NAT/SEA/4 # 16

S. O.

0795

0795

(Formerly)

SUBJECT :

SEA LION And SEA ELEPHANT EXPERIMENTS

CONNECTED FILES.

NUMBER AND YEAR.	
0101	Whaling in the Falklands & S. Georgia - Application by Messrs. Salvesen's for Leases.
~~0497~~x	

EXTRACT FROM TELEGRAM FROM HON COL. SEC. TO MAGISTRATE S.GEORGIA

No. 180 of 17.12.47.

(Original filed in 0101 - Whaling and F.Is. & S.G. by Salvesen's

.....

5. Sea Elephants. Governor agrees to issue special permit to take 20 bulls for experimental purposes and report on results to Government as soon as completed through Magistrate South Georgia.

.....

TELEGRAMS
"SALVESEN, TELEX," LEITH.
AS AUTHORISED BY GOVT. OCT. 1939

ESTABLISHED 1846.

TELEPHONE
LEITH, 35211 (12 LINES)

IN REPLY REFER TO
CGM/EWC.

CHR. SALVESEN & CO.

H. K. SALVESEN
T. H. HUMPHREYS
C. G. MARSHALL, D.F.C.
I. R. S. SALVESEN
HON. R. C. GEDDES
L. M. HARPER GOW, M.B.E.

GLASGOW
94 HOPE STREET, C.2
GRANTON
CUSTOM HOUSE BDGS.

29 BERNARD STREET,
LEITH, 14th April, 1948.

The Colonial Secretary,
Government Offices,
Port Stanley,
FALKLAND ISLANDS.

Sir,

SEA ELEPHANT EXPERIMENTS.

We have to thank you for permission to take twenty Sea Elephants in South Georgia and we give below a short report on the experiments carried out on the twenty elephants taken in~~to~~ Elephant Bay, Husvik Harbour on the 24th/25th March, 194~~7~~8.

Before killing, the large elephants were singled out and driven out close to the water's edge. By placing a toggle through the lower jaw bone and splicing back on to a long rope it was found that they could be comparatively easily hauled to the Catcher standing off shore, a distance of some 200/250 yards. Several of the elephants were gutted on the beach and it was found that in spite of this they floated when in the water. Towing experiments, however, lead us to the conclusion that it would not be practicable to tow for any distance in a moderate or heavy sea.

The blubber, including the skin, was stripped on the flensing plan, thirty-six barrels of blubber oil being obtained, an average of 1.8 per elephant.

The carcases produced nine barrels of oil, an average of .45 barrel per elephant. An endeavour was made to strip the meat from the bones but the length of time taken would not make this a practicable proposition. The residues from the boilers, blubber, meat and bone were dried and milled and produced 1625 kilos of meat and bone meal, giving the following analysis:-

Moisture	4.7
Oil	18.6
Protein	58.8
Tri-Calcium Phosphate	17.1

Three elephants were skinned and the skins have been salted.

It/

(See overleaf)

The Colonial Secretary,
Port Stanley, F.I.

14th April, 1948.

/ It is hoped to have these cured and tanned with a view to having their commercial value as leather assessed.

The raw livers have also been salted and it is hoped to have these processed to obtain what we hope will be a liver oil with a fairly high Vitamin A content.

We enclose, for your information, a complete list of weights of the various parts of the Sea Elephants and also Analysis of these parts.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

Encs:

4

WEIGHTS OF PARTS OF SEA ELEPHANT.

Length: 13' 4".

Total Weight: 4357 lbs.

Part.	Lbs.	Percentage of Total.
Skin	265	6.10
Blubber	1469	33.70
Meat	923	21.19
Bone	688	15.79
Flipper fore	174	3.98
" hind	70	1.61
Head	114	2.62
Heart	20	.46
Liver	110	2.53
Spleen	25	.58
Lungs	90	2.06
Kidneys	14	.32
Stomach	72	1.65
Intestines	90	2.06
Tongue	15	.35
Blood (Calculated)	218	5.00
	4357	100.00

The fore flippers include shoulder blade.
Stomach and intestines were quite empty.

ANALYSES OF PARTS OF SEA ELEPHANT.

Part.	Blubber.	Meat.	Bone.	Stomach.	Intestines.
Moisture	13.0%	71.2%	43.2%	79.8%	80.1%
Oil	84.0%	2.1%	19.5%	0.2%	0.4%
Solids	3.0%	26.7%	37.3%	20.0%	19.0%

Part.	Lungs.	Heart.	Kidneys.	Tongue.	Liver.
Moisture	80.3%	73.8%	77.8%	60.5%	72.0%
Oil	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	21.8%	1.4%
Solids	19.0%	25.7%	21.9%	17.7%	26.6%

6

G.N.

1–5 f. . commence pa

12/7

To Hon. Col. Sec. 13-vii-48

Messrs Salvesen's communications are of great interest.

Since the carcasses contain practically half a barrel of oil each it is clear that they should be used, especially when it is remembered that March bulls, although killable are not the best; one would expect a higher production later in the winter. In addition the meal produced, 1625 kg, equals 203 kg/ for each of the eight seals, or 446·6 lbs.

2 ways/

In the absence of dates as to cost one must conclude that the whole carcass ought to be used.

? what about jogging Pesca.

J.S.A.G.N.

6

Government Naturalist Department,
Stanley, Falkland Islands.
31st July, 1948.

P.R.H.Tilbury, Esq.,
Waverley House,
Stanley.

8 Your reference. Letter of the 31st July, 1948.

I am to inform you that His Honour the Deputy-Governor has assented to your killing two adult male sea lions for experimental purposes.

J.E.D. Davidson

Government Naturalist.

Reference is to a telephone conversation with H.E. JED

7 2 copys. Licence attd. for signature please.

Stanley.

31st July, 1948.

Mr. P. H. H. Tilbury is hereby licensed to kill two adult male sea lions for experimental purposes without fee.

C. B. Chambers

Governor's Deputy.

Original sent to Mr. Tilbury on 3. 8. 48

31st. July. 1948.

Dr. J. V. Hamilton.
Government Surgeon,
Port Stanley.

Application for permit to take seal.

Sir,

Further to our conversation on the 7th. of this month, I now beg to request that I be granted permission to take not more than two adult male sealions for the purpose of [illegible] specimens of their skin in the U.K., and also in order to ascertain whether any market can be found for the skin.

Yours faithfully,

P. F. V. Gilbury.

P. F. V. Gilbury.

31-VII-48

The Deputy Governor assented by telephone to the permit being granted

J. H. G.

A.

note confirmation pl.
original of (4) has been sent
to Library

for C.S.
4.8.48

H.S.

Noted.

2/. As (4) is of scientific interest may I send a copy to "Nature" for publication.

J.H.R.
D.N.
5-viii-48

31-VIII-48
[illegible] Library [illegible]

C.S.O. No.....

Inside Minute Paper.

Sheet No. 10

G.N.

Are we entitled to do so & shd. we ask Salomons first?

