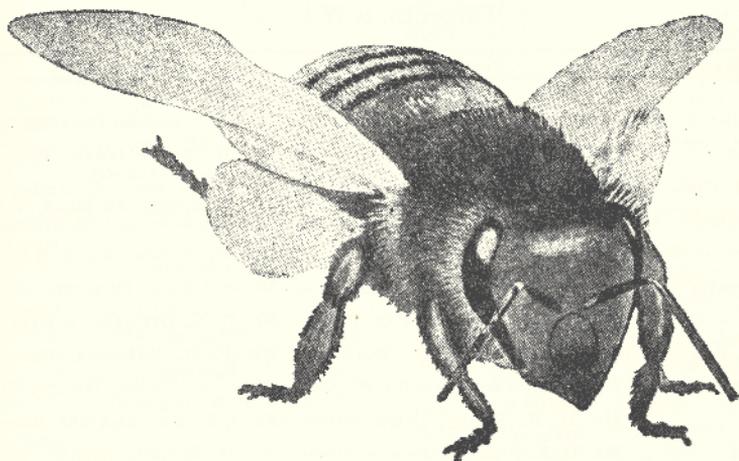


THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL. 17, No. 2

MAY, 1955



OFFICIAL ORGAN of the
NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION
OF NEW ZEALAND
(Incorporated).

*(An Organisation for the advancement of
the Beekeeping Industry in New Zealand)*

Better Beekeeping

Better Marketing

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The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

Published Quarterly in February, May, August and November,
by the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Incorporated).

J. McFadzien, Editor.

Subscription, 8/- per annum, post free.

VOL. 17, No. 2

MAY, 1955

NOTICE BOARD

1955 CONFERENCE

The Annual Dominion Conference will be held this year on 13th, 14th and 15th July at the Lyceum Hall, Guinness Street, Greymouth. The Executive will meet on 11th and 12th July.

Travel Services — Inward

Executive members: Inter-Island ferry leaves Wellington Friday night, connecting with Coast express train (Christchurch - Greymouth). Arrive Greymouth about 4.30 p.m. Saturday. Alternatively, there is a daily plane service from North Island to West Coast on every day except Sundays. Also, Newman's Bus Service travels from Blenheim and Nelson.

Delegates: Plane from North Island. Or train from Christchurch (departs about 9.50 a.m.). Or railcar from Christchurch (departs 2.20 a.m., arrives Greymouth 7.0 a.m.).

Outward Services

Railcar departs Greymouth for Christchurch daily (except Sunday) at 5.30 p.m. On Saturday express train to Christchurch connects with North Island ferry. Also Saturday plane service to North Island.

All persons desiring to travel by railcar are advised to book well in advance, both ways.

Accommodation

Ample accommodation is available at the following hotels, but delegates and others (except Executive members) are required to make their own bookings: Revingtons (5-star), Albion

(4-star), Duke of Edinburgh (3-star plus), Royal (3-star), Commercial (3-star).

H.M.A. ELECTION

Under regulation 5 (2) of the Honey Marketing Authority Regulations 1953, all producer representatives retire this year. The last hour and day for receiving nominations are fixed by clause (19) of the Schedule to the regulations and this year will be noon on the 17th August.

DUNEDIN CONVENTION

The Annual Convention of Otago and Southland Beekeepers will be held this year in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Building, Moray Place, Dunedin, on Tuesday, June 7th. Messrs E. A. Field (Chairman) and K. B. Longmore (Government nominee) of the Honey Marketing Authority, will be present, circumstances permitting, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who are interested in beekeeping.

Programme—10.30 a.m.: Business meeting to discuss Convention administration and Winter Show activities.

2 p.m.: Addresses by members of the Executive and the Marketing Authority, and consideration of marketing and other current affairs.

7.30 p.m.: Social evening with two addresses by Messrs I. W. Forster ("Aspects of Pollination") and H. Cloake ("Honeyhouse Management").

HAMILTON MEETING

Details of the Instruction Course to be held at Hamilton are given in the Department of Agriculture Notes in this issue.

FEBRUARY NUMBER

We regret that owing to a delay in transit the February Journal did not reach North Island readers until February 28, or possibly even later. The issue was posted in Timaru on February 22 and most South Island beekeepers received their copies the following day, but unfortunately the North Island quota was held up in Christchurch for several days through pressure of work and shortage of staff.

NEW PRICE ORDER

It is unfortunate that there was some delay in notification of the Price Order gazetted on the 27th January, and honey producers may have been placed at a disadvantage on this account. The procedure in releasing the Order and the reasons for the delay are indicated in the following correspondence between the General Secretary on the one hand and the Minister of Industries and Commerce and the Director of Price Control on the other.

FOXTON, 22nd February, 1955.

The Minister of Industries and Commerce,
Parliament Buildings,
WELLINGTON, C.I.

Dear Sir,

re PRICE CONTROL DIVISION AND NEW HONEY PRICE ORDER

With reference to the recent release of a new Price Order for Honey, I wish to register a strong protest at the manner in which the application of this Association was handled by the Price Control Division of your Department.

The position briefly is as follows:—

On 10th August, 1954, an application for an increase in the price of honey to cover increased production costs was lodged by this Association, supported by a re-costing carried out by the Extension Division of the Department of Agriculture. At the same time an application was lodged by the Association for an increase to cover added packing costs on a case prepared by the Honey Marketing Authority. It was understood that the two applications would be considered together.

On 28th October the Dominion Executive of the Association was meeting in Wellington and it was then learnt from the Director of Price Control that the application had been investigated, found in order, and passed over to the Tribunal for further action. The urgent necessity for having a new price order in operation by the end of November was stressed and we were led to believe that the new order would be gazetted on 16th December.

The new order was not gazetted on this date, however, and in telephone conversation with the Secretary to the Tribunal (Mr Field), I was informed that the application was being held over until the New Year and no further action would be taken until after the Tribunal had conferred with producer representatives over "some points in the application which were in doubt." Mr Field also stated that the time was considered inopportune for the issue of a new price order as merchants were reported to be holding large stocks of old season's honey, and an increase in price would benefit the wrong people!

I asked Mr Field to inform me of the time the Tribunal could meet our representatives and also to outline the points which it was desired to discuss. Mr Field promised to advise me along these lines, but as no advice came to hand, I wrote to him on 21st January, again asking him to fix the date of the meeting. No reply was received.

On 11th February the Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority advised me that he had learnt from a Wellington merchant that honey prices had risen, and he asked if I had received any advice in this connection. I immediately telephoned the Secretary of the Price Tribunal and verified the fact that a new price order for honey had been gazetted on 27th January, 1955. On 16th February, I received the first written confirmation in the form of an advice from the Director of Price Control. That is, almost three weeks after the new order had been in force! The Honey Marketing Authority were in the same position.

