

C. S. O.

NAT/SEA/5 # 8

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4
9
7
/
B

(Formerly)

SUBJECT :

SEALING:- Concession to Mr Tilbury (C.D.C.).

REPORTS ~~REDACTED~~.

CONNECTED FILES.

NUMBER AND YEAR.

CONNECTED FILES:-

.FIS/7/1 PART ALBEMARLE...
.0497/F.....0497/U.....
.0497/A.....
.0497/C.....
.0497/D.....
.0497/U.....

No. 0497/811.

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

MEMORANDUM.

20th September, 19 50.

From: The Collector of Customs,
Stanley.

To: The Honourable,
The Colonial Secretary,
Stanley.
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

SUBJECT:- Report from Sealing Officer.

2 I have the honour to submit herewith, a report
from the Sealing Officer at Albemarle please.

MS.

MS.
21/9/50

[Signature]
Collector of Customs.

2
Albemarle

18 Sept 1950

Report of Sealing operations, to date.

Sealing commenced on day 18th, but owing to so many break downs in the machinery only 956 sea lions and 3 elephants have been killed. Although the seal were plentiful, the plant was unable to cope with any more. Up to date some 160 drums of oil and 48 bags of meat meal have been produced, although there is still some oil in the settling tanks, and about 100 seal on the slip.

The meat meal that has been produced could not be dried out satisfactory owing to machinery not working properly, so the remainder of the cooked meat is now being stored up until such time as the machinery is got working correctly.

No livens had been saved until the 16th Sept because of so many break downs it was unable to deal with them. Yesterday 40 livens were put through the Kek mill as an experiment, but it remains to be seen what the result will be.

J. B. Browning

Sealing officer

3.

A

Y.E.

H 1-2 and diary at com s.f.c. (A most depressing record)

B.

125 SEP 1950

Very disappointing for Mr. Gabury - I had a long talk with him on Saturday; he is not discouraged and hopes that next year things will be better. They will need to be - the one fortunate thing seems to be that there is no lack of seed and that it is simply a case of better plant; the real trouble seems to be the lack of an Inspection Dept. in CDE.

Mr. T. made 3 requests:

1. For assistance in getting 1 or if possible 2 diggers up from S. Georgia in John Biocoe 12' long 7' diameter 3½ tons weight. Agree in principle but he must arrange with Capt. Johnston.
2. That condition regarding disposal of entire carcass be waived this year only as plant incapable of dealing with them. Accept facts as evidence but he must write in officially.
3. That he is feeling the absence of a good Foreman and would like to have one Peterson (POW Eliza Cove) in Galapagos. If P. wants to go to Ottomani suppose we could stop him - plan of to E.E.

A.

H.C.S.

S.O. will be instructed to call on His Excellency when he returns to Stanley.

2. Would you let me know when (B)p.2 on the opposite page is decided officially, so that the S.O. can be informed please?

C. of C.
3.X.50.

B.

E.E.
P.3. H.E.'s minute, para 3. Did Peterson go to
the S.A.S.C.?

18 OCT 1950

C

H.C.S.

Peterson.

1. I informed him man of the decision regarding president fund and I anticipate 'official' application being made on Peterson's behalf by Mr Tilbury.
2. Peterson's intention was to leave fund towards the end of October - for the time being he is still with us.

E.H. 20.X.50.

Avoid official letters from Tilbury.

6/11/50.

6/11/50
20/11/50
10/12/50
10/12/50

Customs Department,
Stanley,
9th March, 1951.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit in quintuplicate, a report upon the sealing operations conducted in the Colony by the South Atlantic Sealing Company during the season 1950.

2. With the arrival of the Company's Manager, Mr. P.H. Tilbury and the two sealing vessels "Protector III" and "Golden Chance" on the 14th November, 1949, a commencement was made on the erection of a sealing station at Albemarle. After considerable effort and much ingenuity on the part of Mr. Tilbury and staff, everything was in readiness to commence operations by August 17th 1950.

3. Sea-lions. Work on this species was commenced on the 18th August, on which date some eighty-one animals were taken. A breakdown in plant occurred when dealing with the first batch, and a replacement digester had to be brought from a neighbouring farm. It was not until ten days later that a fresh start could be made. Work then continued intermittently, interrupted from time to time by bad weather conditions and the inadequacy of the meat-meal plant to deal with meat residue as it came forward from the digestors.