S.S

H.C.S.

What was in my mind.
I should think we would be technically but it seems rather rude to ignore S.
∴ I propose to proceed by addressing them ~~as with~~ and asking them to give their consent direct to my "agent"
i.e. F.C. Fraser, British Museum N.H.
and telling him to hold on till he gets it.

J.E.D. P.N.

G.N.

By all means.

S.S
15/8

H.C.S.

Thank you.
2. Copies of MS and letters as (11) (12) and (13).
3. Sugd "what" is a relative, please.

J.E.D.
P.N.
12-viii-48

Naturalist Department,
Stanley, Falkland Islands.
11th August, 1948.

My Dear James,

I enclose a note intended for " Nature " but it cannot be sent until you have a letter of consent from Chr. Salvesen, 29 Bernard Street, Leith, as the figures are theirs. Would you mind holding on to the m.s. until then? It might be a good idea to jog them if they do not write fairly soon. ? Do you mind.

Yours sincerely,

To
Dr. F. C. Fraser.

Naturalist Department,
Stanley, Falkland Islands.
11th August, 1948.

Messrs Christian Salvesen & Co.,
29 Bernard Street,
Leith.

Dear Sirs,

The figures relating to your Elephant Seal experiment in South Georgia are of such scientific interest that I am very desirous of publishing them.

I would therefore be very grateful for your kind permission to do so.

If you are willing to assent I would be indebted if you would send a note to that effect to Dr. F.C.Fraser, British Museum, (Natural History) Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7. who will then send a copy of the typescript which he will have, to "Nature" which is as you know a most reputable periodical.

Captain H.M.Salvesen and Mr. C.C.Marshall will I hope remember various agreeable meetings here.

I doubt it !!

With sincere thanks in anticipation of your assent,

I am,
Yours faithfully,

J Ham

(Dr. J.E.Hamilton,)
Government Naturalist,
Falkland Islands.

Weight etc. of Elephant Seal.

There were recently killed in South Georgia twenty Elephant seals for special examination as to production of oil and meat and bone meal. By the courtesy of Messrs Christian Salvesen and Co. of Leith I am able to publish the following figures relating to the experiment.

Of special interest was the weighing of an entire animal in pieces. The total weight was 4357 lbs. and the blood, much of which would be lost, was estimated at 218 lbs. almost exactly 5%.

Length: 13 ' 4 '' . presumably nose to tail.

	lbs.	Percentage of Total.
Skin	265	6.10
Blubber	1469	33.70
Meat	923	21.19
Bone	688	15.79
Flipper fore	174	3.98
" hind	70	1.61
Head	114	2.62
Heart	20	.46
Liver	110	2.53
Spleen	25	.58
Lungs	90	2.06
Kidneys	14	.32
Stomach	72	1.65
Intestines	90	2.06
Tongue	15	.35
Blood (Calculated)	218	5.00
	4357	100.00

The fore flippers include shoulder blade.
Stomach and intestines were quite empty.

Composition of tissues.

	Blubber.	Meat.	Bone.	Stomach.	Intestines
Moisture	13.0%	71.2%	43.2%	79.8%	80.1%
Oil	84.0%	2.1%	19.5%	0.2%	0.4%
Solids	3.0%	26.7%	37.3%	20.0%	19.0%

	Lungs.	Heart.	Kidneys.	Tongue.	Liver.
Moisture	80.3%	73.8%	77.8%	60.5%	72.0%
Oil	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	21.8%	1.4%
Solids	19.0%	25.7%	21.9%	17.7%	26.6%

The 20 animals produced averages of 1.8 barrels of oil from the blubber and .45 barrels from the carcases 2.25 or 90 gallons (1 barrel = 40 gallons) per seal.

Meat and bone meal from the residues amounted to 1625 kg.

Analysis of this product gave the following result

Moisture	4.7%
Oil	18.6%
Protein	58.8%
Tri-calcium Phosphate	17.1%
	99.2

J.E. HAMILTON
FALKLAND ISLANDS
PAL 10/18

14

TELEGRAMS
"SALVESEN, TELEX," LEITH.

ESTABLISHED 1846

TELEPHONE
LEITH 35211 (12 LINES)

CHR. SALVESEN & CO.

H. K. SALVESEN I. R. S. SALVESEN
T. H. HUMPHREYS HON. R. C. GEDDES
C. G. MARSHALL D.F.C. L. M. HARPER GOW M.B.E.

GLASGOW
94 HOPE STREET, C. 2.
GRANTON
CUSTOM HOUSE BDGS.

29 BERNARD STREET,
LEITH,

Ref: CGM/JSS.

0796.

30th January, 1950.

The Colonial Secretary,
Government Offices,
Stanley,
Falkland Islands.

Sir,

In 1947 you were good enough to give us permission to experiment with a number of sea elephants at Leith Harbour and we promised to let you have the complete results of any experiments we did with these. We have already given you the results of the oil extraction and meat meal products but only recently have we had the results of the experiments undertaken on our behalf by Messrs. David Callender & Sons Ltd., Bonnington Tannery, Leith, on the processing of the sea elephant hides. We have pleasure in enclosing a copy of their remarks, which may be of some interest and some value to you.

We are, Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

Chr Salvesen & Co

Encl:

A.C.S.
Ack. & express our thanks
File & p.v.

16 FEB 1950

reply at 17.
Reply at 31

Copy

DAVID CALLENDER & SONS LTD.,
Bonnington Tannery,
Leith, Edinburgh, 6.

27th January, 1950.

Messrs. Chr. Salvesen & Co.,
Leith.

Dear Sirs,

Attention of Mr. Marshall.

We confirm our conversation today regarding the Sea Elephant Hides of which you sent us a parcel some time ago to process.

We have completed the tannage of these, but have not yet tested the market either for selling or for their use. But we have gone far enough to say that these will be of some economic value as a substitute for Walrus hides, of which so few are obtainable at present.

The essential feature of Walrus is that it should be a stout hide. It must be at least ¼" thick after tanning. So far as we can see it is only the very stoutest of the Elephant that will give this-probably only the largest of the Bulls.

They probably weigh at least 60lbs.

The pieces you sent us were very small. Area is another essential feature. Would it be possible to remove the hide by making two cuts only from head to tail, one along the middle of the back, the other along the middle of the belly, making two sides of equal area?

The value of the hide is considerably impaired if there are cuts on the flesh side caused by the flaying knives.

And of course the hides must be sufficiently well salted to avoid any putrefaction before they reach this country.

If these stipulations can be carried out we consider/

p.t.o.

0795.

17

21st February, 50.

Gentlemen,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of and to thank you for your letter 0[illegible]/[illegible] of the 30th of January, 1950, on the subject of experiments which you have carried out with sea elephant hides.

14

2. The remarks of Messrs. David Callender and Sons, Ltd., are most interesting.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

Colonial Secretary.

Chr. Salveson & Co.,
29, Bernard Street,
Leith,
SCOTLAND.

WH.