Although the new price order did not cover the full claims made, there was no mention of this fact in the letter from the Director of Price Control, nor was there any reference to those items of the application which had not been recognised. This matter is being taken up with the Division.

There can be no doubt that the lack of earlier advice from the Department will cause serious repercussions in the Industry. Producers were advised by the Association in December that there would be some indefinite delay in securing a new price order and many have doubtless made arrangements to dispose of at least part of their crops, especially as the season looked promising.

It seems ironical that while the Tribunal was anxious that the merchants should not reap the harvest of an increase in prices, the delay in notifying the Industry of the new price order, has given them just that very opportunity, and robbed the producers in some instances of the benefit which was rightly his.

The importance of the Beekeeping Industry and its value to primary production as a whole in the Dominion is well known and appreciated by the Government. It does not seem too much to expect therefore that the interests of this Industry be protected in such cases as I mention above.

I would therefore ask that you look into this matter and I shall be pleased to receive an assurance from you that such circumstances shall not recur in the case of any future applications which are lodged by the Association on behalf of the Industry.

Looking forward to your early reply,

Yours faithfully,

R. A. FRASER,

General Secretary.

FOXTON, 28th February, 1955.

The Director of Price Control,
Department of Industries and Commerce,
P.O. Box 1320, WELLINGTON.

Dear Sir,

HONEY PRICES — YOUR REF. 1/50.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th instant enclosing copy of the new price order No. 1591 which was gazetted on the 27th January, 1955.

While it is gratifying to learn that some of the Association's claims have been recognised and increases granted in certain cases, I was nevertheless surprised and extremely concerned to learn of the issue of a new order almost three weeks after it had been gazetted: surprised, because the last official advice we had had was in a telephone conversation with the Secretary of the Tribunal before Christmas to the effect that the Tribunal were not prepared to grant any increases and would not take any further action in the application until after discussing the application with Industry representatives. My very natural concern will be understood and appreciated when it is realised that all Branches and Direct Members of the Association were advised of this fact and were expecting to receive a further communication from me before any new price was in operation. I must say that it seems very irregular for a new price order to be gazetted before the organisation responsible for lodging the application had been advised, especially as in this case it has given merchants and others an opportunity to capitalise on the increased prices before the producers were aware of them. I note that no reasons are advanced in your letter as to why this delay took place, and I would be pleased to receive some explanation on the matter at your early convenience.

As mentioned above, it is obvious that the new price order covers the increases sought in added production and packing costs in part only. It would therefore be appreciated if you would advise details of the claims which have not been recognised and granted by the Tribunal and I shall look forward to receiving this information at your early convenience.

Yours faithfully,

R. A. FRASER,
General Secretary.

Office of the Minister of Industries & Commerce,
WELLINGTON, C.1, 24th March, 1955.

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z. Inc.,
P.O. Box 19, FOXTON.

Dear Sir,

On receiving your letter of 22nd February concerning the recent Honey Price Order, I enquired from the Price Tribunal as to the manner in which your Association's recent price application had been dealt, and I have now been advised by the Tribunal of the factors by which it was guided in gazetting the Order.

I understand that when the official reports relating to this season's price were brought before the Tribunal they indicated that carry over stocks from the previous season were adequate for the Christmas period and that sales were being made at prices lower than the maximum approved. As the greatest proportion of the proposed increases in prices was for substantially higher packing costs compared with the increase

claimed for producing honey, the Tribunal considered it should not open the way for traders to obtain undue benefits from the stocks they were holding and that the new prices should come into effect when the new season's stocks were coming into use. These facts, I understand, were passed on to you by the Secretary to the Tribunal.

When the Order was gazetted it provided for the increase sought for producing the crop but the very substantial increases for packing were not conceded in full. However, the Tribunal allowed what it considered to be adequate provision for packing. In view of the fact that the producers' price was approved as applied for, there does not appear to be any reason for the Tribunal to call your Association's representatives to Wellington.

If the Secretary to the Tribunal did, in the course of conversation with you, give the impression that the Tribunal desired to have discussion with producers on some aspects of the application, it would appear that there has been some misunderstanding. It is true that the Tribunal was prepared to discuss packing costs further, but this discussion was not intended to take place with the producers. It is the more unfortunate that the Secretary to the Tribunal was on leave when the matter was dealt with early in the New Year.

Concerning your complaint that you were unaware of the Price Order, I am advised that although publication in the Gazette is, in itself, deemed to be notice to all parties, it is nevertheless customary for copies of Price Orders to be sent by the Price Control Division as soon as possible after publication to the parties chiefly concerned. I can assure you that this procedure of formally advising the Tribunal's decision will be continued and there should be no further difficulties on this account.

Yours faithfully,

DEAN J. EYRE,
Minister of Industries and Commerce.

Price Control Division,
Dept. of Industries & Commerce,
332-340 Lambton Quay,
WELLINGTON, C.1,
24th March, 1955.

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z. Inc.,
P.O. Box 19, FOXTON.

Dear Sir,

HONEY PRICES.

The Division acknowledges receipt of your letter of 28th February, 1955, and regrets that due to an unfortunate misunderstanding, some delay occurred in furnishing you with a copy of the new Honey Price Order giving effect to the Price Tribunal's decision on your general industry application.

In answer to the final paragraph of your letter, I would advise that the new prices fixed for bulk honey under Clause 7 of the Price Order are based on the survey of production costs conducted by the Department of Agriculture and provide fully for all increased costs incurred in the production and packing of bulk honey. The decision of the Tribunal, however, did not allow any increases in the price of honey sold by producers into customers' own containers and the maximum price authorised in respect of such sales is 1/2½d per lb.

In respect of the prices of honey packed in retail containers of a type described in the Schedule to the Price Order, the Tribunal's decision provided for the same increase as was approved for bulk honey prices, i.e., at the rate of 3d per lb. together with an increase of the amount required to recover the difference in cost of packing materials between those on which the previous prices were based and the equivalent current cost of packing materials.

Yours faithfully,
H. L. WISE,
Director of Price Control.

H.M.A. REGULATIONS, 1953

Amendments to the Regulations are being introduced to be effective at the forthcoming election.

Producers who have sold honey to a packer and who wish to vote are advised that they will be required to send to the Manager of the Honey Marketing Authority, prior to June 30, a statutory declaration showing the amount of honey sold. A declaration in the form given below will be acceptable to the Returning Officer:

IN THE MATTER of the Honey Marketing
Authority Regulations, 1953.

I, _____ (Full Name)
of _____ (Address)
_____ (Occupation), do
hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

I, That during the year ending on the 30th day
of June, 1955, I supplied to _____
(Full Name), of _____ (Address)
_____ (Occupation), who is
a packer of honey, _____ tons of honey in
respect of which I did not purchase any seals.
And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously
believing the same to be true and by
virtue of the Justice of the Peace Act, 1927.

