

**CONFIDENTIAL.**

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No. *C/4/43.*

C.S.

19 43.

Holmested Blake & Co., Ltd.

SUBJECT.

19 43.

23rd March.

CLAIM IN RESPECT OF RAM IMPORTED BY  
HOLMESTED BLAKE & COMPANY, LIMITED.

Previous Paper.

See *C/11/43.*

MINUTES.

*1.*

Letter from Chairman, Holmested, Blake & Co., Ltd., of  
23/3/43.

*(2).*

*D/Ag.*

*For your report please.*

*KB  
27/5.*

*(3)*

*Report enclosed herewith: Surely the natural approach for Holmested & Blake Co would have been to request a description of the manner in which the disease attacked the sheep & the size of the lesions. At times they have adopted the other method they have asked for everything we can give them, & should be shown no mercy.*

*J.S.  
29/5/43*

*(4).*

*Report from D/Ag.*

*28-5-43.*

Subsequent Paper.

*L.A.*

*(5).*

*(1) was handed to me by Manager. F.I.C. I should be grateful for your advice as to the reply.*

*KB  
31/5.*

H. B. L.

(6)

I should reply & say that "Government stands behind the actions & reports of its own officers & cannot admit any liability." Then they can test the matter in court if they wish.

P.B.  
2.19.

3.6-43.

(7)

As marked

P.B. 4/11/43

letter to Chairman, Chess. Holmsted & Blake of 6/6/43. 8.

letter to Spanager, F.I.C., of 20.9.43. 9.

(10)

D/Aq.

Can I have a copy of the F.I.C. memo referred to in (9)?

K.B.

22/9

(11)

HCL

Copy enclosed herewith

Joly  
24/9/43

(12)

G.F.

To see (9) & (9a)

K.B.  
27/9

✓

pc

Telegram No 113 to S. of S. of 21.4.45. 13.

Telegram No 140 from S. of S. of 11.4.45. 14.

(15)

D/Aq

We will discuss.

K.B.  
15/10/45.

~~letter to Crown Agents of 14.8.45 20~~

~~Memor. Holmsted Blake & Co of 14.8.45 21~~

(1)

# HOLMESTED BLAKE & COMPANY, LIMITED

AND AT  
HILL COVE,  
FALKLAND ISLANDS

SOUTHERNHAY,  
CAVENDISH ROAD,  
WEYBRIDGE,  
SURREY.

Sir,

23rd March, 1943.

In August, 1940 the Falkland Islands Company shipped on our behalf, per s.s. "LAFONIA" from Liverpool to Port Stanley, 6 Romney Marsh Rams which had been bred by Mr. Clifford Nicholson of Willoughton Manor, Near Lincoln. Mr. Nicholson is a well-known breeder of pedigree sheep and has a considerable export business.

The rams arrived Liverpool 28th August, 1940, were examined and passed by a Veterinary Officer and put on board without delay. Vessel sailed on 31st August, called at St. Vincent and Montevideo arriving Port Stanley 7th October where the animals were placed in quarantine on 8th idem.

One died on the voyage out and another shortly after landing into quarantine - believed due to pneumonia.

Whilst in quarantine and within one month from landing one developed a skin affection said by the Falkland Islands Agricultural Department to be Mycotic Dermatitis.

This ram was kept in quarantine and on 7th May, 1941 the Agricultural Department issued a certificate stating that it has been

The Honourable  
The Colonial Secretary,  
Port Stanley,  
Falkland Islands.

/condemned

*we missed the disease on first examination but the sheep were examined with microscope. The stain on the wool appears to be the lesion on sample in our possession.*

1a

condemned as suffering from Mycotic Dermatitis. On making further enquiries we find that it was not then destroyed but kept at the Quarantine Station and experimented on by the Agricultural Department; it was ultimately destroyed early in 1942. Incidentally we understand that the Colonial Manager, Falkland Islands Company, expressed his desire to see it on several occasions but this was not convenient and he was never enabled to do so.