A.O. to see. 22/2. H.C.S. Most Interesting. Seen Thank you Look P. Colonial 22/II/50 S.O.

18

F.

1/6. Hull be interested in 12-16

[illegible] 22/2/50

This information may be 'precis'd and, without disclosing the source, sent to (a) Pesca, South Georgia and (b) Tilbury. Let me see before issue pl.

They hides would be subject to tax in the same way as similar F.I. products.

MC. 25/ii-50

J.E. Précis & draft at com stge.

15 MAR 1950

Issue. (it has taken rather a long time). MC. 15/iii

No. 0795

19

Colonial Secretary's Office,
STANLEY.
16th March, 1950.

Sir,

I am directed by the Governor to inform you that with the approval of this Government, samples of sea elephant hides were sent to the United Kingdom for processing, and I attach for your information a precis of a report which has been received on the experiment.

20

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) Michael R. Rayner

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Manager,
Compania Argentina de Pesca,
SOUTH GEROGIA

Agent,
South Atlantic Sealing Company,
STANLEY.

VP

PROCESSING OF SEA ELEPHANT HIDES

Experiments recently carried out in the United Kingdom in the processing of sea elephant hides have furnished the information that they are of economic value as a substitute for walrus hides which are at present very scarce.

The Tanners point out that the essential feature of a walrus hide is that it should be at least 7/8" thick after tanning. So far as can be seen it is only the very stoutest of the elephants that will give a hide of this thickness, probably only the largest of the bulls.

The samples on which the experiments were carried out were very scarce. It is emphasised that area is another essential feature, and the Tanners suggest that the hide be removed by making two cuts only, one from head to tail along the middle of the back and the other along the middle of the belly, making two sides of equal area.

It is also pointed out that the value of the hide is considerably reduced if there are cuts on the under side caused by flaying knives.

Preservation of the hides during shipment to the United Kingdom is a further consideration; they must be sufficiently well salted to avoid putrefaction.

Provided the above stipulations are carried out the Tanners observe that the hides should be worth about 6d. per lb. salted weight.

Elephant hide is about ~~250~~ 2 cwt – say 200, (a 210 salted). 17/3/50
i.e. about £5 per skin

1·8 barrels blubber oil
·45 " carcass oil } say 2 barrels average @ £90 per ton = £30
80 kilos meat and bone meal ?

Or, about, £40 per elephant x 1000 = £40,000 per season

21

88444/50

COLONIAL OFFICE,
THE CHURCH HOUSE,
GREAT SMITH STREET,
WESTMINSTER,
S.W. 1.

J.E. May wish to see this from Carter

28th February, 1950

20 MAR 1950

Soon – we had a letter from ? Solomon
Dear Raymer, Have written to both Tilbury & Peca? MC.

You will doubtless have read the minutes of the last meeting of the Scientific Committee held on the 24th January, copies of which were forwarded to you under cover of the Secretary of State's printed despatch No. 7 of the 14th February.

In the course of the meeting the new Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute, Dr. Bertram stressed that the time had now come to explore the commercial possibilities of seals in the Dependencies. The discussion is recorded under item 3 (IV), and I attach a copy of the relevant extract of the minutes amended in the light of recent comments from members.

24

I am forwarding, for your consideration, a copy of a letter which I recently received from Roberts, who has been carrying out an enquiry on his own into the commercial prospects of the elephant seal. There is a United Kingdom firm, Messrs. Whitmore (Eden Bridge) Limited who are definitely interested and Mr. Whitmore told him that he would very much like to have a bulk sample. In fact, he would like a sample of some 5-6 hides as soon as possible, and another bulk sample of some 50 hides in the period August to early October, when the skins are in their best condition.

26

See 32 Some

M.R. RAYMER, ESQ.,
COLONIAL SECRETARIAT,
PORT STANLEY,
FALKLAND ISLANDS.

22

Some time ago, before I knew that this subject was going to be discussed by the scientists, I received a call from somebody in the Board of Trade, who told me that there was a United Kingdom firm interested in acquiring elephant seal skins. I advised the caller to apply to the Colonial Development Corporation. In my ignorance I supposed that it would be possible for the C.D.C. to obtain the necessary amount of elephant seal skins through Tilbury. The Committee say that, if this industry develops, the C.D.C. with their concession in the Colony will not find enough skins of this type, and that South Georgia is the proper place to go for them. I understand, however, that the C.D.C. have asked Tilbury in the Falklands to send home 50 skins for initial experimental purposes from their own base in the Falklands. Whether they can produce them is another matter.

Quite.

I do not know how far Government wishes to come in on this business; I imagine that your interest would be confined to ensuring that, if the industry develops, Government reap some form of return, presumably by way of an export tax, on the skins. If the C.D.C. produce the skins then the revenue would accrue to the Colony; whereas, if the Compagnia/Argentina Da Pesca produce the skins, the Dependencies, would be the gainer.

When you have time I should be grateful if you could drop me a line as to how this little project is progressing. The suggestion by the Committee was not, of course, strictly within their terms of reference, but the idea was certainly a good one and one which we hope will be pursued if there is anything in it.

Under

23

Under Item 3 (IV) (b) Bertram emphasised the need for further investigations into the Crabeater and Weddell seals. Again, if you have time, I should be grateful to have your views on this suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

C. A. Parker.

Extract from Draft Minutes of the 9th F.I.D.S.C. Meeting held on 24th January, 1950.

(iv) Seal investigations

The Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute suggested that the time was now ripe to investigate in detail the commercial possibilities of the seals of the Dependencies.

(a) Elephant seals.

Thanks to the conservation which had been the object of Colonial Office policy for over 40 years at South Georgia the elephant seals had made a remarkable recovery from past slaughter, and had for long been killed on a rational scale for their blubber. Quite apart from elephant seal oil, Dr. Roberts stressed there were certain distinct commercial possibilities in this species. The skin could be used as a substitute for walrus leather for certain industrial purposes, such as the polishing of iron and steel castings, steelware and precious metals, etc. Owing to the decrease in number and the policy of stock preservation enforced by the Canadian Government walrus skins were becoming difficult to obtain and there was an opening for sea elephant skins. A firm called Messrs. Whitmore (Eden Bridge) Limited wished to secure 50 skins as a trial sample. The prospects of splitting elephant seal skins for the upholstry trade had also been investigated, but had proved hopeless for this purpose.

The Secretary stated that recently before he knew of this proposal he had received an enquiry from the Board of Trade as to how samples of seal skins could be procured for an interested firm in this country. He had advised that the firm in question should contact the C.D.C. who had just established a sealing industry for sea lions in West Falkland. It was pointed out that there were great numbers of elephant seals in S. Georgia and practically none in the Falklands, and the C.D.C. would be unable to obtain the right species in the Falklands. The Compania Argentina da Pesca had a sole concession for elephant seals in S. Georgia and were more likely to be able to help in the matter, though of course there might be disadvantages in using a private firm.