Declared at _____
by the said _____ (Full Name)
this _____ day of _____
1955, before me:

_____ A Justice of the Peace.

HONEY SOLD WITHOUT SEALS LEVY

FIRM FINED £2 AND COSTS

Pullin's Apiaries Ltd., of Mt. Roskill (Mr Oliphant), was fined £2 and costs £4/3/- by Mr F. McCarthy, S.M., in the Auckland Magistrate's Court on March 25th, following prosecution by the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority (Mr Baxter) under the Honey Marketing Authority Regulations of 1953. The authority alleged that on March 8 the defendant company sold honey in canisters which bore no mark to show that the required levy had been paid. This was admitted.

Mr Baxter said it was noticed that the company was advertising its honey for sale, contrary to the regulations. A person acting on the authority's behalf subsequently visited the apiaries and bought 10 pounds of honey in two containers, neither of which had the official levy mark.

Mr Oliphant asked for a small penalty, as the prosecution was the first brought under the regulations, which his client did not know very well.

The magistrate said he would take this into consideration, but the regulations were important and must be obeyed.—"N.Z. Herald," 27/4/55.

HONEY DRYING PLANT

The N.Z. Journal of Science and Technology (Sec. A, Vol. 36, No. 4) contains an article by C. R. Paterson and T. Palmer-Jones entitled "A Vacuum Plant for Removing Excess Water from Honey." It is a 15-page illustrated article which discusses the problem of excess moisture and describes in detail the equipment which has been designed for removing it effectively.

"THE INDIAN BEE JOURNAL," official organ of the All India Beekeepers' Association. 15/- per year (International Money Order).

Address: Ramgarh, Dist. Nainital, U.P., India.



COMB FOUNDATION

Beeswax is now being accepted for conversion into foundation for your next season's requirements. Send your wax now to ensure early delivery.

BEESWAX

We are still paying top market prices for clean beeswax. Any quantity acceptable and we pay freight by cheapest route on lots of 100 lbs. or more.

Consignment notes, shipping notes and forwarding instructions sent on request. Please state quantity of wax to be despatched.

A. ECROYD 11 THORNTON STREET,
CHRISTCHURCH, N.Z.

"Suppliers to the beekeeping industry for 40 years"

FLOODS IN N.S.W.

We extend our sympathy to beekeepers who have suffered loss in the recent disastrous floods in New South Wales. An indication of the extent of the calamity is given in "The Australasian Beekeeper," and it is apparent that large areas of the state were submerged in floods of record levels.

In the town of Maitland tremendous damage was done, and although the factory premises of Pender Bros. fortunately escaped the water, it was necessary to have the March issue of the Journal printed in Newcastle. Because of the building up of the banks since previous floods the river rose to a tremendous height, crashed over the banks in many places, until huge breaks let the water go with terrific force, causing a tangled mass of debris, smashed houses, sand, silt and mud.

As the waters slowly subsided the awful job of cleaning up commenced. The scene was really indescribable and the stench depressing and deplorable.

It has been the greatest flood disaster in white man's experience in New South Wales.

IMPORTED JAMS

The reimposition of import licensing to regulate the types and quantity of imported jams, jellies, marmalade and preserves entering the Dominion was sought by the N.Z. Fruit and Vegetable Cannery Federation before the Board of Trade in Wellington recently. The hearing was to provide evidence upon which the Board might review the import duty on fruit pulp and jams.

It was suggested to the Executive that the National Beekeepers' Association might give evidence to protect the interests of honey producers. However, after consideration it was decided that the effect of English jams on local honey sales was probably small, and in any case it would be extremely difficult to present definite evidence on this point. It was also doubtful whether submissions coming from the honey industry

would be accepted by the Board as being relevant to the case.

Several organisations of growers, manufacturers, and packers in the jam and fruit pulp industry were represented at the hearing. It was pointed out that imported jams were selling at such low prices that fair and reasonable competition between imported and locally-made goods was impossible, and it was claimed that the position arose mainly through operating costs beyond the New Zealand manufacturers' control.

CHATHAM ISLANDS

Endeavours to establish colonies of honey bees on the island in former years were unsuccessful. There is no evidence that American foul-brood was present. As no specific reasons for failures could be ascertained, it is presumed that lack of food, strong winds, inadequate shelter, and lack of experience all contributed to the failures which led farmers to the conclusion that further attempts were unwarranted.

Having realised that the absence of seeds in clover flower heads is due to the absence of bees and that the production of clover seed is desirable, several farmers recently procured hives of bees from New Zealand and already a fair quantity of high-grade honey has been produced and most clover flower heads within reasonable distances of hives were found to contain seeds. The renewed interest in beekeeping should aid pasture improvement.

—From an article by E. A. Madden in the N.Z. Journal of Agriculture.

Sentimentality is no indication of a warm heart. Nothing weeps more copiously than a block of ice.

False steps are most often made by standing still.

Mother: "Willie, what are you doing with these cigarettes in your pocket?"
Willie: "Waiting till I'm old enough to smoke them."

THE NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

An Invitation

"The N.Z. Beekeeper" is the official organ of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.), an organisation for the advancement of the beekeeping industry in New Zealand. In the fifty years or so of its existence the Association has identified itself with the movement toward better beekeeping and better marketing, and the voluntary services of its members down the years have contributed to the present status of the honey industry.

The Journal is circulated not only to members but to all beekeepers having 30 or more registered hives. The objective is to provide a news service relating to the work of the Association, the Department of Agriculture, the Honey Marketing Authority, and other matters of general interest which will embrace all commercial honey producers. In this way it is hoped that a spirit of unity, co-operation and progress can be nourished in the honey industry.

To those readers who have not yet done so the Executive extends a cordial invitation to become members of the Association. Many benefits are to be gained from discussions and demonstrations at Branch Meetings and Field Days, especially as these functions provide a personal contact with Apiary Instructors and the marketing administration. In addition to the general advantages of membership most members avail themselves of the Association's insurance scheme, under which the beekeeper is covered (within limits) against claims resulting from injury to persons or property by his bees.

Beekeeping in New Zealand is now recognised as an important and reputable branch of primary production. Every responsible honey producer must be interested in the future of the craft, and he should consider it a duty to take an active part in the work of the Dominion organisation and so contribute his share toward the welfare of the industry.

A list of Branch Secretaries may be found on page 2 of this Journal, while the subscription and insurance rates are given inside the back cover. The financial year of the Association commences on June 1st. Beekeepers who wish to join are invited to do so by completing the form overleaf. We recommend that it be forwarded to the nearest Branch Secretary in order to secure the extra benefits of Branch membership, but where this is not convenient the application can be sent direct to the General Secretary. Direct Members, as well as Branches, are kept fully informed of the work of the Association.

