, a northerly aspect. Although at times, but rarely, subject to very severe snowstorms, the Grampians is a safe breeding-country. The run carries merinos and half-breds. The total area of the Grampians Run is 45,000 acres, of which about 26,000 acres consists of sound winter and ewe country, the remaining 19,000 acres being summer country, well grassed up to a high altitude. The winter and summer country are well proportioned throughout the run. The Grampians Run carries about 16,600 sheep, including 5,800 breeding-ewes. The average percentage of lambs for a period of the past five years is 70 per cent., the normal death-rate being about 7 per cent. There is no doubt that this run is capable of subdivision.

We recommend that it be divided into three pastoral runs, to be known as Grampians, Grampians No. 2, and Grampians No. 3, the carrying-capacities respectively being 5,300 sheep, 5,800 sheep, and 5,700 sheep, and the upset annual rentals respectively £320, £350, and £330.

GRAY'S HILLS: RUN No. 73.

Purely a summer run. Situated on the left bank of the Tekapo River (part of Mackenzie Plain), the distance from Fairlie being thirty-eight miles. The area of this run is 26,000 acres, consisting of flat, stony land almost destitute of grass, the native tussock having disappeared except from the margins of swamps. Sorrel, a native fescue, constitutes the principal sheep-feed. The carrying-capacity is difficult to ascertain. The lessee works this run with the adjoining Education endowment of 29,862 acres, using the former as summer grazing only; probably it would summer 8,000 sheep. It is not suitable for subdivision.

We recommend that this run be reoffered as one pastoral run, at the upset rental of £240 per annum.

HALDON: RUN No. 70.

Haldon Run is distant about forty-four miles from Fairlie. It is situated at the extreme southern limit of the Mackenzie country. It comprises a total area of 37,200 acres, and is worked by the present lessee in conjunction with an Education endowment of Canterbury College containing 19,025 acres, and a freehold of 19,000 acres (the whole area being worked as one concern). Haldon Run is a remarkably good, safe run. The country has a good aspect, being on the east side of the Mackenzie Plain, is safe country regarded from a snow point of view.