It was felt that a trial shipment of 50 wet salted skins might be undertaken in the first instance. There might be advantages in having Government selling the skins to the firm rather than allowing a private firm to acquire the skins in the first instance. Members were told that the Colonial Office was grateful for this suggestion. The whole proposal and the best method of tackling the problem would be considered carefully by the Colonial Office in consultation with the Governor.

It was mentioned that Mr. Laws' work on the biology of elephant seals, if anything materialized from these commercial possibilities, would become even more important.

Why? Pesca et al have gone along quite happily without these aids!

(b)

(b) Crabeater and Weddell seals.

Dr. Bertram said that apart from the elephant seal, the only two seals of importance were the Crabeater and the Weddell. The former was probably the most abundant seal in the world, but little was known in detail about it. Every opportunity should be taken of further investigation, and advantage might be taken of the aeroplanes in the Dependencies to make flights over the pack ice at the appropriate season namely early in December in the hope of finding large breeding congregations. The "John Biscoe" would not be available this season for that purpose and it was now too late for the use of an aeroplane, as the time for breeding congregations was now past. It might, however, be possible to use the aeroplane if only for ice reconnaissance and to gather any likely information on the movements of the seals.

The Weddell Seal probably could more or less be developed by taking of a suitable number of pups for their skins. The population would not stand heavy exploitation, but something worthwhile certainly could be done and Dr. Bertram went on to suggest that a trial sample of 200 pup skins should be tested and tried on the market, since pre-war reports (when samples of the pup Weddell skins were dyed and approved) suggested that there were real possibilities there.

The Committee :-

Recommended that these suggestions for commercial exploitation of seal skins should be followed up by the Colonial Office.

Research Department,

FOREIGN OFFICE,

Princes Street,

S.W.1.

27th January, 1950

P.A. Carter, Esq.,
Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
London S.W.1.

Dear Carter,

I promised to let you have a note about Elephant Seal leather so that you could follow up the remarks I made at the meeting on 24th January.

I have for some time been looking into this question and started with an enquiry of what is being, or has been, done in the past with other species of seals in other parts of the world, especially the walrus in the Arctic.

2. Walrus leather has for centuries been tanned for a number of purposes which have been largely developed because it is the thickest leather of any animal. The evolution of the tannage of Walrus hide for its modern purposes has been the speciality of only three firms in this country. Although tanners in foreign countries have experimented with this leather, none of them have been able to compete successfully with the British product.

3. One of the chief purposes of Walrus leather is to affix it to glazer wheels, some if which have a diameter of as much as seven feet by a width of 14 inches. These wheels, rotating at extremely high speeds, are dressed with carborundum powder, and are used for removing the scale from iron castings. A more mellow tannage is used to give a final polish to iron and steel. In many countries, especially the U.S.A., an even more mellow tannage (and for this purpose the thicker the hide the better) is cut up into small diameter bobs which are attached to highspeed flexible shaft equipment, and are used for polishing silverware and precious metals. A further use for Walrus hide of a hard tannage is in connection with the ginning of cotton.

4. The essential attribute of Walrus leather which has been developed by British tanners is that the fibre of the leather is extremely hard and firm, giving it cutting propensities that are not found to the same degree in any other leather. In recent years the lighter Walrus hides, mainly cubs, have been given a dressing hide tannage. The splits are rolled for insoling (footwear) and the grain (outer side) is dressed for handbags, luggage, men's dress belts, and a variety of other purposes.

5. Walrusses are now getting very rare and they are protected by law in many areas where they were formerly hunted. The supply of hides reaching this country is very small, but a good tanned skin will fetch as much as £500. I understand, moreover, that the whole output now goes to the United States and Canada, thereby gaining dollars. The supply of hides is likely to decrease still more in the future, but already not more than about 40 reach this country annually.

6. I have discussed this matter with two of the three British tanners concerned, and in particular with Mr. Paul Whitmore of Whitmores (Eden Bridge) Ltd., The Grange, Bermondsey, London, S.E.1. He tells me that bull Elephant Seal hides are an excellent substitute for Walrus hide. I have shown him a sample and both he and his Walrus hide agent are very optimistic about its possibilities - in fact they find that Elephant Seal hides were at one time exported in place of Walrus.

7. Mr. Whitmore would like a bulk sample of 50 (not 30 - 40 as I said at the meeting) wet-salted hides with the blubber flayed off, and I understand that he would be willing to pay the necessary expenses of such a trial. On 6th January he wrote to Mr. T. H. Galletly of the Board of Trade (Leather Control), 4th Floor, Empire House, St. Martin's-le-Grand, E.C.1. asking for his help. His letter mentions the Falkland Islands (when he should in fact have said South Georgia). I hope this ties up with the Board of Trade enquiry which you mentioned.

8. There is in South Georgia a herd of more than 100,000 Elephant Seals, which the Cia. Argentina de Pesca holds a licence to exploit under the control

of

of the Magistrate. The above estimate of the numbers is a very cautious one; there is evidence that there has been a considerable increase in the past 20 years and there may be three times this number. There are also small herds elsewhere in the Dependencies, but, on the existing information, not enough to warrant exploitation on a paying basis without depleting the stock.

9. You will appreciate that these suggestions tie in with the research work which R. M. Laws has been doing at Signy Island and hopes to continue at South Georgia. My enquiries this end have been accelerated by reading his preliminary report on his first year's work at Signy Island, where it is evident that exploitation is not yet possible. The main object of his work is to obtain the information which the Governor would require in deciding the number of animals that could safely be killed annually without depleting the stock, a number which is probably well above the present level. Laws is proposing to bring back with him small samples of hide but I do not think he has contemplated anything like a commercial sample of 50 hides. These, in any event, could not be obtained at Signy Island. I think, therefore, that if you feel able to follow up these ideas it will be essential to obtain them at South Georgia.

Laws says that Signy is not capable of commercial exploitation.

10. Elephant Seals come ashore there in late August or early September to breed. Pupping is spread over a period between the last week in August and early October, and that is the best time to kill them. The harems break up in December and the seals go to sea. They return to moult in January and February, remaining ashore in large numbers for 6 to 8 weeks. It would therefore be possible to obtain some in the immediate future since most of the bulls remain ashore until the end of April when they go to sea again (the cows are useless for leather). We do not yet know whether a hide collected in this moulting season will be satisfactory. My personal suggestion is that the Governor should be asked to arrange for not more than 5 hides to be collected during the moulting season, and that the main trial sample should be taken at the beginning of the breeding season, when the Magistrate should have no difficulty in arranging it.

11. Should you wish to get in touch with Mr. Whitmore, his telephone number is Bermondsey 1914-15.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) E. B. Roberts.

28

Agricultural Officer

From p. 21. for o. please.

28/3/50.

H.C.S.

1/ There are plenty of seals (Elephant) in the Falklands for these trial shipments & I think this line of business might help to set C.D.C. venture under Tilbury on its feet; in the initial period when they may be hard pressed to make a go of it

2/ As Elephant Hide is only a substitute for Walrus why dont the Scientific Committee discuss the introduction of Walrus into these southern waters.