Present members may also use the form to renew their subscriptions for the coming year.

APPLICATION FORM

(Please read information overleaf)

Date.....

The Secretary,

.....Branch,

.....

(Or the General Secretary, P.O. Box 19, Foxton.)

Please enrol me as a Member of your Association.

I have a total of.....colonies in.....registered
apiaries and enclose:—

£ : : being Annual Subscription and

£ : : being premium for Apiary Insurance.

Total £ : :

Signed.....

Name and Full Address (block letters):

.....

.....

.....

ANZAC DAY — PRESS TRIBUTE TO N.Z. BEEKEEPER

The following news item appeared recently in the "Gisborne Herald":—

Throughout the North Island to-day there are many veterans of the First New Zealand Expeditionary Force on the move, working around various centres on schedules which will wind up at Wellington for the major national reunion of Gallipoli men. This gathering, to be held early next week, will mark the fortieth anniversary of the opening of the land campaign designed to by-pass the Turkish forts guarding The Narrows during the First World War.

The campaign was costly and unsuccessful, but it remains a vivid chapter in modern warfare. Survivors among the contending armies have long since buried the hatchet and from time to time have engaged in exchanges of goodwill. New Zealanders who fought on the Peninsula are inclined to regard the struggle as the last of the "soldiers' wars" in which fighting was confined entirely to the troops engaged and non-combatants were allowed to stand clear.

Renewing Old Acquaintances

The prospect of their national reunion at Wellington has sent many First N.Z.E.F. men on a round of visits to their old comrades in different parts of the country, in preparation for the round-up at Wellington. A majority of the travellers are retired men with time on their hands and an urge to pick up old threads.

Typical of the Gallipoli veterans is Mr A. Norton, who with his wife is visiting Gisborne. Mr Norton came to New Zealand from Britain shortly before the outbreak of the First World War and took employment with one of the original settlers on Run 47, in the Rakauroa-Tahora area. He was one of the early volunteers during a period which almost stripped the high country of its young men, and in due course he took part in the Gallipoli campaign. He shared with Mr W. Allen, a post-splitter who had worked in the same area, severe injuries which led to each man losing an eye.

Returning to New Zealand and receiving his discharge after further treatment, Mr Norton later made good as a bee-farmer in Canterbury. He married, raised a family and saw his children marry. To-day he and Mrs Norton are retired and have recently returned from a holiday in the United Kingdom. Both enjoying robust health, they provide an example of completely successful integration with their adopted country. They are the guests in Gisborne of Mr and Mrs A. Wade, Fox Street.

Mr Norton set a fine example of how to succeed in beekeeping in New Zealand by his tenacity and application of commonsense methods of production in a comparatively difficult beekeeping area through lean and fat years without losing confidence. Mr Norton has our best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

His son Bernard has taken over his beekeeping business.

WASPS MAY CAUSE ABSENCE OF FLIES

WELLINGTON, March 9.

An unusual absence of flies in spite of the recent humid weather, which might have been expected to provide ideal breeding conditions, has been noticed in one or two suburbs of Wellington and in parts of the North Island.

Wasps, which have themselves developed into a major pest within a few years, are thought by the manager of a Wellington pest control service to be killing flies.

The Department of Agriculture said today that although there was no actual evidence of wasps attacking flies, they did live on other insects, and it was quite possible that flies were among their victims.

—Press Association.

THE REALITY

"I know that some people in the north think that Southland is a land of snow and ice. In reality it is a land flowing with milk and honey," said the Mayor, Mr A. L. Adamson, when officially opening the conference of the New Zealand Drivers' Federation at Invercargill. "We don't tell everyone about this otherwise the people from the north might invade us and rob the hive."

PACKAGE BEES

In our system of management, using only package bees, combs are easily and quickly examined before hiving the packages. We replace the poor combs with extra dark combs of perfect worker cells, drawn out in a good honeyflow. We never place foundation in the brood chambers as the lack of drone cells will usually result in a good sized patch of drone being drawn out. Our supers are all light combs as we find that any honey extracted from dark combs will always run a little darker.—M. R. Frisque, in "American Bee Journal."

HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

LETTER FROM CHAIRMAN

The Authority has held two meetings since my last statement in the Journal.

One thing very evident is that branches and beekeepers are making use of their elected members to keep them up to date on our activities. It is not always physically possible for members of the Authority to supply exact figures at a moment's notice, but our aim is to keep beekeepers in the picture as much as possible, and information will only be withheld when there is a genuine reason for doing so.

Owing to the good season in many parts of both Islands we have received into our Depots up to the end of April approximately 1,200 tons of honey and you can rest assured we are doing our best to find satisfactory markets. Rewa Rewa honey is selling steadily and other dark honeys are moving better than we anticipated at one stage. I do not think it would be prudent to state our prices and markets in a journal which has readers all over the world.

The local market is well supplied with producers' honey at present. Some producers are of the opinion we should sell more on the local market, others that we should sell less. This problem will always cause friction unless the Authority is given areas it can exploit or unless producers agree that it can exploit the main centres of population. I should like to hear the views of producers at Conference through their delegates or from yourselves.

Seals revenue is increasing but as we have had some complaints that honey is being sold without seals we have reluctantly had to appoint an Inspector. We sincerely hope this will not have to be followed by prosecutions.

We are still concerned over our future regarding premises, and I have been going into this matter thoroughly. You will appreciate that land and building costs are heavy and any proposition that comes to our notice is carefully and critically examined by the Board. I am satisfied that all members of the Board have done and are doing a good job and that slowly but surely we are overcoming many difficulties we have inherited.

Yours faithfully,

25/4/55.

(Signed) E. A. FIELD, Chairman.

SEALS LEVY

According to reports from the Honey Marketing Authority's officers who have been undertaking seals inspection work, it appears that some beekeepers are uncertain of their obligations under the Honey Marketing Authority Regulations, 1953.

Copies of Clauses 20, 21 and 22 (1) of the Regulations are therefore set out below for the guidance of all concerned.

It will be noted that the only sales which are exempt from payment of the levy are:—

(a) Comb honey—provided no extracted honey is added.

(b) Honey exceeding 10lb. net weight sold by way of retail trade and

delivery taken at the apiary and provided orders are not solicited by advertisement.

(c) Honey accepted by the Authority for disposal.

Those beekeepers who still have cartons embossed with the old rate of levy are advised that the period during which adhesive seals may be used for the additional levy has been extended by the Minister to 30th November, 1955. Any lids then on hand should be forwarded to the Authority for reprinting.

