

C. S. O.

1307

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(Formerly)

SUBJECT:

SHEEP AILMENTS IN FALKLAND ISLANDS.

CONNECTED FILES.

NUMBER AND YEAR.

235/35

Note on the high mortality rate of sheep in the Falkland Is.

EX. CO. MINUTES

1307

DESPATCHES AND TELEGRAMS.

To S. of S.			From S. of S.		
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EX. CO. MINUTES.

Date.	Page.	

A.O.

101

Are we now (or rather still)
completely free from scab in
our flocks?

2. What other remediable
afflictions do sheep suffer from
here?

3. Are you satisfied with the
standard of "dipping"?

4. Have you read Norris's
Practical Sheep Farming? I have
just re-read and found it
most interesting.

Mc.

Pl. See 2 & 3

CB. I asked H.O. to give me his views on sheep ailments which has produced the following thoughtful and useful commentary. Please file + B.U. i.d.c. Y.E.

2.

MC 27/1

1. Yes. So far as I know the whole of the Islands are free from sheep scab & sheep lice.

But this is an infection which is liable to recur in epidemic form on an odd sheep or so 10-15 or 20 years after its last incidence in a district was observed.

2. Other remediable sheep afflictions, ^{here} are:-
Externally keds, or sheep ticks, which I maintain could be exterminated Island by Island by repeated dipping & repeated gathering & re-gathering until all Camps' last sto away sheep had been found & eliminated as carriers, by-passing the dip.

Internally there are intestinal, stomach & lung worms & Cysticercus, or the cyst form of the tape worm in dogs the latter show no symptoms in the live sheep; but can be controlled by dealing strictly with all dogs; except where there are foci to continue the worms life cycle in.

Then also there are now comparatively expensive but effective serums for vaccinator, prevention of Puffy Kidney, Lamb Dysentery & other bacterial Intestinal Infections.

Pine disease so prevalent in young sheep, strictly not a disease but a nutritional deficiency is remedied by cobalt & other trace minerals being fed or injected in assimilable form.

Blindness. Periodic Ophthalmia or Moon blindness affecting the eye is not over common now but was troublesome in past years & is likely to be of higher incidence in dry years after much burning; when it may be epidemic through individual flocks. It is usually only temporary but not curable & the causal organism is unknown. But this is not so serious as wool blindness, hardly a disease, & most prevalent in lowlands. The remedy is eye barking & it is capable of being bred out by selection.

Other visual defects in sheep here are cataract & sometimes myopia with or without astigmatism.

I have seen sheep here with Facial Eczema, Actinomyces which is bone enlargement generally about the head caused by a universally present soil bacteria; & stomach worms & digestive disorders, more prevalent in the late winter & early spring due to sheep being then forced to eat grass which they & eschewed earlier in the year, or round settlements in pedigree rams & jets by having in that season to nibble close to the roots & with mud at a maximum the dirt intake is the cause.

Mixed with other debilitating factors such as damp & chill a high

Young at Fendon Station has done so

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incidence of these complaints is always co-incident with the
than of snow.

A high plane of nutrition would mitigate this.

Septicemia from cuts is not over common but does occur
especially in fat animals including supplementary-fed imported
rams to which it is a great danger.

Otherwise pneumonia is a much greater killer after shearing. It
is unremedial in practice, but in theory would yield to treatment
with sulphur drugs. More cover, covered tally pens & care such
as putting "chippies" back in the shed overnight on bed & wild
nights reduces the incidence which is generally the result of a chill.

Cereous Lymph adenitis could be reduced by better hygiene
in lamb marking & dealing with shear cuts. It cannot be cured
& is of little consequence until export of the infected carcass to U.K.
is desired.

Then there is also some post partum paralysis which whilst itself
in most cases is only temporary in effect due to the compressing
or bruising of an anterior nerve or nerves in the act of parturition
& so hardly to be classed as a disease; it never the less serious
here as it renders both ewe & lamb very vulnerable to bird attack.

This report on disease does not read as well as I would
like it & to add interest I attach a paper on Australian Field
Research which form of Experiment I had thought lent itself
to investigation here in respect of some of these diseases

3. The Dipping is usually carried out well, dip
is mixed rather over strength & most farmers are conscientious in
the work. What I am dissatisfied with is the low standard of
gathering & the percentage of sheep left behind or missed in these
gathers with less & less back gathering being done. (labour shortage
is the cause) Thus undipped sheep left in, I would venture to be
bold as to say all camps nullifies the care in dipping.
Further - more the dips on many small islands are poor & on
outer islands such as the Jacsons no dipping is done at all
but ticks do not become epidemic on the sheep there as long
as they remain over fat.

4. Yes I have read Mr. Nowise's very interesting
book & think it a most commendable text book for
its simplicity in language & style & the ease of under-
standing the author's thoughts.

It is
generally
practical.

It is
in fact
a menace.

ACS

It would be more convenient if this could be typed
on ordinary sized paper. Pl so arrange, after the
mail has gone

[Handwritten initials]

1 NOV 1950

[Handwritten notes:]
PH sent to (copy made)
C: 11"

C.S.

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I asked A.O. to give me his views on sheep ailments which has produced the following thoughtful and useful commentary. Please file & B.U. i.d.c.

(Intld) M.C.

27/x/50.

Y.E.

1. Yes. So far as I know the whole of the Islands are free from Sheep Scab and Sheep Lice. But this is an infection which is liable to recur in epidemic form on an odd sheep or so 10 - 15 or 20 years after the last incidence in a district was observed.