John P. Clive
D.O. 3/IV/50

0795 (HCS may have file)

TELEPHONE: MAYFAIR 7494 TELEGRAMS: VELOP, PICCY, LONDON CODE: BENTLEY'S SECOND

29

COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

(SOUTH ATLANTIC SEALING COMPANY LIMITED.).
33 DOVER STREET
LONDON, W.1

Rcd 15/4/50.

Albemarle,
29/3/50.

Sir,

19

We are in receipt of your letter dated 16th March 1950 in which you inform us that Sea-Elephant hides have recently been sent to U.K. for sample tanning, and thank you for the enclosed precis of the report on the result of the experiment, which we have read with interest.

For some time past inquiries have reached us from various tanners in the U.K. in which they ask for supplies of these and other hides - the attraction being, of course, Sterling payment - and insofar as technical considerations are concerned there is little to impede a supply from this colony. However, if these hides are dealt with as greensalted hides they require 28%-30% of their green weight in salt if they are to be adequately preserved. Now at the present time, and with our present arrangements, salt costs us £20-10/- per ton, and the freight to the U.K. is around £23 per ton, and at the price offered there is little left to cover the cost of preparing the hides for shipment, let alone profit.

The admittedly difficult problem of dealing with these and other hides is nevertheless constantly before us, and we shall certainly endevour to ship home suitable hides if means can be found of overcoming the above mentioned difficulties.

Yours faithfully,

P.R.H. Tilbury.

P.R.H. Tilbury.
Managing Director.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary.
Stanley.

Extract from 0497/III (Sealing. Mr. Tilbury)

C.S.

..... He has been experimenting with Kelp and talked of the possibilities of fish meal;

..... He proposes, initially, to produce oil and meal; he will send a parcel of 50 Elephant Hides to the Board of Trade - who have been enquiring - but says that the cost of salt, landed here, is likely to kill any developments in that direction. It is possible that he may be able to get it cheaper from the Turks and Cocos Islands where the Corporation was a salt-producing scheme and in that event there might be something in the hide trade. This failing, he will try to produce gelatine from it and from the connective tissue in the blubber; gelatine flakes having a high commercial value - something in the neighbourhood of £300 per ton! .....

Extracted from 0497/III

(Intld) M.C.
12.4.50

A.O. p.23. Do you know anything about Crabeater or Weddell seals?

5 MAY 1950

H.C.S. These are smaller types than the sea lion but occasional specimens are sometimes seen on the beach or in Falkland waters.

John P. Blair
F.O. 4/V/50

F.I. Ref: 0795

31

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

15th May, 1950.

Dear Carter,

21

Please refer to your letter of the 28th of February, 1950, reference 88444/50, regarding seals. In this connection we have had some correspondence with Salvesens and I attach for your information a copy of their latest letter to us with an enclosure. We sent a summary of this latter to Tilbury and I enclose also a copy of his reply. During the course of an interview with the Governor last month Tilbury repeated his point about the excessive cost of salt and mentioned that if he could not get it cheaper from the Turks and Cocos Islands, where the Colonial Development Corporation has a salt-producing venture, he might perhaps try to produce gelatine from the hides and the connective tissue in the blubber since gelatine flakes have a high commercial value - he quoted a figure in the neighbourhood of £300 per ton.

14 & 15

29.

I have little information at present regarding Crabeater and Weddell seals. I gather that they are smaller than Sea Lions and relatively rare in these waters.

As you surmise, Government's main interest in any ventures of this nature is confined to ensuring that the revenue of the Colony reaps fair benefit. If there is any future in these trades both Tilbury and Pesca are sufficiently keen and astute to profit by it.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) Michael R. Raymer

19/5/50.

P.A. Carter, Esq.,
COLONIAL OFFICE.

VP

32.

Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith St.,
S.W.1.

88444/50

12th July, 1950.

Dear Raymer,

31. Thank you for your letter and enclosures of the 15th of May about possible commercial development of the seal skin trade.

21 In my letter to you of the 28th of February I mentioned the name of another U.K. firm, Messrs. Whitmore Limited. I wonder if Tilbury was ever approached by them? At the last meeting of the Scientific Committee, one of the members - I forget who, but it was probably Roberts - asked me whether there had been any development in this direction - and I told him I would try to find out. I should be grateful for any information you can give me on this point.

?

they are unfortunate that they breed on the pack. ie ...

Bertram of the Scott Polar Research Institute insists that more should be done to reconnoitre breeding congregations of Crabeater and Weddell seals. He has pointed out to me more than once that they congregate generally about September, and that it is most unlikely that you would acquire any knowledge from observations carried out during the cruise of the "John Biscoe" because she would never be in the area in question at the right time. Hence his reason for pressing for the use of the Auster to reconnoitre suitable localities.

X

I gather from Ken Butler that the Governor has no intention of using the Auster in the Dependencies next year, but I presume it might be possible to use the aircraft in one of

/the

M.R. Raymer, Esq.

Reply at 36.

the succeeding years, in which event something perhaps might be done to satisfy Bertram's curiosity.

I am sorry to bother you in the midst of your multifarious duties, but if you can find time to drop me a line on the two main points in this letter I would be grateful, as we like to be as helpful as we can to these scientists!

Why?

Yours sincerely,

P. A. Carter

(P. A.Carter)

J.E.

ff 32-33. The Scientific Committee is interested in Graham's & Weddell seals in the Dependencies. This suggestion that we should investigate them by plane seems a bit far fetched, but perhaps we could keep them happy by saying that FIDS bases personnel have been instructed to keep a look-out

As regards "elephant" hides, Tilbury is fully briefed; exploitation depends not only on freight but also the price of salt for preserving. Present indications are that he will be able to obtain the latter at a figure which will leave a sufficient margin to justify development of this ~~trade~~ by-product and he is arranging to send specimen parcels (a) to the Board of Trade (b) to commercial firms.

X. Then Bertram must be talking through his hat; from whence does he propose that the Hunter should operate? And if the seals congregate in September when the seas are not navigable how if they do congregate are they to be

35

exploited? Tell him we keep a sharp look-out!!

Please reply accordingly. "The Governor to whom I have referred your letter, directs me to say . . . . . " I do wish these Committee chums would stop trying to teach Grandma how to suck eggs.

MC 20/VIII

F.I. Ref:0795

C.O. Ref: 88444/50

36.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,

STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

22nd August, 1950.

Dear Carter,

32.

The Governor, to whom I have shown your letter of 12th July, 1950 , about the possible commercial development of the trade in seal skins, directs me to say that Tilbury is fully briefed as regards "elephant" hides. Exploitation depends not only on freight but on the price of salt for processing. Present indications are that he will be able to obtain the latter at a figure which will leave a sufficient margin to justify development of this by-product to his main undertaking and he is arranging to send specimen parcels to (a) the Board of Trade, and (b) commercial firms. I will ensure that he has the address of Messrs. Whitmore, Limited.