4. Up to the end of the first week in September, the sea-lions were reported by the Sealing Officer to be "very large, fat and numerous" but after that date the condition and number of seal diminished perceptibly. Although thirty-two lions were taken as late as December 31st, the hunting of this species had to all intents and purposes ended by September 29th.

5. The total catch, locality where taken and production in barrels, are given in the following Tables :-

The Honourable,
The Colonial Secretary,
STANLEY.

SEA-LIONS - Quantities taken and Locality.

Locality.	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	TOTAL.
Ad-bar Is.	291	807	-	1	26	1125
Imp Is.	-	69	-	-	-	69
In Arch Is.	-	46	-	5	-	51
tural Arch Is.	-	49	-	-	-	49
n sh. Bay.	-	29	-	-	-	29
TOTALS	291	1,000	-	6	26	1323 (≠)

Production of Oil. (≠) The licence is for 9,000 seals which were certainly available.

	Number taken.	Oil production (brls).	Av. brls per seal.	Av. seal per brl.
sea-lions	1323	328	0.247 (9.88 galls)	4.033

6. Sea-Elephants. Following a lapse of some six weeks after completion of the sea-lion season, the hunting of elephants commenced on the 10th November and continued without interruption until the 17th December, by which time 720 had been taken. Killing now ceased to enable the shore plant to cope with material on hand before Christmas.

7. At this time, an application was made by the Sealing Company to extend the period of sealing to January 31st 1950. This received the favourable consideration of the Government, with the proviso that the 2,000 seal maximum quota should not be exceeded.

8. Hunting of elephants therefore re-commenced on the 3rd of January and continued to the 31st January, resulting in only an additional 121 being taken, making the total number of elephants killed for the season 841. This final month of operations was hampered by bad weather and labour troubles.

9. The number of elephant-seal taken, locality and

production /

are given in the following Tables :-

SEA-ELEPHANTS - Quantities taken and Locality.

Locality.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN. '51.	TOTALS.
Main Arch Is.	3	-	47	22	16	88
The Twins.	-	-	61	36	21	118
Sand-bar Is.	-	-	13	1	-	14
3rd Passage Is.	-	-	-	3	-	3
Carcass Is.	-	-	-	-	26	26
Bird Is.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Sea-Lion Is.	-	-	-	71	3	74
Sea-Lion Is. East	-	-	90	44	-	134
Sea-Lion Is. (Brandy Is.)	-	-	7	13	-	20
Sea-Lion Is. (Rum Is.)	-	-	-	50	-	50
Driftwood Pt.	-	-	-	66	-	66
Elephant Cays.	-	-	12	4	-	16
Barren Is.	-	-	39	11	-	50
George Is.	-	-	16	98	-	114
George Is. (Knob Is.)	-	-	-	13	-	13
George Is. (Tussock Is.)	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boat Pt.	-	-	-	-	36	36
Triste Is.	-	-	-	-	7	7
Porpoise Pt.(Bay).	-	-	-	-	9	9
Porpoise Pt.(Is.)	-	-	-	-	1	1
TOTALS	3	-	285	432	121	841

Production of Oil.

Note. The operator is licensed to take 2,000 Elephant Seal; it is doubtful if the figure should exceed 1,000.

	Number taken.	Oil production (brls.)	Av. brls. per seal.	Av. No. of seal per brl.
Sea-elephants	841	715	0.85 (34 gallons)	1.17

10. Utilisation of Carcasses.

All sea-lion carcasses were disposed /

of, but during the whole of the period under review, only 120 of a total of 841 elephant carcasses were taken from the beaches. This was caused mainly by adverse surf conditions and the fact that, generally speaking, elephants are found in the most inaccessible places with at many times bad holding ground for anchors. Moreover carcasses could not be dealt with at the plant, because the machinery used for processing the residue (i.e. meal) proved quite unreliable. However, during the time the meat plant was working, some five tons of meat-meal and guano were produced.