*He should have referred to the authorities*

As we were not satisfied with the diagnosis we decided to pursue the matter further and put two queries before the Cooper Technical Bureau

1. Is Mycotic Dermatitis prevalent in England?
2. Is it possible that the skin would not show any sign even if the sheep had Mycotic Dermatitis?

to which they replied on 9th March, 1942 -

"In reply to the questions that you raise in your letter of the 6th March:

"1. So far as our experience goes, mycotic dermatitis is very rare in Great Britain. We have had one or two specimens of abnormal sheepskin and fleece submitted to us, showing bacterial staining and crusts, which we have considered to be cases of mycotic dermatitis.

" We cannot remember ever to have seen a reference to the occurrence of mycotic dermatitis in Great Britain in the veterinary literature.

"2. Had the sheep in question recently suffered from mycotic dermatitis, we would expect to find some evidence on the skin in the form of thickening and corrugation.

" Had the sheep been suffering from mycotic dermatitis at the time of embarkation from Liverpool, it is in the highest degree unlikely that the condition would have escaped the notice of the veterinary officer.

" It would also seem improbable that mycotic dermatitis could develop in the course of a voyage of little more than 5 weeks unless the sheep were transported under

"such conditions that their fleeces and skins were constantly wet.

" There is the possibility that the conditions during the voyage were such that the sheep developed some abnormal skin condition which the Falkland Islands authority certified as being mycotic dermatitis.

" Should you receive a specimen of the skin, we would be interested to see it."

1B

We therefore decided to have the skin and fleeces sent Home for expert examination and this was done. We understand that when the Falkland Islands Agricultural Department were advised of our desire they expressed the view that "the skin will not show anything but the fleece will justify the condemnation of the animal". The skin and fleeces arrived in September, 1942 and were submitted to the Cooper Technical Bureau for examination and report.

They reported on 29th October last -

"Some days ago we received a case containing a dried sheepskin and two fleeces, which you inform us were shipped from the Falkland Islands by Messrs. Houlder Bros.

"We have made a careful examination of both skin and fleeces and have failed to find the slightest evidence of mycotic dermatitis. The wool is rather dirty but, in our judgment, there is nothing wrong with its quality.

"We would suggest that you might submit the two fleeces for expert opinion, either to the Bradford Technical College, or to the Wool Industries Research Association, Toppington, Headingley, Leeds 6.

"There is something queer about the adverse report of the veterinary authorities in the Falkland Islands."

We then arranged for the Bradford Technical College to examine and report and we attach copy of their report dated 11th February, 1943

(together with copy of covering letter dated 15th idem from the Cooper Technical Bureau). We specially draw your attention to paragraph 8 -

"The wool does not show any signs of having come from a sheep suffering from a skin disease", which emphasises that no trace of skin disease could be found, and to paragraph 11 -

"Respecting the better fleece, both the Wool Control Appraisers and ourselves agree that it is an ideal type and equal to the best of this type of wool in all respects." This reference to the very high quality of the fleece confirms and strengthens our view that the loss of <sup>the</sup> services of what was undoubtedly an exceptional ram is most serious.

/The

10

The importation of stud sheep into the Colony has been increasingly difficult since war broke out and you will appreciate that not only have we been deprived of the ram's services to our flocks but there is a time lag which cannot possibly be overtaken even if the ram could be replaced

We hold that the opinion given by the Cooper Technical Bureau in their letters of 9th March, 1942 and 15th February, 1943, and the Bradford Technical College's report dated 11th February, 1943 prove conclusively that the Falkland Islands Agricultural Department's diagnosis of Mycotic Dermatitis was wrong and that there can be no reasonable doubt a grave error of judgment has been made by this Department of the Falkland Islands Government, which has deprived us of the use of a costly ram the value of whose stud services to our flocks cannot be estimated and for which there can be no adequate redress.

We do, however, submit that we are entitled to claim compensation for the actual expenses incurred by us in purchasing, shipping out and whilst in quarantine which amount to £86. 18. 11. (details attached).

We are therefore requesting the Colonial Manager, Falkland Islands Company, to submit this letter to you on our behalf and beg that we may be favoured with an early reply which kindly send to him.