With regard to the Crabeater and Weddell seals, as I have already said, they are rare in Colony waters. If the learned Doctor (Bertram) means that they congregate generally about September in the waters of the Dependencies, he should be aware that by far the greater part of those waters are not navigable at that time of the year, which makes it difficult to see how they are to be observed and, when observed, exploited. The range of the Auster is distinctly limited. Where does Dr. Bertram propose that it should be operated from? Ships can't go into those waters as early as September and there is no land near enough for the Auster to operate from, (except from Deception, and we would not propose to keep a 'plane and crew down there just for that purpose). All that we can say is that the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey will keep a look out for the creatures as they (F.I.D.S.) go about their lawful business.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) Michael A. Rayner

P.A. Carter, Esq.,
COLONIAL OFFICE.

VP

0795

37

28th August, 50.

Sir,

17. I am directed to refer to my letter No. 0795 of the 16th of March, 1950, on the subject of sea elephant hides, and to say that the Colonial Office have advised that a firm called Messrs. Whitmore, (Eden Bridge) Limited, the Grange, Bermondsey, LONDON, S.E. 1, are interested and would appreciate a bulk sample of the hides. I have promised the Colonial Office that I would bring the name of this firm to your notice, though it may well be that they are already known to you.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) Michael R. Rayner

Reply at 38

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Mr. Tilbury,
South Atlantic Sealing Company, Limited,
STANLEY.

VP

SOUTH ATLANTIC SEALING COMPANY LIMITED,
STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

38

Albemarle,
2/10/50.

The Hon.The Colonial Secretary,
Stanley,
Falkland Islands.

Sir,

37

I have for acknowledgment your letter No.0795 dated 28th.August 1950 in which you say that Messrs.Whitmore Ltd. are interested in receiving a sample parcel of Sea-Elephant hides.

It is to be hoped that we shall be ready to commence taking sea-elephants towards the end of this month,and an early opportunity will be taken to forward these skins.

A sample parcel of Sealion hides will be despatched to C.D.C. selling agents this month.

Yours faithfully,

P.R.H.Tilbury,
Managing Director,
S.A.S.Co.Ltd.

file.

9 OCT 1950

PA

I gather he is sending his hides to CDC for disposal – a firm named Carter to whom he sent a parcel of

T.E.
39

Sea Lion skins last year anticipated being able to dispose (abroad) of as many as he can supply for sole leathers & other industrial purposes, at about 2/3d per lb. minimum. Elephants should do even better and Tilbury is thinking in terms of 5/- per lb. ; with the average weight at 200 lbs this becomes highly profitable i.e. £50 a hide.

K.I.V. Looks as if we ought to raise the duty to 5% ad valorem? Issue S/T at once.

MC 15/iii

F.L. Ref: 0795.

40

SAVING TELEGRAM.

From: The Governor of the Falkland Islands.

To: The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Date: 19th March, 1931.

No. 6A saving.

36 Mayner's confidential letter of 22nd August to Carter. Seal China.

From recent conversation with Tilbury I understand that firm of some of Carter to whom he sent parcel of Sea Lion skins have advised that they can dispose of any quantity (abroad) at minimum 2 shillings 3 pence per lb. Prospects for Elephant skins even better and understand him to be thinking in terms five shillings per lb. at which figure trade would be highly profitable elephant skins averaging 200 lb.

2. Would be grateful any light you can give me on present market trends.

3. Pursuit of Cumberbatch and Reddell seal proposals to which I have given careful consideration is in my view quite pointless.

GOVERNOR.

Reply at 44

Ldn.

41

vi

Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

9 February, 1951.

My reference: 88444/50.
Your reference: 0795.

My dear Raymer,

36 I am afraid I have taken some time in replying to your letter of the 22nd August about the possible commercial development of the trade in seal skins. The gist of your remarks both in the letter under reference and your former letter of the 15th May, 1950, was duly passed to the Committee.

31

If anything does transpire from the commercial exploitation of sea elephant hides, I hope you will let us know, as the experiment is not without interest.

We have further news on this matter. pp early pl.
Mec

Yours sincerely,

P A Carter

(P.A. Carter)

M.R. RAYMER, ESQ.

42

Y.E.

's minute p.41. Page 40 covers this?

20/3/51.

That is

MC. 21/III

H.C.S.

H.E.'s minute at 88-89. We are attending to the estate tax angle in other papers, I think.

21/3/51.

H.C.S.

Yes, Sir, please see pps attached (0466)

H.C.S. 22/3/51

11/4/51

88444/51

43

Saving.

075

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the Officer Administering the Government of FALKLANDS (COLONY)

Date 8 May, 1951.

No. 39 **Saving.**

40

Your savingram No. 60A Colony.

Seal skins.

I understand that the sample skins referred to in your savingram are still on their way to the United Kingdom. When they arrive, a number of tanners have agreed to try them out, but it will be some months before the processing is complete and the value of the hides assessed.

2. The Colonial Products Advisory Bureau (Plant and Animal) are making enquiries, but it will take time to get a fair picture of the position. Moreover, it is probable that the C.D.C. are making their own enquiries and will obtain much the same information, as the field of investigation is narrow.

SECRET.

9 JUL 1951

COPY

88444/51

0795

44

Saving.

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the Officer Administering the Government of FALKLAND ISLANDS (COLONY)

Date 23 May, 1951.

No. 44 Saving.

43 My savingram No. 39.

Seal skins.

45 Enclosed herewith is a copy of a letter from the Colonial Products Advisory Bureau (Plant and Animal) on the above subject.

2. With reference to the last sentence of Dr. Furlong's letter, I understand that the walrus is circum-arctic. There are no walruses in the Antarctic and there are no tropical walruses. Therefore there are no Colonial dependencies where these animals can be said to exist.

SECRET.

What a word!

COPY

45

COLONIAL PRODUCTS ADVISORY
BUREAU
(PLANT AND ANIMAL)
Imperial Institute,
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7.

Ref. L.871/3
Your Ref: -

9th May, 1951.

Dear Greig,

In my minute on your file concerning elephant seal hides from the Falkland Islands, No. 88444, I promised to collect some information in response to the Governor's request concerning the market trend of this material.

There are two firms in the United Kingdom who would be interested in elephant hides; these are Whitmore's of Bermondsey and Callenders of Leith, who are apparently the only two firms tanning walrus hides. The elephant hides, if found suitable as substitute material for walrus hides, would command a good price but they must be really heavy in substance.

I had a conversation with Mr. Whitmore, and the position is obviously as follows. Nobody is prepared at the present moment to say whether there will be a market at all for elephant seal hides, or what their value will be until tanning trials have been carried out with them. It is a new material and the experimental stage is only just beginning. Consequently, there is no question of ascertaining "market trend".