11. It was originally intended to furnish this report with some comparison with the seasons of the past but, for the most part, production figures given in old reports shew elephant and lion oil to have been mixed; again, in the old days both females and pups were taken, preventing a true comparison. The Sealing Officer's report for 1936 was in more detail and these figures, together with those for the 1949 sea-elephant season at South Georgia, are given as comparisons; they show this season's operations in a somewhat unfavourable light :-

Area.	Season	SEA-LIONS.			SEA-ELEPHANTS.		
		Number taken.	Total Brls.	Average Brls.	Number taken.	Total Brls.	Average Brls.
Falk. Is.	1935	9,086	2,275	0.25	180	180	1.0
Falk. Is.	1950	1,323	328	0.24	841	715	0.85
S.Georgia.	1949	-	-	-	6876	13358	1.942

12. In concluding this report, it may be said that from production point of view, the season has been disappointing but when considering the late start, the inadequate machinery and the labour troubles experienced, the results achieved lead one to believe that production will run at a substantially higher level in 1951.

13. A separate report from the Sealing Officer, covering the /

season's operations in detail, is attached as an Appendix.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) B. W. BIGGS.

Collector of Customs.



Report by the Sealing Officer, on
the Sealing at Albemarle, July 1950-Jan. 1951.

10

Sea Lions. I left Stanley on s.s. "Fitzroy" for Albemarle on July 21st 1950, arriving there on July 22nd, taking up my quarters aboard the "Golden Chance" which was to the boat for seal-catching. As a good deal of work had to be done to the plant ashore before it would be ready for operating, the crew of the "Golden Chance" were busy making facilities on the sealing grounds for handling the seals. This consisted of cutting a patch of tussock about 50 yds in diameter about 80 yards from the beach, and then cutting a track of about 8 yard wide from the cleared patch down to the beach, the idea being to 'round up' the seal in the tussock into this cleared space, where they could be held easily; then letting about six or eight come down the cleared track to the beach where two men were standing (one each side of the track), with rifles to shoot them as close to the water as possible. In this way only the required number for that day were killed and the remainder just drifted back into the tussock.

The seal lying around the beaches are not disturbed, as they eventually go up into the tussock where they are 'rounded up' into the cleared space, this means that the killing only goes on in one place on each island. After the required number have been shot, they are gutted on the beach and taken off to the boat by means of a yawl. This is a long length of 3" rope with short pieces of rope spliced into it about every 20'; on each of these a short end or toggle as it is called, is fastened to 2 lions; each yawl has 15 toggles and so can take 30 lions. A long line is then run ashore from the ship and fastened to the end of the yawl. It is then pulled aboard by the ship's winch. The toggles are so spaced on the yawl that as the first pair of seal are heaved up to the derrick, the next pair are at the ship's rail where a hook has already been installed. This hook holds the rest of the yawl while the pair at the derrick are lowered into the hold. This goes on until all the seal are aboard. The beach is then cleared up, all the guts being put into the sea.

The first load of lions were brought in on the 18th August, but as some of the machinery in the shore plant fail this meant that another digester had to be installed. Sealing had to be suspended until a digester was brought from San Carlos. Sealing again commenced on August 30th and continued until September 25th. By this time most of the lions had gone to their breeding grounds and those that had not were so scattered that it was considered too costly to go about collecting a few here and there.

During the part season the Company was operating, most of the machinery gave considerable trouble. The cold extraction of the oil failed owing to the hacking machine being a complete failure, so all the seal had to be cooked in the digestors. The meat-meal plant was also a source of trouble because it would not dry the meat enough to be shipped, although a few tons were sold locally as fertilizer.

An attempt was made to extract liver oil. Forty seal-livers were put through the 'Kek' mill and then into a settling tank, but as no oil surfaced after several days of settling, the lot had to be dumped. No further attempt was made.

During July, August, and the early part of September, sea-lions on the Arch Island group were very plentiful and due to the season being so far advanced before a start was made this area alone supplied all the seal that were taken except toward the end of September when the seal were leaving, a small load (29 millions) were taken from a small island at the entrance

to/

11
Port Stephens. During the season 1323 sea-lions were taken. Two sheets of blubber were casked up and shipped to the United Kingdom for a trial on a mincing machine, which the Company is intending to purchase to take the place of the hacking machine.