We are, Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

For HOLMESTED, BLAKE & COMPANY, LTD.

Robert Blake

Chairman.

10

RAM - HORKSTOW MANOR NO.13 of 1939.

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	£.	s.	d
First cost	45.	0.	0
1/6th of Shipping Expenses	32.	16.	2
1/4th of Port Stanley expenses	5.	10.	0
Telegram and expenses re sending skin and fleeces Home			
	3.	12.	9
	<hr/>		
	£ 86.	18.	11
	<hr/> <hr/>		

HOLMESTED, BLAKE & CO., LTD.  
"SOUTHERNHAY",  
CAVENDISH ROAD,  
WEYBRIDGE, SURREY.

23rd March, 1943.

TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
BRADFORD.

## TEXTILE TESTING LABORATORY.

REPORT on TWO ROMNEY MARSH FLEECES FROM FALKLAND ISLANDS.

SUBMITTED by THE COOPER TECHNICAL BUREAU,  
BERKHAMSTED, HERTS.

## NATURE OF TEST TO WHICH FLEECES HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED:

We have examined the two fleeces sent to us and in doing so have had the assistance of two of the appraisers from the Wool Control. One of them has had considerable experience in judging this type of wool, having purchased very large quantities for one of the Bradford houses who specialise in Falkland Islands wools.

The two fleeces came to us packed in one bag without any identification marks, but we are assuming that the better fleece is the one which was shorn last.

Both the Wool Control experts and ourselves can hardly credit that two fleeces of such different characteristics and 'get-up' should have come from the same animal.

They both agree, and we support their contention, that the colour of the first fleece is its worst feature and that although it shows some signs of tenderness, about 1½ to 2 inches from the tip, it cannot be considered unduly tender. Slight tenderness is often found in this class of wool.

In their opinion, the bad colour of the wool has reduced its value by at least 25 per cent. They suggest that the type of dip employed may, to a large extent, be responsible for this discolouration. They both agree that it is a defect which frequently occurs in both English and Colonial wools and is often attributable to the dip employed not having been used according to the instructions supplied by the manufacturer.

The colour is permanent and cannot be removed by scouring as is evidenced by the scoured sample which accompanies this report.

With respect to the processing properties, the slight tenderness will result in a reduced tear of 'top' to 'noil', but apart from this we cannot foresee any difficulty likely to occur during processing.

The wool does not show any signs of having come from a sheep suffering from a skin disease.

One feature of the colour is that staples shade from a pale orange at the tip to almost pure white at the root. This suggests that the sheep has had several dippings whilst the wool was of a good length. We should be interested to know if this is the case.

The lack of information as to the history of the sheep, number of shearings, etc., has somewhat increased our difficulties in reporting on the fleeces.

Respecting the better fleece, both the Wool Control Appraisers and ourselves agree that it is an ideal type and equal to the best of this type of wool in all respects.

We are holding the fleeces and await your instructions as to their disposal.

11th February, 1943.

SIGNED W.E. KING  
Head of the Department.



C O P Y

THE COOPER TECHNICAL BUREAU

BERKHAMSTED, HERTS.

15th February, 1943.

We have this morning received the report of the Bradford Technical College on the two Romney fleeces sent from the Falkland Islands.

We enclose a copy of this report, also samples of the scoured wool from the two fleeces.

You will see that the Bradford wool experts confirm the view which we expressed in our letter to you dated the 29th October, 1942, viz., that the fleeces showed no evidence of having come from a sheep suffering from a skin disease.

We have no hesitation in affirming that the animal from which these fleeces were derived was not suffering from mycotic dermatitis.

The staining of one of the fleeces is certainly due to the use of a bloom sheep dip. Bloom dips contain dyes which impart a colour to the wool, which is considered by many sheep-breeders to enhance the appearance of the sheep.

Messrs. Cooper, McDougall & Robertson produce bloom dips, but export no bloom dips to the Falkland Islands. We have no information as to whether the ram in question was ever dipped in the Falkland Islands.

