

country we erect no fences whatever—i.e., spar fences—and we think our club is one of the few who make the rule “Follow the pack and don’t look for soft stuff.” The reason we seceded from the Woodlands Hunt (originally the name adopted for the Dannevirke Hunt, and afterwards shifted to Pahiatua, as the same was considered more central) was that the master, who resided in Pahiatua, wrote us stating that the pack would hunt no farther north than Papatawa and Kumeroa. We received this notification a few days subsequent to Wairarapa relinquishing the sport.

By the Deputation.—We started the hunt here in 1891. We were the original hunt club in this district, and we are also the oldest hunt club in Hawke’s Bay. We began twenty-five years ago with a paper-chase. In 1904 the hounds were transferred to Pahiatua, and subsequently, as the Woodlands Hunt Club refused to hunt up here, we started a pack of our own. We have ten couples of hounds, besides puppies coming on. We have authority from the Dannevirke Jockey Club to race on its course if we obtain a permit. We have a letter from the Bank of New Zealand showing that the Woodlands Hunt Club opened an account with the bank in 1896, and that the account was closed in 1904 and the balance transferred to Pahiatua. The Pahiatua people took our name and our hounds. We held a steeplechase meeting here in 1904 in conjunction with the Woodlands Hunt Club. “Woodlands,” the original name of our club, was given to it by one of our present whips, Mr. Roake. Our hounds at different shows have compared more than favourably with any other pack in New Zealand. We have had some very successful runs. Our membership is drawn from quite a big area, reaching to Akitio, Kumeroa, and Pahiatua.

WOODLANDS HUNT CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Pahiatua. The club was formed in 1894, and is registered with the New Zealand Hunts Association and the New Zealand Racing Conference. The last meeting was held on the 29th July, 1914. A list of the present members of the club and a copy of the last balance-sheet have been forwarded. We propose to race on the Pahiatua Racing Club’s course, particulars of which have already been furnished. The nearest clubs using the totalizator are Masterton, about forty miles, and Woodville, about thirteen miles distant. The nearest non-totalizator club is the Pahiatua Racing Club. We would point out that we are the second-oldest club in New Zealand, that we are the only hunt club that has a pack of hounds in the Wellington District, and that the only support we have received from racing clubs in the Wellington District is £10 from the Wellington Racing Club. In other racing districts the hunter is catered for by way of hunt races for duly qualified hunters, and also by way of cash donations. The Auckland Racing Club gives £200 to their hunts, and the Canterbury Jockey Club gives £200 in their district, also providing hunters (only) events. The district in which the Woodlands hounds are now hunted is composed of small settlers, who have for twenty years kept the hunt going, and have been the means of starting both the Manawatu and Dannevirke Hunt Clubs. When the Wellington Hunt Club gave up hunting, and also the Wairarapa, the Woodlands Hunt acquired the hounds, which they have kept going and successfully hunted ever since. For many years the Woodlands Hunt Club has held a steeplechase meeting. Since the bookmakers have ceased to exist the members have been unduly taxed financially to keep the steeplechase meeting going, which is the real inducement for the farmer to keep his hunter or to breed the same. When the bookmakers were allowed to bet on the racecourse they paid the club from £70 to £100 for the right to bet at the meeting, which was of great assistance in keeping the steeplechase going, by assisting to provide the stakes.

By the Deputation.—We believe the Woodlands Hunt Club is certainly the oldest hunt club in this part of the Island, if not in the North Island. It is the parent club of the Dannevirke and Manawatu Hunts. The Dannevirke and Manawatu clubs are offshoots from us. We have had ten very successful steeplechase meetings. Up till quite recently the club was very successful from a membership point of view, but recently, on account of the war, our membership has fallen off. There is a very keen desire all over the district that the hunt club should keep going, and it is only by a totalizator permit that the flag can be kept flying. The Government realize that if they want a good horse to carry weight over country for army-remount purposes they must get them from the class of horse we use, and therefore we think hunt clubs should be encouraged more than they are. We breed and use the finest stamp of horse you can get for carrying a good weight over heavy country. We maintain that the districts which support hunt clubs produce a better class and better-bred horses than the districts where there are no hunts. We have five couples of hounds: that is a little less than they used to be. Some of our friends take the hounds in the summer and look after them for us, which saves us a few pounds. We have kept the sport alive in the Pahiatua and neighbouring districts for nineteen years, and have kept good horses going, and have produced many good riders, who are capable of riding over wire, water, and timber, and of caring for their horses. It is owing to the unselfish and sportsmanlike action of the Woodlands Hunt that at present there exists in the Manawatu district a registered hunt so prosperous as to be able, after four years, to purchase kennels at a cost of over £1,000. About three years ago, in compliance with a request received from southern Hawke’s Bay gentlemen, the Woodlands hounds were hunted in southern Hawke’s Bay, and as a result of the interest which the Woodlands Hunt created when the Wairarapa Hunt disbanded their pack was purchased by southern Hawke’s Bay, and two years ago a registration was obtained for the Dannevirke Hunt. We think the only way to encourage a good breed of army remounts is by encouraging hunting. There is a greater chance of people breeding horses if they see an opportunity of getting £100 to £150 for them. At our last meeting with the bookmakers we got £91 from them, and gave £95 in stakes. We only want a revenue to give good stakes. We do not want to make a profit out of the meetings with the permit. We have no hesitation in saying we ran as good a meeting as in any part of the Dominion.