In the course of the season 31 sea-lion skins were sent to the United Kingdom to see what price they would bring, and the Manager told me that the skins were sold at 56/- each; also several bundles of seal whiskers were sent away, but up to the present it is not known what price they will bring.

Sea Elephant Season 1950. Although 3 elephants were caught on the Arch Islands on September 3rd, the actual season did not start until November 10th and would have finished on December 31st, but as a special concession it was decided to extend the season up to the 31st January, 1951, provided that not more than 2,000 elephants in all were taken.

The elephants appear to 'haul up' in the most awkward places to work, such as the Sea-lion Islands, The Twins, Elephant Cays and a number of other places, nearly all of which are on the open coast, so of course it is necessary to have fine weather, and even so, in many cases the elephant has to be boated off in the surf, as well as having to contend with thick kelp.

As the meat-meal plant was giving a lot of trouble, permission was sought and granted, to take only the number of carcasses that the plant could deal with, on the understanding that all the carcasses not taken, would be taken into the water after the blubber had been taken off. These instructions were carried out. I feel that in some isolated cases, it would be almost impossible to take carcasses; for instance, I have seen places where elephants were lying on the beach but the surf was too great to land. In these cases landing was made at some other point on the island and the men walked around to where they were killed and flensed them. Then the boat would lay outside the breakers with a line ashore, the men on the beach would fasten on a few sheets of blubber, and the boat would haul out. Although this is hard work, and the men on the beach are often up to their waists in water to get the blubber in the surf. Once in the water, the blubber will float. This is not so with the carcasses, as they sink, and often while being towed off to the boat they become caught up in rocks and tree kelp on the bottom. This does not often occur, and I feel that it might be left to the discretion of the Sealing Officer on the spot, as to whether or not the carcass might be abandoned. The sealing licence states that all carcasses must be used.

During the season a number of pituitary glands were taken, (a small gland at the back of the brain), for experimental purposes by scientists in the United Kingdom. It is not possible to get the gland from every elephant as a good many are smashed by the bullet.

Of the 120 elephant carcasses brought to the station, no meat-meal of commercial value was produced, it was only suitable for local fertilizer, as there was a very small amount of oil still remaining, and if stored in a large quantity it would heat. The bones are put outside to weather before they can be ground up as bone-meal.

The three months that the elephant fishing was carried out, December appeared to be the month when they were most numerous; about that time they seem to lie about the beach for several weeks without going into the water, but by the middle of January, they are coming and going. You will see them on the beach today, but by tomorrow they are gone, and perhaps by night or next day there are some more back again.

12

The main breeding grounds are the easterly Sea-lion Is. and The Twins. I would estimate that there were twice as many pups on the easterly Sea-lion Is. as there were on the Twins. I counted 285 pups on the easterly Sea-lion Is. and 148 on the Twins, but as the pups had already started taking to the water before we got there, these figures could not be taken for the actual amount of pups born on each island. There does not seem to be any other place that we visited, that there were any quantity of pups, although we did see odd ones here and there.

Towards the end of January 37 elephant skins were salted down to be shipped to the United Kingdom. This has been done as a trial to see if it will be worthwhile saving the skins in future. At present they are boiled down for oil.

Some five tons or so of meat-meal has been processed and sold locally as fertilizer, 2 cwt of the meal has been sent to the United Kingdom to see if anything can be done about extracting the small % of oil remaining.

Visit to Fur-seal rookeries.

I left Stanley in the "Protector III" on February 17th to visit the known fur-seal rookeries. The vessel was bound for Ajax Bay as first stop, but the Captain steamed in very close to the Volunteer Rocks so that I could get a good view. The east end of the largest rock was covered with fur seal, but as we approached hundreds of these dived into the water. By counting and judging, a very reserved estimate would be 2,000 - probably nearer 3,000. In 1948 when I landed here, there were in the vicinity of 1,500, so there appears to be almost twice that number.

After calling at various ports we arrived off the Elephant Cagen on the 22nd February, but as there was a strong S.W. wind blowing and a very heavy sea breaking all around the seal rocks, a landing was impossible. We steamed around the rocks as close as possible, and very slowly, and apart from lifting their heads to look at us, the fur seal did not appear to take any notice. I did not see one single seal take to the water and we were very close to the rocks, in fact under such weather conditions I sometimes thought we were a bit too close. By counting some, and estimating that they were lying together so thickly, both Mr. Laws of the Falkland Islands and Dependencies Survey, and myself, were in agreement that there would be upwards of 4,000 fur seals on the rock.