If the elephant hides cannot be used in

/place

R.C.H. Greig, Esq.,
Colonial Office,
Sanctuary Buildings,
Gt. Smith Street, S.W.1.

place of walrus hides, then one might consider using them for other leather purposes, but they would secure in that case nothing like the high price of a walrus hide. I cannot get a figure for walrus hides, but it is probably well above 5s. a lb.

I have also had a conversation with C.D.C. and have learnt that the trial consignment of elephant hides is now on its way to this country. They have offered to keep me informed of the results of tannery trails, and, generally, with respect to the marketing of elephant seal hides. C.D.C. also informed me that one lot of sea lion skins had already been subjected to tanning trials in this country, but they had proved too light in substance to replace walrus hides, and it looks as though they will not be of any use for the purposes for which walrus leather is required.

Mr. Whitmore told me that it took 2 years to convert walrus hide into leather. This one can easily imagine, as it is a thick hide, and the properties required in the leather would necessitate slow and complete tanning. It therefore looks as though this experimental stage with elephant seal hides will be a long one. Whitmore raised the question as to whether it was possible to find new sources of supply of walrus hides. They are very scarce, small quantities coming from Norway, while Canada is a possible source known to him. He states that there is a large unsatisfied demand for walrus leather in America, all of our production being sold to that country. I wonder it if would be a good thing to ask your Fisheries Adviser for his views on the possibilities of supplying walrus hides from some source or other within our territories.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) J.R. Furlong.

FALKLAND ISLANDS

DESPATCH
NO. 32

Date 22 JUN 1951

Transmitted with the compliments of the Secretary of State for the Colonies for

the Governor's information. ~~consideration~~. ~~observations~~.

Reference:- Secretary of State's / ~~Governor's~~ ~~Telegram No.~~ ~~Despatch No.~~ Savingram No. 111 of 23.5.51

Date	Nature of Communication
30.5.51	Copy of letter from Colonial Products Advisory Bureau 9 JUL 1951

48

COPY

Colonial Products Advisory Bureau
(Plant and Animal)
Imperial Institute,
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7.

Ref: L.871/3

30th May, 1951.

Dear Greig,

With reference to elephant seal skins from the Falkland Islands you will be interested to hear that the C.D.C. have now brought over a small consignment of 37 hides. I went to see them in the warehouse on Monday, and have arranged for one of the heaviest hides to be sent to the Penketh Tanning Company. You will remember that Roger Withinshaw, the Director of that company, is the Chairman of our Consultative Committee. I had discovered that he was a producer of walrus leather and would be interested in elephant seal hides. I understand that Whitmore's will be chiefly concerned with this small lot that has arrived.

As I do not know anything about seal hides, I cannot express an opinion on the present lot, but it was apparent that they varied considerably in size. Withinshaw, however, will give me his views in due course.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) J.R. Furlong.

R.C.H. Greig, Esq.,
Colonial Office.

Mail from US

FALKLAND ISLANDS

88444/51

DESPATCH
No. 77 Col

0795

Date 19 OCT 1951

50

Transmitted with the compliments of the Secretary of State for the Colonies for

the Governor's ~~consideration~~ information. observations.

Reference:- Secretary of State's ~~Governor's~~ } ~~Telegram No.~~ Despatch No. 32 ~~Savingram No.~~ of 22-6-51

Date	Nature of Communication
1 Oct 51	Copy of a letter from Colonial Products Advisory Bureau 51.
	W.H. 15/11/51

64/1/849 3m 11/50 DL

CC N

Ref.L.871/3
Your Ref.No.88444/51

COLONIAL PRODUCTS ADVISORY
(PLANT AND ANIMAL),
Imperial Institute,
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7

10th October, 1951

Dear Greig,

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd October on the subject of Elephant Seal hides from the Falkland Islands.

The only information which I have concerning the consignment brought over by C.D.C. is that on the 7th September, Wates of C.D.C. rang me up and reported that the trials with these hides were being carried out at Penketh and by Whitmores. He said that so far the tannery reports were not very promising, but that we should have to wait until the tanning had been completed, which would require some months yet. I gather that the hides are not proving very comparable with walrus hide, for which they would be a substitute.

Wates also told me that the Sea Lion skins which Whitmores had been trying out had proved unsuitable for mechanical leather. It is possible that they might be split and used for upper leather.

I will endeavour to get full reports on both these materials from C.D.C. in due course.

Yours sincerely,

(sd) J.R.Furlong.

R.C.H. Greig, Esq.,
Colonial Office,
Sanctuary Buildings,
Gt.Smith Street,
S.W.1

FA

PI

COLONIAL PRODUCTS ADVISORY BOARD
(PLANT AND ANIMAL).

Imperial Institute,
South Kensington,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Ref.L.6171/3
Your Ref.No.30444/32

Fourteenth October, 1951

Dear Davis,

Thank you for your letter of the 7 October on the subject of Kingsford Smith's deal hides from the Falkland Islands.

The only information which I have concerning the consignment brought over by C.D.C. is that on the 7th October, Weiss of C.D.C. rang me up and reported that the trials with these hides were being carried out by Penketh and Bilmores. He said that so far the tannery reports were very promising, but that we should have to wait until the tannery had been completed, which would require some months yet. I gather that the hides are not proving very competitive with walrus hide, for which they would be a substitute.

Weiss also told me that the sea lion skins which Bilmores had been trying out had proved unsuitable for mechanical leather. It is possible that they might be split and used for upper leather.

I will endeavour to get full reports on both these materials from C.D.C. in due course.

Yours sincerely,

(sd) J.W. Munford.

R.C.H. Davis, Esq.,
Colonial Office,
Secretary Buildings,
St. Smith Street,
S.W.1

FALKLAND Is.,

DESPATCH
NO. 83 Col

0795

88444/51 53

Date 30th Nov: 1951

Transmitted with the compliments of the Secretary of State for the Colonies for

information.
the Governor's ~~consideration~~.
~~observations~~.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE
18 DEC 1951
FALKLAND ISLANDS

Reference:- Secretary of State's } ~~Telegram No.~~ Despatch No. 77 ~~Savingram No.~~ of 19.10.51
~~Governor's~~ }

Date	Nature of Communication
21. 11. 51	Copies of letter from Colonial Products Advisory Bureau, to Colonial Office

DS 61664/1/849 3m 11/50 DL

COPY

54

COLONIAL PRODUCTS ADVISORY
BUREAU
(PLANT AND ANIMAL),
Imperial Institute Building
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7.

Ref: L.871/3

Your ref: No. 88444/51

21st November, 1951.

Dear Greig,

With further reference to your letter of the 3rd October, and in continuation of my reply of the 10th October on the subject of Falkland Islands Seals, I can now give you some later information on the position.

I have had a telephone conversation with Wates of C.D.C. and ascertained the following:-

(1) Elephant Seal Hides. The information to date is very much against these hides being useable in place of walrus hides, but a decision will have to wait the completion of the present tanning trials, which will be next March.

(2) Sea Lion Skins. The position with regard to these skins is more promising. A small consignment is on its way to this country and has been sold, as a trial commercial lot, to an English tannery. It is thought that the skins can be used for cut-sole leather, if not for that purpose then as slipper soles.

