

*No. 74; Whalesback; 32,500 Acres.*

This run has never been worked by itself, and therefore we had no guide beyond the evidence of our own eyes as to its carrying-capacity. Probably it will carry from 8,000 to 10,000 sheep. It consists principally of a narrow range, part of which lies outside the Mackenzie Basin. It is well grassed, easily fencible, and comparatively safe. Owing to its proximity to two of the exits from the basin, it is suitable for division into two, though each block would not carry more than 4,000 or 5,000 sheep. In the event of its being subdivided, the dividing-line should be drawn diagonally, so as to give each block an equal proportion of safe country.

## THE ASHBURTON COUNTY.

*Nos. 110A, 110B, and 111; Mesopotamia: No. 110A, 44,000 Acres (24,000 Acres Waste Country); No. 110B, 14,000 Acres (12,800 Acres Waste Country); No. 111, 18,500 Acres (12,000 Acres Waste Country).*

These runs are being worked as a whole in conjunction with No. 110, a block of Education reserve, consisting of 37,900 acres. Nos. 110A, 110B, and 111 comprise entirely back country, and, owing to their broken and rugged nature and their situation, they are unsuitable for any other purpose than that for which they are at present being utilized. They are completely shut off by the reserve, which includes practically all the best country on the station. No effective method of subdivision is practicable until Nos. 110A, 110B, and 111 are united with No. 110 under one landlord. In view of this fact, it is unnecessary, if it were possible, to attempt an estimate of the carrying-capacity of these runs.

*No. 112; Stronschrubie; 17,000 Acres (7,000 Acres Waste Country): Carries 3,000 Sheep.*

For some years past this run has been worked by the lessee of Mesopotamia as a part of that station. It is unfit for subdivision; indeed past experience raises the doubt as to whether it can be worked profitably by itself.

*No. 113; Hakatere; 54,700 Acres (17,000 Acres Waste Country). No. 114; Hakatere No. 2; 26,500 Acres (10,900 Acres Waste Country).*

At present these two runs are being worked together, in conjunction with an adjoining Education reserve (Mount Possession). No. 113 consists almost entirely of broken, dangerous country, suitable only for summer feeding. In the somewhat doubtful event of its being taken up by itself, it is difficult to see how the risk to the tenant could be otherwise than very grave indeed. It might carry from 9,000 to 10,000 dry sheep. Run No. 114 includes some safe country on the Potts River, and by itself would carry from 5,000 to 6,000 sheep, including sufficient ewes to insure the maintenance of the flock without recourse to buying sheep. We cannot recommend that the two blocks should be united and let as a whole, for the reason that in this event the run would be overloaded with unsafe country. Nor can we recommend that either should be further divided. It should be borne in mind that the Potts River, which separates the two runs, is not an effective boundary in summer.

*No. 116; Dunbar's; 25,000 Acres: Carries 5,750 Sheep.*

This is not a safe run, and is small enough already. At present it is being worked in conjunction with the adjoining leasehold of Clent Hills.

*No. 117; Lake Heron; 37,500 Acres (13,800 Acres Waste Country): Carries 11,000 Sheep.*

This is a slightly safer run than Dunbar's, though by no means free from snow losses. On many occasions its flocks have been seriously depleted by storms, and, apart from the losses referred to, its average annual death-rate amounts to a thousand sheep. In seasons of average losses its lessees cannot quite maintain their flocks without buying sheep. The only way of subdividing this run would be to cut it latitudinally, in which event the lower portion would be without winter country except a trifling area on what is known as the Sugarloaf, capable of wintering less than 1,000 sheep. As the upper portion, though better supplied with winter country than the lower, would not make a really good and safe run, we cannot see that any material advantage would be gained by subdivision.

*No. 118; Double Hill No. 1; 64,000 Acres (17,000 Acres Waste Country): No. 119; Double Hill No. 2, 49,500 Acres (12,500 Acres Waste Country): Carries 36,000 Sheep.*

These runs are at present being worked together. They are similar in character, their principal feature being a long stretch of warm, steep, well-grassed, northerly facings fronting on the Rakaia River, backed by more or less broken and rugged country. Though not immune from storm losses, these runs enjoy a deservedly high reputation, not only from the fact that as far as back country goes they are comparatively safe, but also from the numbers and quantity of the surplus stock which they produce. They would make four admirable runs, provided care were taken in each case to apportion the winter feeding proportionately to the summer and waste country. The principal drawback to subdivision would probably be found in the quantity and costly nature of the fencing which would be entailed, and the lack of communication.