From the information furnished in your letter to us, dated the 6th March, 1942, we would infer that the ram was shorn twice after its arrival in the Falkland Islands.

It is possible that the bloom dip was used shortly before the ram was shipped from Liverpool. The bloom staining affects the outer part of the staple only; the inner portion of the fleece is not stained. This indicates that some months elapsed between dipping and shearing. The unstained portion of the staple represents the growth of wool after dipping which, naturally, would show no stain.

The unstained fleece is presumably that of a later shearing and shows no dip stain.

The general result of the investigation indicates that the veterinary officer of the Falkland Islands Department of Agriculture was wrong in certifying that the ram in question was affected with mycotic dermatitis.

pp. THE COOPER TECHNICAL BUREAU.

MINUTE.

No. \_\_\_\_\_

28th May 1943.

From Director of Agriculture.

To The Honourable,

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

Stanley.

Hereunder is the report you requested concerning M.P. C/4/43 Red 1.

No claim against this Government can succeed, as we possess a specimen of the crust in the wool taken from the stained fleece which is mentioned in Holmsted, Blake & Co's letter. Any wool expert could identify our specimens as coming from the fleeces in question. This sample proves the accuracy of the diagnosis of Mycotic Dermatitis, a term which we explained in the letter covering the certificate of death.

The above statement is to my mind a complete answer to Holmsted, Blake & Co's letter.

In view of the statement in Holmsted, Blake & Co's letter, to wit, " we hold..... that the Falkland Island Agricultural Department's diagnosis of Mycotic Dermatitis was wrong and that there can be no reasonable doubt that a grave error of judgment has been made....." I consider an apology is due or that proceedings for unwarranted and unjustifiable defamation should be taken.

The following points have a bearing on this case :-

- (1) Efficient quarantine does not permit for inspection of animals in quarantine by members of the public or by the importer and there can be no obligation to permit anyone to view animals in quarantine. The whole responsibility for efficient quarantine lies with the Director of Agriculture.
- (2) The skin and fleeces were released to the Manager of the Falkland Island Co. who requested them "for insurance purposes". It would be interesting to learn how these items and part of our letter to the manager of the Falkland Island Co. whom we believed to be acting for Insurance Co. came into the hands of Holmsted and Blake.
- (3) Dermatitis is a disease concerning which there can be no reasonable doubt. On the sheep in question the scab extended from one flank across the loin and down to the other flank and varied from 2 ins. to 9 ins. in width. There was no wool growing on the major portion of the scab and consequently the only evidence of infection that the wool would show would be the break in the continuity of the wool. Small amounts of scab were apparent in the wool about the margins of the lesion. The amazing conceit of a man who because he fails to observe evidence of Dermatitis in wool "has no hesitation in affirming that the animals from which these fleeces were derived was not suffering from mycotic dermatitis" is beyond comp-

comprehension, especially in view of the fact that the animal was condemned in quarantine by responsible highly trained and widely experienced Government Officers. In this connection I would remind you and others that negative evidence never proves anything.

- (4) For your information, the Agricultural degree which I took in New Zealand includes two years study of Veterinary Anatomy and Veterinary Medicine, and though I do not claim to be a qualified veterinarian, I have no doubt of my ability to diagnose such diseases as we have so far intercepted in quarantine or encountered in the Falkland Islands.



Director of Agriculture.

C/4/43.

(8)

5th June,

43.

Sir,

*Red!*

I have the honour to refer to your letter dated the 3rd March, 1943, which was handed to me by the Manager, Falkland Islands Company, on the 27th May, on the subject of a ram destroyed in quarantine.

2. This Government stands behind the actions and reports of its own officers and cannot admit any liability.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

K. G BRADLEY  
Colonial Secretary.

Chairman,  
Messrs Holmested Blake and Co., Ltd.,  
Southernhay,  
Cavendish Road,  
Weybridge, Surrey,  
ENGLAND.

*copy to manager.*

*7-1-43*

(9a).

Hon.Col.Sec. For your information.

13th September 1943.

From  
The Falkland Island CO.Ltd.  
Stanley.