We then went out to the rocks at N. Fur Island and steamed along the rocks, but not a single seal was seen.

The next call was New Island, where we arrived at 3.30 after a very rough crossing. Mr. Davis very kindly walked with us over to the back of the island to show us the place inhabited by the fur seal. This was really the most remarkable sight I have seen on the tour, the sight was nearly all cliffs, three to four hundred feet high, going sheer into the sea and along the foot of the cliffs there are ledges, most of which can only be got at by boat. It was quite common to see several hundred fur seal lying on one ledge. There were also places under the cliffs that we not could see into from the top, but we could hear that there were plenty of seal in them. At a very reserved estimate I would put the number at this rookery at 8,000, although if one could only wait for suitable weather and go around in boat under the cliffs, I feel quite confident that the numbers would greatly exceed this estimate. I would like to stress at this point that unless one is prepared to hold up a boat at each rookery, until the weather is suitable, (which might mean several days), only reserved estimates can be given.

13
visited Bird Island earlier in the year while we were
Elephant chasing and found only 48 fur seals and 31 pups.
As I am led to believe that large numbers of fur seal were
on Bird Island years ago and only small numbers on New Isle
I am inclined to think that the seal are leaving Bird Island
and 'hauling up' on New Island.

An attempt was made to visit the Beauchene Island on
February 25th, but after getting about half way out, the
weather came on too bad and we had to give up and run back
to Bull Cove. The weather was not suitable on the next day
and as Mr. Tilbury said he could not spare the time to wait
about, he gave up the attempt and returned to Albemarle. He
said that if the weather was suitable when he went to
Stanley about the 8th of March, he would call there, but as
the wind was N.E. when we left to come to Stanley, no
further attempt was made. As the landing place on the
Beauchene Is. is on the N.E. end, a N.E. wind would be the
worst wind to attempt to visit this island.

(sgd.) J. B. BROWNING.

Sealing Officer.
9th March, 1951.

4/6. 5-13 submitted for YEs' information, pl. 14.
15.3.57

Seen. Copy as amended to SJS
Cunningham's
under 3 p.m. f.i. -
Mc. 15/3

Ref: 0497/B.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

STANLEY.

20th March, 1951.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

No. 17 COLONY.

Sir,

4-13
I have the honour to forward for your information the report of the Collector of Customs, Stanley, on the sealing operations conducted in the Colony by the South Atlantic Sealing Company during the season 1950.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Sgd.) MILES CLIFFORD

GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
JAMES GRIFFITHS, P.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

RM.

20/3/51

15

Customs Department,
Stanley,
21st December, 1951.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit a report upon the sealing operations carried out at Albemarle, by the South Atlantic Sealing Company during the 1951 Season.

2. Before sealing commenced, a number of modifications were made to the sealing licence, the most important being:-

(a) An increase authorised in the number of sea-lions which may be taken in any one year, from 9,000 to 15,000 seal, and a reduction effected in the permitted number of sea-elephants from 2,000 to 1,000.

(b) The season for sea-lions was defined as being from 1st May to 30th September. That for sea-elephants from 1st April to 15th January in the following year, with the proviso that October would henceforth be regarded as a 'closed' month for elephants, because of its importance during the breeding season.

3. Sea-lions. Although work on this species commenced on July 3rd some six weeks earlier than last year, only 1,889 or 12.6% of the approved number of 15,000 were taken by September 30th. The condition of the animals in the earlier part of the season was generally poor, but improved in September. The overall condition of the herd, both in condition and number was below that of last year, resulting in a decrease in oil production of 0.02 barrels per seal.

4. It was observed in the month of August, that the stomachs of sea-lions taken were filled with an unfamiliar species of fish - each fish measuring from 12 - 14 inches in length; each stomach containing from between 50 - 60 fish, later to be identified as a species of cod - micromesistius australis. The presence of this close and plentiful food may have had a bearing on the scarcity of seal on the beaches.