It looks as though the Continent may provide a better market than the United Kingdom for Sea Lion skins. The C.D.C. are continuing their efforts through the firm of Carters (Merchants) Ltd. of Winchester House. C.D.C. find this firm very useful for hides and skins. It is the Carters referred to by the Governor in a former Savingram as a firm that could

/sell

R. C. H. Greig, Esq.,
Colonial Office,
Sanctuary Buildings,
Gt. Smith Street,
S.W.1.

55

sell quantities of these skins.

Wates has promised to keep me informed of the progress made with respect to the above matters.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) J. R. Furlong

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

MED. 123/227/07.

DESPATCH
NO. 121

0775

Date 21 JUN 1952

56

Transmitted with the compliments of the Secretary of State for the Colonies for

information.
the Governor's ~~consideration~~.
~~observations.~~

Reference:- Secretary of State's } ~~Telegram No~~. Despatch No. 77 - 50
~~Governor's~~ } ~~Savingram No~~.
of 19.10.51.

Date	Nature of Communication
27th May. 52	Notice of letter from the Colonial Products Advisory Bureau to the Colonial Office
P.N. on file pl.	P.A.

19782/70.

1.

COLONIAL PRODUCTS ADVISORY BUREAU
(PLANT AND ANIMAL),
Imperial Institute Building,
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7
(Tel: Kensington 2904)

Ref. L.871/3
Your Ref. .....

S618 (2 H531)
Lundy
R.B.
27/5

27th May, 1952.

Dear Greig,

In reply to your letter addressed to Dr. Furlong and dated 19th May, the following information has recently been received concerning Elephant Seal hides.

A copy of letter from Mr. Gates of the Colonial Development Corporation is enclosed herewith. A copy of the report from Northcote, referred to in this letter, is on our file.

As the British Leather Manufacturers' Research Association report is very lengthy, I am only giving you their conclusions:-

"Concluding remarks. The structure of the elephant seal corresponds markedly with that of the walrus hide. The elephant hide of the south not in any way replace the walrus. It is unlikely to tan to full thickness to make a satisfactory leather. Possibly the person which might make a flexible light leather; but in our opinion the grain layer presents for many adverse features and difficulties of application to make the proposition appear to be unattractive to tanners".

Further information will be sent you when available.

Yours sincerely,

W. G. Greig, Esq.,
Colonial Office,
Downing Street,
St. Smith Street, S.W.1.

COPY

COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
33 Hill Street,
LONDON. W.1.

2/82/MAS

23rd May 1952

Colonial Products Advisory Bureau,
Imperial Institute,
London, S.W.7.

Attention Dr Furlong

Dear Sirs,

Referring to Mr. Pearman's telephone call yesterday about our experiments in the tanning of bull elephant seal hides, the writer that day was examining leather produced from hides supplied by us ex our Falkland Islands undertaking, which had been in tan for approximately 12 months. You will remember that it had been hoped that elephant seal would prove an alternative to walrus for the production of heavy leathers, primarily for metal polishing.

We cannot do better than send you copies of the following:-

(a) copy of letter and report from The British Leather Manufacturers' Research Association dated 10th August 1951;

(b)

(b) copy of letter dated 6th May 1952 from Whitmores (Enclosure) Ltd.

The writer's examination of the leather confirms Whitmores' opinion. It is of very poor quality, of little strength and is very badly marked. It is hoped that it will be possible to sell the leather produced but it is quite unsuitable for heavy polishing leathers for which purpose Whitmores bought the hides.

Perhaps you will be kind enough to treat Whitmores' letter in confidence.

Samples from the same shipment were taken by Forbeth Limited in this country and by tanneries in Sweden, Germany, France and Holland. Reports from the continental tanneries are still awaited, but Forbeth experience so far corresponds with Whitmores.

We also have two samples with the National Leathersellers Research College, but reports on these may be delayed as they have not been in work so long.

We feel we must await reports on these remaining samples before deciding there is no future in bull elephant seal hide, as much will depend on the tanning methods and end use for the leather. At the same time, it is definitely established that sea elephant can never replace calfskin.

We will keep you advised on final reports and shall be glad to give you any further information required.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) H.J. WATTS

for Marketing Officer

HW/GV

F.I. DEPS.

MED. 123/227/01.

DESPATCH NO. 6

Date 15 JAN 1953 59

0795

Transmitted with the compliments of the Secretary of State for the Colonies for

the Governor's ~~consideration~~. information. ~~observations~~.

Reference:- ~~Secretary of State's~~ SECRETARY OF STATE'S ~~Governor's~~ ~~Telegram No.~~ Despatch No. 121 ~~Savingram No.~~ of 21.6.52 56

Date	Nature of Communication
23rd Dec. 52	Copies of Colonial Office letter to R.W. Peadman, Esq
7th Jan. 53	Copies of reply to above

BF

60

C O P Y.

COLONIAL OFFICE,
Sanctuary Buildings,
Great Smith Street,
S.W.1.

MED. 123/227/01
L.871/3

23rd December, 1952.

Dear Pearman,

57

On the 27th May you wrote to Greig about Elephant Seal Hides, and at the end of that letter you promised him further information when available.

2. I have now been asked to enquire whether you have yet been able to obtain any further information on that subject.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) L.G. Allen

R.W. PEARMAN, ESQ., B.Sc., A.R.C.S., A.R.I.C.

61

C O P Y.

COLONIAL PRODUCTS ADVISORY
BUREAU
(PLANT AND ANIMAL),
Imperial Institute Building,
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7.

Ref: L.871/3
Your Ref: MED.123/227/01

7th January, 1953.

Dear Allen,

60

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd December 1952 regarding Elephant Seal Hides.

I contacted the Colonial Development Corporation on this matter, and they informed me that reports from the Continental tanners confirmed the findings already given in my letter dated 27th May. It has been definitely established that Sea Elephant hides can never replace Walrus Hides.

59

As far as the C.D.C. are concerned, this investigation is now closed.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) R.W. Pearman.

L.G. ALLEN, ESQ.,
COLONIAL OFFICE.

A lot of hot air seems to have been generated over this to no very good purpose. But nothing will deter Dr. Bertram who will be back at us again soon. Fine Cocks from Weddell pops need tonic.

H.C. 21 VIII

No. 144/85 Rec'd CSO 7/3/64

MEMORANDUM.

It is requested that, in any reference to this memorandum the above number and date should be quoted.

6th March, 1964

O.I.C., British Antarctic Survey,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

The Honourable Colonial Secretary,

Secretariat,

Stanley.

SUBJECT :-

We have asked Mr. Ian Strange to obtain samples of skin from the Sea Lion (Otaria). The samples are required to further investigation into the hair pattern in seals.

Mr. Strange will be visiting you in connection with licences etc., and any expenses incurred by him in this matter may be charged direct to B.A.S.

E. Clapp.

E. Clapp., O.I.C.,

10.3