To  
The Stock Inspector,  
Stanley.

Dear Sir,

We shall be obliged if you will supply us with the history and treatment of Mr Blake's ram from the date of arrival to the date of condemnation; also giving us the number of times the animal was dipped and naming the dips used.

An early reply will oblige.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(sgnd) D.W.Roberts.

Manager.

Hon.Col.Sec.

For your information.

(9)

( copy )

20th September 1943.


The Manager,

Falkland Island Col Ltd.

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of your memorandum of the 13th inst concerning Mr. Blake's ram. We regret that we are not prepared to pursue this matter further.

Yours faithfully,

  
Director of Agriculture.

DECODE.

13

TELEGRAM.

From His Excellency the Governor.....

To Secretary of State for the Colonies.

M.P. Nos. 23/44.  
S/4/43.

Despatched: 21st April, 19 45. Time: .....

Received: ..... 19 ... Time: .....

See Recd 30  
in M.P. 23/44.

No. 113. Your telegram No. 104 of the 17th April.

2. No (2) no claim has yet been made by the Falkland Islands Company in respect of the five rams referred to in paragraph 10 of the memorandum enclosure No. 2 to my despatch No. 30. If a reasonable claim is submitted I agree that it should be paid.

3. The 286 - 18 - 11d was not claimed by the Falkland Islands Company but by Messrs Holmstead Blake and Company in respect of one ram imported in May 1941 which died in quarantine. This case is referred to in paragraphs 2 - 9 of the memorandum enclosure No. 1 to my despatch No. 30. We have refused to entertain this claim as the Agricultural Department holds specimens as definite (R) definite evidence that it died of Mycotic Dermatitis and not of dip poisoning.

Recd 16b  
in 24/44

Recd 16a  
in 28/44.

GOVERNOR.

C.T.C.

DECODE.

No. 75.

TELEGRAM.

14

*From* Secretary of State for the Colonies.

*To* His Excellency the Governor.

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*Despatched* : 11th May, 1945. *Time* : 1415.

*Received* : 12th May, 1945. *Time* : 1030.

Red 13.  
MP 23/44

No. 140. Your telegram No. 113. I agree that a reasonable claim by the Falkland Islands Company in respect of 5 rams should be paid. They have been ~~so~~ informed.

2. I am advised that evidence of mycotic dermatitis would not be acceptable to a court in the case of 1 ram imported by Messrs. Holmstead Blake & Company and that severity of infection would be in question in death of this disease. In these circumstances I consider it unwise to risk being unable to substantiate a diagnosis and that the sum of £86. 18s. 11d. should be paid to the Company.

SECRETARY OF STATE.



17

PAUL HAYWARD, M.P.  
No. 39.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
STANLEY,  
31st May, 1945.

Sir,

*Red 14*

I have the honour to refer to your telegram, No. 140 of the 11th May, paragraph 2, regarding a claim by Messrs Holmstedt, Blake & Company for £66. 18s. 11d. in respect of a ram condemned in quarantine.

*Red 13*

2. In my telegram, No. 143 I stated that the Agricultural Department holds specimens as definite evidence that the ram died of Mycotic Dermatitis. This was, I am afraid, badly phrased. The ram was suffering from this disease, and was condemned, and subsequently slaughtered. The details of the history are set out in paragraph five of enclosure, No. 1 to my despatch, No. 30 of 1944. There is no question of the animal having actually died of the disease.

*Red 16 in  
23/44*

3. The Director of Agriculture also states as follows :

"On the sheep in question the scab extended from one flank across the lion and down to the other flank and varied from 2 ins. to 9 ins. in width. There was no wool growing on the major portion"

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
O. F. G. STANLEY, P.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

"portion of the scab and consequently the only evidence of infection that the wool would show would be the "break in the continuity of the wool. Small amounts of "scab were apparent in the wool about the margins of the "lesion".

4. It is also a fact that Mr. Harding, Local Manager of the Farm, on being informed of the nature of the disease from which the ram was suffering told the Stock Inspector that he would not be able to use it for breeding and had no objection to its condemnation. The Stock Inspector, Mr. T. Beaty, is now on leave in the United Kingdom and can give any further information which may be desired.