5. The total catch, locality where taken and production in barrels, are given in the following Tables :-

The Honourable,

The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley.

Sea-lions - Quantity taken and Locality.

LOCALITY.	July.	August.	September.	Total.
Sand-bar Is.	717	175	259	1151
Main Arch Is.	84	5	74	163
Nat. Arch Is.	-	7	288	295
10/- Bay.	-	66	64	130
Clump Is.	8	14	11	33
Barren Is.	-	117	-	117
Totals	809	384	696	1889

Production of Oil.

	Number taken.	Oil Production in brls.	Av. brls per seal.	Av. seal per brl.
Sea-lion	1889	424.3	0.225 (9 galls.)	4.455

5. Sea-Elephants. Operations commenced on Elephants on November 3rd. Reports on condition and quantities available were good and 29 were taken up to November 12th. Unfortunately, activities ceased from that date onward due to an acute labour shortage and to the inability of the plant to cope with the material. However, elephant oil produced amounted to 32.9 barrels, an average of 1.13 barrels as against only 0.85 last year.

6. The number of elephant seal taken, locality and production, are given in the Tables below:-

Sea-elephants - Quantities taken & Localities.

LOCALITY.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1-15th Jan. 1952	Total.
Driftwood Is.	-		3	-	-	3
East Sea Lion Is.	-	Closed	5	-	-	5
The Twins.	-	month.	9	-	-	9
Carcass Is.	-		12	-	-	12
Totals	-	-	29	-	-	29

Oil Production /

Production of Oil.

Species.	Number taken.	Oil Production.	Av. Brls. per seal.	Av.No. of seal per brl.
Sea-elephants	29	32.9	1.13	0.88

7. Utilisation of Carcasses. All sea-lion carcasses were disposed of again this year. Disposal of elephant carcasses amounted to 44.83% of the total number of elephants dealt with, as against only 14.15% last season.

8. Production of Guano, etc. From all species, 26 tons of meat-meal and guano were produced and 418 seal hides prepared for export.

9. As in last year's Report, a Table of comparisons is provided as a matter of interest :-

Area.	SEA-LIONS.				SEA-ELEPHANTS.		
	Season	No. Taken	Total Brls.	Av. Brls.	No. Taken	Total Brls.	Av. Brls.
Falkland Is.	1936	9086	2275	0.25	180	180	1
-do-	1950	1323	328	0.24	841	715	0.85
-do-	1951	1889	424	0.225	29	32.9	1.13
South Georgia	1950	-	-	-	6951	13035	1.88

10. The results attained this year were definitely disappointing. The main contributory causes being the prevalent labour shortage, with lack of sufficient engineering staff; ~~and~~ inadequate plant being additional and important disadvantages. It is understood that the management will make every effort to obtain ~~additional~~ ^{from various} labour and to make further improvements in the present equipment, before work commences next season.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

B. J. G.
Collector of Customs.

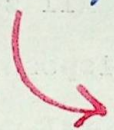
1/6

I submit 15-17 for J.C.'s information.

As L. of C. says the season's results were, on the whole, disappointing.

2. ²A copy ⁵may be sent to S. of S. f. i. pl.?

RTJ:CS
22/12/51



Accy.

mc. 22/xii

19
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.
24th December, 1951.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

No. 72 STANLEY.

Sir,

15-17
I have the honour to forward for your information the report
of the Collector of Customs, Stanley, on the sealing operations
conducted in the Colony by the South Atlantic Sealing Company during
the season 1951.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Sgd.) MILES CLIFFORD

GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
OLIVER HYSTON, F.C., D.S.O., M.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

IRM.

See 20

24/12/51



20

REF 143/144/61.

Your ref: F.I.Ref:0497/B.

COLONIAL OFFICE,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

18 January, 1952.

No. 11 COLONY.

Sir,

19
15

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 72 Colony of the 24th of December, 1951, forwarding the report of the Collector of Customs, Stanley, on the sealing operations conducted in the Colony by the South Atlantic Sealing Company during the season 1951.

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

John D. Jackson

W. 14/2

GOVERNOR,

SIR MILES CLIFFORD, K.B.E., C.M.G.,

etc., etc., etc.