W. H. CHUDLEY, Manager.

Levy

20. (1) Subject to the provisions of these regulations, there shall be payable in respect of all honey sold in New Zealand a levy computed according to the weight of the honey sold at the following rates:—

- (a) Where the weight of the honey sold is 8oz. or less, $\frac{1}{2}$ d;
 - (b) Where the weight of the honey sold is over 8oz. but does not exceed 1lb., 1d;
 - (c) Where the weight of the honey sold exceeds 1lb. but does not exceed $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb., $1\frac{1}{2}$ d;
 - (d) Where the weight of the honey exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. but does not exceed 2lb., 2d;
 - (e) Where the weight of the honey sold exceeds 2lb., at the rate of 1d a pound for every exact number of pounds, increased by 1d for any part of a pound in excess of the exact number.
- (2) No levy shall be payable with respect to—
- (a) Any honey sold for consumption in the bee comb in which it was produced:

Provided that there shall not be exempted from payment of levy under this paragraph any honey in the bee comb where the comb or any portion thereof is packed, together with extracted honey, in the same retail container;

- (b) Any honey exceeding 10lb. net weight sold by a producer by retail at his apiary and delivered to the purchaser at the apiary in any case where the producer does not, by advertisement, solicit orders for the sale of honey by retail at his apiary;
 - (c) Any honey accepted by the Authority for disposal by the Authority on behalf of suppliers.
21. The levy shall be payable by—

- (a) The producer, except where the honey is sold to a packer; and
- (b) The packer where the honey is bought by him from the Authority or from a producer and is resold to the packer.

22. (1) Payment of the levy shall be indicated as follows:

- (a) Where honey is packed in a carton: by means of a stamp of the appropriate value embossed on the lid of the carton;

Provided that, for a period of six months from the commencement of these regulations, or such further period as the Minister may determine, payment of the levy may be indicated by means of an adhesive seal as well as in the manner authorised by this paragraph;

- (b) Where honey is packed in a canister: by means of a number and mark stencilled or imprinted on the canister or by means of an

adhesive seal affixed as provided by paragraph (c) hereof;

- (c) Where honey is packed in any other kind of container: by means either of an adhesive seal of the appropriate value which shall be affixed to the container in such a manner as to be easily seen or of a label affixed to the container and franked by the Authority in a manner indicating the payment of the correct amount of the levy payable in respect of the amount of honey in the container.

REMINDER TO BEEKEEPERS

Honey for Supply to Honey Marketing Authority

CONTRACT HONEY

Those beekeepers supplying honey to the Authority under contract are reminded that the last day for honey to be sent into depots is the 30th June, 1955. Honey sent in after that date cannot be treated as contract honey and will not qualify for the contract premium.

NON-CONTRACT HONEY

The pro rata system of payment lapses on the 30th June, 1955. All honey sent in after that date, whether by contractors or non-contractors, is subject to special purchase arrangements.

W. H. CHUDLEY, Manager.



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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HORTICULTURE DIVISION

The last available beekeeping statistics to the end of June 1953 show an increase of 3085 established apiaries and 61,977 hives of bees since 1945. Present holdings are well distributed as under:—

	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
North Island	4,619	7,810	122,391
South Island	1,949	4,720	69,162
Totals	6,568	12,530	191,553

Honey Crop Estimate 1954-55 Season

Fair to good beekeeping conditions were experienced in all districts last season except the West Coast of the South Island, Nelson and Marlborough, where crops generally were poor owing to prolonged periods of warm dry weather affecting the main nectar sources in those areas.

In other districts, particularly East Coast areas of the North Island and in Manawatu, good to heavy crops were secured. Record crops of amber coloured honey from bush sources, mainly rewarewa, were secured in the Tauranga district. Pohutukawa in coastal areas, however, carried very little bloom and little or no surplus honey was produced from that source.

Production from commercial and domestic apiaries for the year ended 31st March, 1955, is estimated in round figures at 7,000 tons of honey and 245,000lb. of commercial beeswax, approximately 550 tons of honey and 19,400lb. of beeswax more than the previous season.

Following are district estimates:—

District	Commercial, 30 hives and over	Under 30 hives	Total Production
Auckland, including North Auckland	670	130	800
Hamilton	1,170	54	1,224
Tauranga	1,000	75	1,075
Hastings	625	80	705
Hawera	406	57	463
Palmerston North	560	145	705
Greymouth	140	16	156
Christchurch	570	30	600
Oamaru	660	40	700
Invercargill	550	50	600

Consumers generally in New Zealand are showing a preference for mild flavoured light coloured honey, consequently more honey of the darker coloured grades than usual has been submitted for grading for export.

Beekeeping Instruction Course

The Department has been asked to conduct a short course for North Island beekeepers along the lines of the meetings held at Timaru for South Island beekeepers last year, to coincide with a general meeting of producers to be arranged.

The matter of venue was left to North Island Executive members of the N.B.A. in consultation with Mr C. R. Paterson and the Executive of the South Auckland Branch of the Association.

A two-day course in August next has been decided upon, to be held in the Winter Gardens Hall (Show Buildings), Anglesea Street, Hamilton, on 10th and 11th August, details of which will be circulated by post to North Island producers as soon as possible.

Overseas Visit

A study of beekeeping problems and other matters of importance to the beekeeping industry in New Zealand and to the Department is to be made by Mr T. Palmer-Jones, Research Officer at the Animal Research Station, Wallaceville, who has left for overseas by air.

Mr Palmer-Jones will investigate the effect of the newer chemical weedkillers and insecticides on bees to determine the way in which these preparations should be used without causing bee mortality. Many of these substances materially aid primary production, but unfortunately they are highly toxic to bees and great care must be taken to prevent bee poisoning occurring on such a scale that the essential service bees render as pollinators is impaired. A knowledge of the work done overseas regarding their effect on bees will be of great practical value in bringing our information up to date and will also give us the knowledge necessary for carrying out our own experimental work when local conditions make this necessary.

He will also study the latest methods of controlling bee diseases, including Acarine disease. Fortunately Acarine disease does not occur in New Zealand. We do not permit the entry of honey bees into New Zealand from countries where it is known to exist, and when queens are imported the attendant bees are dissected and examined for disease before the queens are sent on to the importer. This system is normally perfectly satisfactory but it is not proof against individuals who deliberately set out to evade it. The seriousness of the position has been emphasised by a recent report that Acarine disease has now reached the Argentine.

If Acarine disease was discovered in New Zealand the most drastic action would be necessary to prevent its spread.

Our concern in these days of fast air travel is to take every precaution to prevent it reaching New Zealand, and if it does to take immediate action to deal with it. The Department has under consideration a plan for controlling Acarine if it appears. However, it would not be prudent to proceed further at this stage without first-hand information on control measures and the extent of treatment necessary to eradicate it if possible, which can best be obtained at Rothamsted Experimental Station in Britain.