2. Other remediable sheep afflictions here are:-

Externally, keds, or sheep ticks, which I maintain could be exterminated Island by Island by repeated dipping and repeated gathering and re-gathering until all Camps' last stowaway sheep had been found and eliminated as carriers, by-passing the dip. Internally, there are intestinal, stomach and lung worms and cysticercus, or the cyst form of the tape worm in dogs, the latter show no symptoms in the live sheep, but can be controlled by dealing strictly with all dogs; except where there are foxes to continue the worms life cycle in.

Interesting.

Then also there are now comparatively expensive but effective serums for vaccinatory prevention of Pulpy kidney, Lamb Dysentery and other bacterial Intestinal Infections.

Pint disease so prevalent in young sheep, strictly not a disease but a nutritional deficiency and remedied by cobalt and other trace minerals being fed or injected in assimiliable form.

Blindness. Periodic Ophthalmia or Moon blindness affecting the eye is not over common now but was troublesome in past years and is likely to be of higher incidence in dry years after much burning; when it may be epidemic through individual flocks. It is usually only temporary but not curable and the casual organism is unknown. But this is not so serious as wool blindness, hardly a disease, and most prevalent in Corredales. The remedy is eye locking and it is capable of being bred out by selection.

Yonge at Fenton Station has done so?

Other visual defects in sheep here are cataract and sometimes myopia with or without astigmatism.

I have seen sheep here with Facial Eczema, actinomycosis, which is bone enlargement generally about the head caused by a universally present soil bacteria; and stomach cramps and digestive disorders, more prevalent in the late winter and early spring due to sheep being then forced to eat grass which they eschewed earlier in the year, or round settlements in pedigree rams and pets by having in that season to nibble closer to the roots and with mud at a maximum the dirt intake is the cause.

Mixed with other debilitating factors such as damp and chill a high incidence of these complaints is always co-incident with the thaw of snow.

A higher plane of nutrition would mitigate this.

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Septicemia from cuts is not over common but does occur especially in fat animals including supplementary-fed imported rams to which it is a great danger.

Is this generally practiced?

Otherwise, pneumonia is a much greater killer after shearing is irremediable in practice, but in theory would yield to treatment with sulphur drugs. More cover, covered tally pens and care such as putting "clippies" back in the shed overnight on bad and wild nights reduce the incidence which is generally the result of a chill.

Caseous Lymph adenitis could be reduced by better hygiene in lamb-marking and dealing with shear cuts. It cannot be cured and is of little consequence until export of the infected carcass to the United Kingdom is desired.

Then there is also some post partum paralysis which whilst itself in most cases is only temporary in effect due to the compressing or bruising of an anterior nerve or nerves in the act of parturition and so hardly to be (classed as a disease; is never the less serious here as it (renders both ewe and lamb very vulnerable to bird attack.

This report on disease does not read as well as I would like it and to add interest I attach a paper on Australian Field Research which form of Experiment I had thought lent itself to investigation here in respect of some of these diseases.

It is in fact a menace?

3. The Dipping is usually carried out well, dip is mixed rather over strength and most farmers are conscientious in the work. What I am dissatisfied with is the low standard of gathering and the percentage of sheep left behind or missed in these gathers with less and less back gathering being done. (Labour shortage is the cause). Thus undipped sheep left in, I would venture so bold as to say all camps nullifies the care in dipping. Furthermore the dips on many small Islands are poor and on outer islands such as the Jasons no dipping is done at all but ticks do not become epidemic on the sheep there as long as they remain over fat.

4. Yes I have read Mr. Norris' very interesting book and think it a most commendable text book for its simplicity in language and style and the ease of understanding the Author's thoughts.

X Y.E.

A.O.'s paper is very interesting. I hesitate to add anything on a subject in which I am so unqualified. Clearly shortage of labour is at the root of most of the troubles. Also, though I know it is a remark easily and lightly made, the quality of the individual farm labourer's work is not what it was. This is true not only of farm labourers.

2. There is another point which I put with even greater hesitancy. Having regard to the pasture on the average farm here, that farm can only support a certain number of sheep. The number might differ according as to whether the farmer is working on a wool economy or a wool and meat economy. Is it true that if a farmer consistently achieved lamb marking figures of over 100% he would find his farm overstocked with sheep? Possibly this is true on a wool economy, though it could not be, I imagine, on a wool and meat economy. If it is true, the incentive to guard sheep in the different stages of their lives from all the ills and accidents which A.O. has noted, plus the others like drowning in ditches, is less insistent. In such circumstances losses which might otherwise be avoided or minimised are regrettable but not ruinous to the farmer. Only if they would be ruinous to him would he take steps to obviate or minimise them, since those steps are going to cost quite a lot of money, however desirable they may be in theory.

X

16.11.50.

One of the long-term benefits of the Frazer

will be the impetus it will give to closer smaller paddocks, rotational grazing etc shepherding, but this in turn will demand

more bodies. I have no doubt that as

the present wool bubble has burst we shall

turn over to a dual (meat/wool) economy.

The present large loss between marking and dipping (about 11%) is much too high.

X above is all too true and you will find that Tom Norris in his paper on The Falklands says much the same; it has been easy to ignore these losses and concern oneself only with getting an adequate return with the minimum of expenditure and effort and with this - having no outlet for 'wells' the farmer has been content.

MC 16/xi

To see in return

17/11

PA. H.C.S. Seen Thank you John P. Blair 20/XI/50