15/2

Customs Department,
Stanley,
21st December, 1951.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit a report upon the sealing operations carried out at Albemarle, by the South Atlantic Sealing Company during the 1951 Season.

2. Before sealing commenced, a number of modifications were made to the sealing licence, the most important being:-

(a) An increase authorised in the number of sea-lions which may be taken in any one year, from 9,000 to 15,000 seal, and a deduction effected in the permitted number of sea-elephants from 2,000 to 1,000.

(b) The season for sea-lions was defined as being from 1st May to 30th September. That for sea-elephants from 1st April to 15th January in the following year, with the proviso that October would henceforth be regarded as a 'closed' month for elephants, because of its importance during the breeding season.

3. Sea-lions. Although work on this species commenced on July 3rd some six weeks earlier than last year, only 1,889 or 12.6% of the approved number of 15,000 were taken by September 30th. The condition of the animals in the earlier part of the season was generally poor, but improved in September. The overall condition of the herd, both in condition and number was below that of last year, resulting in a decrease in oil production of 0.02 barrels per seal.

4. It was observed in the month of August, that the stomachs of sea-lions taken were filled with an unfamiliar species of fish - each fish measuring from 12 - 14 inches in length; each stomach containing from between 50 - 60 fish, later to be identified as a species of cod - micromesistius australis. The presence of this close and plentiful food may have had a bearing on the scarcity of seal on the beaches.

5. The total catch, locality where taken and production in barrels, are given in the following Tables :-

The Honourable,

The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley.

Sea-lions - Quantity taken and Locality.

LOCALITY.	July.	August.	September.	Total.
Sand-bar Is.	717	175	259	1151
Main Arch Is.	84	5	74	163
Nat. Arch Is.	-	7	288	295
10/- Bay.	-	66	64	130
Clump Is.	8	14	11	33
Barren Is.	-	117	-	117
Totals	809	384	696	1889

Production of Oil.

	Number taken.	Oil Production in brls.	Av. brls per seal.	Av. seal per brl.
Sea-lion	1889	424.3	0.225 (9 galls.)	4.455

5. Sea-Elephants. Operations commenced on Elephants on November 3rd. Reports on condition and quantities available were good and 29 were taken up to November 12th. Unfortunately, activities ceased from that date onward due to an acute labour shortage and to the inability of the plant to cope with the material. However, elephant oil produced amounted to 32.9 barrels, an average of 1.13 barrels as against only 0.85 last year.

6. The number of elephant seal taken, locality and production, are given in the Tables below:-

Sea-elephants - Quantities taken & Localities.

LOCALITY.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1-15th Jan. 1952	Total.
Driftwood Is.	-		3	-	-	3
East Sea Lion Is.	-	Closed	5	-	-	5
The Twins.	-	month.	9	-	-	9
Carcass Is.	-		12	-	-	12
Totals	-	-	29	-	-	29

Oil Production /

Production of Oil.

Species.	Number taken.	Oil Production.	Av. Brls. per seal.	Av.No. of seal per br.
Sea-elephants	29	32.9	1.13	0.88

7. Utilisation of Carcasses. All sea-lion carcasses were disposed of again this year. Disposal of elephant carcasses amounted to 44.83% of the total number of elephants dealt with, as against only 14.15% last season.

8. Production of Guano, etc. From all species, 26 tons of meat-meal and guano were produced and 418 seal hides prepared for export.

9. As in last year's Report, a Table of comparisons is provided as a matter of interest :-

Area.	Season	SEA-LIONS.			SEA-ELEPHANTS.		
		No. Taken.	Total Brls.	Av. Brls.	No. Taken.	Total Brls.	Av. Brls.
Falkland Is.	1936	9086	2275	0.25	180	180	1
-do-	1950	1323	328	0.24	841	715	0.85
-do-	1951	1889	424	0.225	29	32.9	1.13
South Georgia	1950	-	-	-	6951	13035	1.88

10. The results attained this year were definitely disappointing. The main contributory causes being the prevalent labour shortage, with lack of sufficient engineering staff and inadequate plant being additional and important disadvantages. It is understood that the management will make every effort to obtain additional labour and to make further improvements in the present equipment, before work commences next season.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) B. N. BIGGS.

Collector of Customs.

Customs Department,
Stanley,
21st December, 1951.

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