Some important honey marketing problems of a technical nature will be investigated for which the Honey Marketing Authority has agreed to contribute a part of the expense involved. These include an investigation of the Fiehe test as applied to New Zealand honey in Antwerp last year. The honey in question had left New Zealand in perfect condition, yet proof of adulteration was based on the Fiehe test, which is unreliable and under certain conditions will give a false positive reaction.

It is vitally important that this matter is looked into on the spot and that all parties concerned in the sale and purchase of New Zealand honey overseas for shipment to the Continent are shown that our honey is not adulterated and that application of a Fiehe test for adulteration is unreliable, otherwise it may be used to discredit New Zealand honey on the Continent and ultimately affect sales adversely in the United Kingdom.

Other matters to be looked into include a check at the London end on the condition of comb honey shipped from New Zealand and the suitability of various types of trial packages used to ensure safe carriage of this fragile product before setting suitable standards for use by shippers.

Mr Palmer-Jones will also study the methods adopted overseas in obtaining a more effective nectar secretion. His itinerary will include visits to research stations in Switzerland and France. He will be based at the Rothamsted Research Station but will visit other research stations in the United Kingdom. He will be absent from New Zealand about six months.

T. S. WINTER,
Superintendent, Beekeeping Industry.

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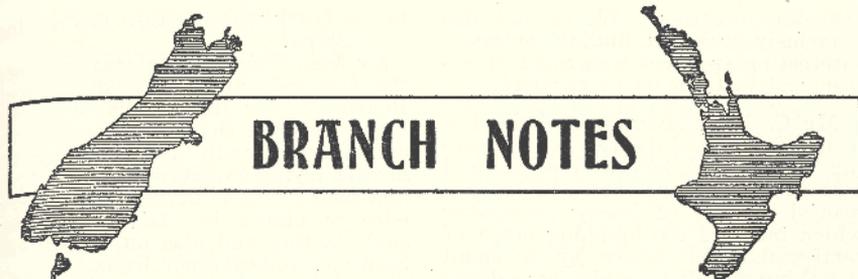
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Two Prominent Canterbury Beekeepers

Mr T. E. Pearson, Darfield (left) and Mr R. L. Holland, Pleasant Point

(Photos by courtesy of Langwood Studio, Timaru)



NORTHLAND

A very enjoyable afternoon was spent by members of the Northland Branch at a Field Day held at Mr Ivy's home apiary in Whangarei on March 26th, 1955. There was a demonstration by the Apiary Instructor for Northland, Mr D. R. Roberts, on the latest method of destroying wasps' nests in buildings and other inaccessible places. This was followed by a general discussion on the effects of the manuka blight on honey production in Northland, and there was some apprehension over the possibility of beekeeping ceasing to be a profitable occupation in this part of the land. More than one beekeeper has threatened to go out of business at the end of the next season for this reason. The manuka is being wiped out by this insect in Northland.

The next talk was given by Mr Roberts on the layout of the accepted design of warm rooms in general use at present. This was very interesting and many hints were offered in this direction.

There was then a discussion on the problems of queen rearing and the introduction of queens to the hives. Many ideas were put forward and the suggestions were appreciated by all present.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in Mr Ivy's beautiful home, where Mrs Ivy served a tasty afternoon tea and a general discussion again took place. At the conclusion Mr Holdaway thanked Mr and Mrs Ivy for the use of their honeyhouse and the afternoon tea.

—P. Gavin.

SOUTH AUCKLAND

Honey Crop

In areas that have a late spring flow there was a good yield before the main flow except where there had been excessively dry weather in a few areas. But when the time came for the commencement of the main flow, North Auckland and some parts of the North Waikato were too dry to hope for anything approaching even an average crop. From that time on it was simply a case of rain in a hurry or extremely low crops. Some were lucky—some were not. For the next six weeks very localised rain, at fairly long intervals, fell throughout most of the Auckland Province. Those beekeepers who got the most of this sparse fall found ideal conditions for nectar secretion in the intervals of very hot weather and yields of 7 tons per hundred hives have been reported. The unfortunate beekeeper who might have been within a few miles of the former class and experienced little rain report as low as 1½ to 2 tons per hundred. The difference came in late January and February, when the areas of the latter beekeepers had completely dried up while the former continued to yield nectar at a steady rate.

To give an average even now is thus difficult, but it is probably in the vicinity of 3½ tons per hundred.

Field Day

A fortnight ago the Branch held a Field Day at the Opal Springs, Mata-mata.

We were fortunate to have a perfect day and nearly 100 beekeepers, including their families, turned out

for the occasion. We were also extremely lucky in finding so many interesting speakers who could entertain and instruct us in our lore.

Mr C. R. Paterson spoke about a heating cable and its uses for increasing the flow of honey in pipes, and also gave a demonstration of his improved method of honey processing which included the breaking down of semi-granulated honey by a small threshing machine completely enclosed from the air. Of the many hundreds of gadgets being used by beekeepers all over the country to-day which originated from Mr Paterson, this may prove to be the most revolutionary.

Sir Edmund Hillary, who is a member of the Branch, gave a most interesting and entertaining address on his experiences with bees and beekeepers in other parts of the world, and assured us that he had gone to some trouble to take honey with him on the successful Everest Expedition, and after hoarding it for some time eventually opened it to find the 5lb. tin disappear into many hungry climbers' mouths in a few minutes. It was therefore with great joy that he found honey had been discovered on the South Col: Swiss honey in perfect condition left there from the previous year. Some of this he made certain went right up to the final Camp IX and was finished by Tensing and himself before the final assault.

The Chairman of the N.Z.H.M.A. and the Dominion President of the N.B.A. both gave sidelights on the observations and reports which had just been released in the Journal, and members seemed glad of the opportunity to ask them questions.

Our local member of the H.M.A., Mr W. Nelson, also gave a short address, and Mr Chudley, Manager for the Marketing Authority, was available for questions on the operation of the Auckland Depot.

Mr L. G. Corlett, of Tauranga, gave a fascinating demonstration of a mechanical truck loader at work, and many were the uplifted eyebrows and envious glances as the machine carried four solid supers of honey up on

to the truck without even any lifting or pushing.

Mr Alan Bates, of Matamata, closed the day with an address on "Queen Rearing." Mr Bates, who is among those few with the largest experience of beekeeping in the country, is always trying to improve his methods and pass on some of his vast experience to others in instructive talks such as this and also on a personal beekeeper-to-beekeeper basis.

Together with swims in the Springs at Matamata, numerous cups of tea, and those personal chats we all enjoy having with others of the same interests as ourselves, it proved to be a Field Day which was successful in every respect.

—R. R. Chandler.

HAWKES BAY

Since our last report the Branch activities have been confined to deep rumblings from individual members who have heard rumours of price-cutting on the honey market. If these rumours prove correct, no doubt violent explosions will follow.