5. The Director of Agriculture has no doubt as to the presence of dermatic infection justifying condemnation. His evidence would be supported not only by a specimen additional to that accompanying my despatch, No. 36 but also by the testimony of witnesses.

6. Dr. Gibbs has no doubt whatever as to the correctness of the diagnosis or of the desirability of condemnation and, in the light of the additional information contained in this despatch, I trust that, in fairness to him, you will feel able to reconsider your opinion in regard to the validity of this claim.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient,  
humble servant,

J. W. CARROLL

DECODE.

224.

TELEGRAM.

18

*From* Secretary of State.

*To* His Excellency the Governor.

*Despatched:* August 8th 19 45 *Time:* 1700

*Received:* August 9th 19 45 *Time:* 1030

224. Your despatch 39. Claims by Holmsted Blake & Coy.

After further consideration by my advisers of technical evidence submitted I remain of the opinion that the claim should be met in full.

Secretary of State.

Red 17

C/4/43.

20

14th August,

45.

Gentlemen,

I shall be grateful if you will pay to

Holmsted Blake & Company, Limited,  
Southernhay,  
Cavendish Road,  
Weybridge,  
Surrey,

the sum of £86. 18s. 11d. and debit our General Account.

2. This is ex gratia payment in respect of one ram condemned and slaughtered in quarantine.

I have the honour to be,  
Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

K. G. BRADLEY

Colonial Secretary.

The Crown Agents for the Colonies,  
4, Millbank,  
Westminster,  
London, S.W. 1.

6/11/43.

Copy to G. I/c., Treasury for information.

(21)

11th August, 43.

Sir,

*Red!*

With reference to your letter of the 22nd March, 1943, I am directed by His Excellency to inform you that the Crown Agents have been instructed to pay you the sum of £36. 18s. 11d. While the Government does not consider itself liable for the loss of this sum it has been decided in all <sup>the</sup> circumstances to make you an ex gratia payment of the above amount.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
K. G. BRADLEY  
Colonial Secretary.

The Chairman,  
Messrs. Holmsted Blake & Co., Ltd.,  
Southornby,  
Cavendish Road,  
Weybridge,  
SURREY.

16.

Your Excellency,

I have discussed the Holmsted & Blake claim very thoroughly with the Director of Agriculture. I am afraid we misled the Secretary of State in the last sentence of (13). (15) The ram did not die of the disease - which is not normally fatal. It was subsequently condemned with the oral agreement of Mr. Harding, as being useless and undesirable because of the disease. There really does not seem to be a shadow of a claim and in fairness to Dr. Gibbs professionally, I think we must return to the charge.

2. If we let a farmer get away with a claim like this we not only increase the ammunition of the farmers in their campaign against Dr. Gibbs and his department, but we let him down and cannot expect him or his successor to take any of the risks which are inherent in proper quarantining. *Draft also p 44.*

3. Incidentally, the other case of 5 rams belonging to the F.I.C., would also probably fail in a court. We are accused of killing them because of our method of dipping. Since then Dr. Gibbs has tried hard to kill two other lots of sheep by the same process and they have survived even more drastic treatment. That matter seems to be settled, but for the reasons given in paragraph 2 above any payment we make should be "ex gratia" and no liability admitted.

See MP 23/44

*LB*  
17th May, 1945.

- 17. Despatch, No. 39 to S. of S. of 31. 5. 45.
- 18. *Telegram No 224 from S. of S. of Aug 8th '45*

*Amen (19)  
No 13/viii/45*

- 20. *letter to Crown Agents of 14.8.45*
- 21. *" " Messrs. Holmsted Blake & Co of 14. 8. 45.*  
*(22)*

*D/Aq.*

To see from (17). His Excellency regrets that this decision should have been necessary and wishes you to know that he does not consider that it reflects on you in any way.

*LB*  
*17.8.45*

*I've returned for D.A.s opinion on his department.*

*LA*  
*WBL*  
*29.5.46*