Between rumblings, extractors may be heard throwing out a better-than-average crop of honey. Generally speaking, the sources of lighter coloured honey have yielded more freely than usual and in some localities it is quite a change to lift the cover from a hive and gaze on nature's bountiful harvest instead of gazing at the floorboards.

Spring management proved very difficult in some areas, owing to a long spell of humid, showery conditions which proved much better for producing swarms than honey. The previous season we in Hawkes Bay thought we knew all about the management of bees, but since then many of us have been forced to think again. However, we at least have a better crop of honey, and if the Scotch thistles are not too Scotch, there is still a wee bit more to come.

—P. Berry.

WEST COAST

Preparations are well in hand for the forthcoming conference to be held at Greymouth.

The Secretary, Mr Glasson, gives the impression that he thrives on work and it will be no fault of his if there is anything lacking by way of arrangement.

Much thought and work have been expended to ensure that the work and interests of apiarists in general will be suitably displayed at the Junior Chamber's Fair at Greymouth, May 12-14. —Tom Holland.

SOUTH CANTERBURY

Field Day held 4th December, 1954,
at Bush Apiary of W. Jennings

After morning tea our Branch Secretary, Mr R. Davidson, addressed the gathering on the latest information of a recent meeting of the Honey Marketing Authority.

He commenced his talk seated on a honey case, but later came down to earth by sitting on a cushion.

His talk was followed with interest and as usual Bob gave us all the latest information and answered questions. The next item of interest was a honey pump complete with motor and reduction gears, produced by Mr A. Ecroyd of Christchurch. All agreed it was an ideal set-up and no doubt sales will result from the demonstration. After lunch a visit was made to the apiary situated up the hill in a lovely spot, with native bush, bell birds—a real beekeeper's paradise. No wonder Bill Jennings has such a contented look about him when he has this retreat to visit away from the rush and bustle of city life.

The first hive opened by the owner of the bees had no less than four full supers of honey on—quite a good start with the main honey flow still to come. During the manipulation of the supers Bill Jennings handed me his smoker and I was able to see at close hand its good and bad points. No doubt it was a good smoker about ten years ago. On puffing the bellows

I discovered it was a dual purpose outfit. The wind from the top of the bellows cooled your face while the balance was sufficient to cause a bit of smoke to issue from the barrel. Of course Bill has become attached to this smoker over the years and has not noticed the steady deterioration setting in.

At this stage our apiary instructor, Mr I. W. Forster, gave a demonstration of handling bees with a miracle powder he produced from a bottle. A little of the dust added to the smoker and he could work wonders with the bees, make them lie down, go to sleep, and throw out the drones. He called it laughing gas, but the bees did everything else but laugh, though I did notice some laughing by the spectators. A super of honey and bees was given a few puffs and the bees quickly dropped out of the combs. We were told they would be O.K. in a couple of hours.

During this demonstration Mr R. Holland, who was suffering from a bad back, decided to sit down but was unfortunate enough to sit on some hot smoke fuel. He quickly changed his position, only to sit down again on a choice sample of comb honey which somehow had been dropped. However, Dick was lucky next try, and during a general discussion which followed he described his method of dividing hives and working of the two queen system.

Our President, Harry Cloake, then showed us through two of his package hives which he had brought with him. Beekeepers showed great interest in these colonies, but it was the general feeling they were rather backward and would hardly build up in time for the honey flow if it was a normal season. However, it will be interesting to know the final result of this experiment. Harry showed us everything about the hives, including the strapping round the hives he had used to move them. It was obvious Harry had been up early that morning and had spent much time and thought for our benefit.

Thus ended what must be called an enjoyable and instructive field day. Let us all do our part to keep them that way.

**Field Day held at the Home Apiary
of Mr E. O. Ball, Hook, on
26th March, 1955**

A welcome to the visitors was extended by Mr E. O. Ball, after which an address was given by Mr R. Davidson, member of the N.Z. Honey Marketing Authority.

Mr Davidson gave us up-to-date information on many matters relating to marketing, such as the result of trial shipments of bulk honey in cardboard cartons to the North Island and new depots established in the South Island. His talk was followed with interest and a vote of thanks was expressed.

The next talk was given by our Apiary Instructor, Mr I. Forster, who showed samples of most types of honey produced in New Zealand. A "gadget" was demonstrated known as a pricker pad, used to help extraction of manuka honey. This was new to most members present, quite a dangerous-looking weapon not made to be sat on.

The gathering expressed thanks to Mr Forster for his instructive address. Just before lunch hour the opportunity was taken by Mr R. Holland to express best wishes on behalf of all present to Mr B. T. Cloake, who is making a trip overseas. In presenting a gift to Mr Cloake, Mr Holland mentioned the sterling service over the years Mr Cloake had given the industry, and all were pleased to hear he was taking a well-earned trip abroad. Mr Cloake suitably replied.

After lunch a talk was given by Mr E. O. Ball on his method and experiences of the two queen system of raising and introducing queens, the only extra equipment needed being a division board. Mr Ball stated he had good results and intended to use the system on a larger scale in the coming season. Mr Ball answered questions and was thanked for his address.

The next subject discussed was the matter of a pollination service. Mr H. Cloake said he felt the time had arrived when beekeepers must be pre-

pared to render this service to farmers or else other beekeepers would step in. Many problems were discussed but time did not permit anything definite to be settled, so beekeepers were asked to think on the matter in the meantime.

Afternoon tea brought to a close a most profitable and enjoyable field day.

—J. G. McKenzie.

NORTH OTAGO

The North Otago Branch held its annual Field Day at Clark's Dam, Maheno, on February 12th. Although we were not favoured by the weather, approximately forty beekeepers, their wives and families attended.

The day was made very interesting and instructive by the men who addressed the gathering and no man interested in bees could have regretted giving up a few hours of his valuable time to attend.

The speakers were: Mr I. Forster, "Prevention and Control of Robbing"; Mr H. Cloake, "Efficiency in the Honey House"; Mr J. McFadzien, "Useful Hints in Beekeeping"; Mr R. Davidson, "Honey Marketing Authority"; and Mr Paterson, "Creaming Honey."

Lolly scrambles, races, ice cream and billy tea all went to make the day very enjoyable.

Although the beekeepers themselves could not be lined up for the races, their wives showed them in no uncertain way just how the 100 yards sprint should be run. Mrs Wilson, Mrs Forster and Mrs Rawcliffe tied equal for first place, and were rewarded with a chocolate fish each for their efforts.

Our President, Mr W. Irving, closed the day with a short speech and thanked all those present for coming along and making the day a success.

—R. B. Mackie.

SOUTHLAND

We report with regret the death on 9th February of Mr Carl Larson, formerly of Myross Bush, who has latterly been living in retirement in Invercargill. Mr Larsen was a member of the Southland Branch for over thirty years, including two

periods as President, and several very successful field days were held at his home. His unflinching cheerfulness and good nature made him a very popular figure with all who were privileged to know him. We extend to Mrs Larson our deepest sympathy.

—J. W. Fraser.

NOTES FOR BEGINNERS

By "Skep"

With your bees snugly packed down for the winter, and your honey house all spick and span, you doubtless have the same satisfied glow as a tired mother who has at last got her small offspring warmly tucked in for the night.

Whilst she has a comparatively short respite, you have almost three months in which to ponder many things.

This is the usual time to review your season's activities, and plan your next season's programme.

Here is something to occupy your thoughts to-night.

Fire

A couple of seasons ago, I loaded my truck with the necessary equipment to winter down a favourite apiary of mine, in a very sheltered position.

I had a breeder there, on which I placed considerable value. I planned to bring her home in a nucleus made up from her own bees, and took along a small unit to join with the hive, in order to keep it established.

A few supers needed replacing. Some new ones were on the truck, together with paint and brushes, entrance guards, and a few sundry items.

The day was fine, and I thought as I approached the apiary, how much I was going to enjoy this job.

Getting nearer, I noticed a scorched tree, and some blackened gorse.

My smile quickly changed to a puzzled frown as I hastened on. I met an appalling sight on rounding the bend. Where once had been a

thriving apiary, nothing remained but 15 little blackened heaps, each consisting of a handful or two of burnt nails, the wire part of a Waldron queen excluder, and the galvanised iron which had covered the roof.

Miraculously, one hive had escaped total destruction, but was deeply charred from top to bottom.

Alas! my breeder was no more.

After surveying the ruins for a time, I set out to find the origin of the fire, with a view to getting some clue of the culprit and take him to task. I was due for disappointment on this score, for the fire had obviously spread from a point where a shooting party had left their picnic fire without taking thorough precautions to extinguish it before leaving.

From there it had spread through gorse and broom into the 10ft. pine hedge I had planted round the site. Devouring this, it made good headway through the long dry grass which abounded in the apiary. The hives provided grand fuel, and must have been quickly reduced to ashes.

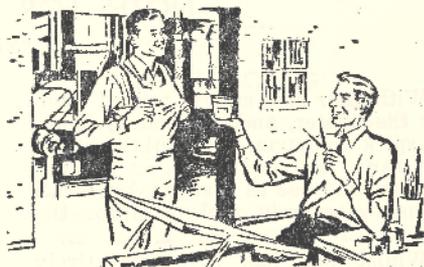
The loss of my bees was a bitter pill, but, more bitter still, was the fact that I had to admit that I was almost equally to blame with the shooters for allowing such a super bonfire to exist.

Gorse and broom had grown right up to my shelter belt. Long grass grew everywhere, with only a square mown in front of each hive. I set out on a fire prevention tour next morning, and viewed each apiary on the basis of "How would my bees fare if a fire occurred here?"



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The work seemed to acquire more and more urgency as I progressed from one apiary to another. Some were safe, but others were just beautifully arranged for destruction. This situation develops so gradually as to go unnoticed until you view it purely from a fire risk point of view.

On routine visits, your interest in the welfare of the bees tends to exclude the fire safety aspect.

This applies more especially to out-apiaries, of course. Your home apiary is, I hope, a model of perfection.

Whenever a new apiary is being established, it is wise to take the precaution of paring the grass off where each hive is to be located. This removes an excellent starting point for fire.

A beehive is a highly inflammable affair, for once the floorboard burns through, the combs melt and feed the flame with beeswax.

Possibly those who live in the ever-green belts of New Zealand will smile at all this from their favoured positions, but not so those who, at some time during the year, experience conditions so dry that a spark from the exhaust of a faulty truck muffler is sufficient to ignite the parched herbage.

It may be of interest to learn that hives may be insured against fire for a small premium. I have carried a cover of £4 per hive for many years.

The Smoker Hazard

Your smoker can create a considerable fire hazard when conditions are dry, especially if the lid hinge is faulty or non-existent.

While endeavouring to puff smoke between supers, it is easy to exert pressure on the end of the nozzle. The lid falls off, and, likely or not, the burning contents fall to the ground.

In windy weather, this can quickly cause a blaze which is exceedingly hard to extinguish, for lack of tools or water.

When young and careless, I set fire to the load on my truck as the result of carrying a lighted smoker hazily in a box amongst other gear, whilst travelling from one apiary to the next.

The lid had come off, allowing the fire to reach smoker fuel, bee brushes and some paper carried for uniting colonies. The draught caused by the moving truck quickly made a blaze, which, fortunately, was discovered in time, and extinguished by throwing the burning objects into a nearby water-race.

The damage in this case was, two pair of burnt hands, loss of one man's eyebrows, two sets of smoker bellows, two bee brushes, and a big hole in the truck cover.

Since then all smokers, alight or otherwise, are invariably carried in a strong metal box with a tight-fitting securely fastened lid.

We are all prone to forget too readily the amount of heat and smoke generated by even a small fire. It need not reach any great proportions to render approach impossible.

Hidden Tragedies

Have you ever spared a moment's thought to consider the tragedies and heartbreaks which often lie behind the bare, short paragraphs which appear almost daily in our newspapers? Boat overturned—man drowned. Car hits pole—woman killed. House destroyed by fire.

Less than a year ago just such a paragraph, about one inch long, appeared in our morning paper.

"The honey-house of Mr B— was totally destroyed by fire at 2.30 a.m."

Had I not known this man well, or if he had been in some other line of business, I might have dismissed the matter with a casual, "Well, hard luck, old chap." But he was a friend of mine, and I had a honey house too, so I could well picture his plight. I got in touch with him immediately and learned the worst. The work of almost a lifetime lost in less than one hour. His honey extracting plant, all his super combs, his truck, and all the hundred and one useful items which a beekeeper accumulates during twenty years in the honey business, were just a heap of twisted iron and ashes.

It takes a stout heart to start again from this.

What Would You Do ?

If someone rushed in at this moment and yelled at you, "Your honey house is on fire!" just what would you do? Have you ever visualised such a possibility? Have you ever made any preparations to meet such a situation?

It is night, and if the truth were known, you could hardly find a bucket, let alone a fire extinguisher or fire hose.

To-morrow morning just take a look round your shed. You will be amazed at the amount of highly inflammable material you have there, when you look at it from the bonfire point of view.

There are those stacks of extracted combs, that heap of beeswax, the pile of honey cartons, not to mention cases, paper to line them, maybe your truck in a lean-to at the back. And, yes! believe it or not, I have even seen a drum of petrol in a back corner of a honey shed!

The Main Culprits

The fact that the risk exists will be readily admitted.

Perhaps it can be greatly reduced by considering the main fire culprits, and taking all reasonable precautions to minimise their danger.

No. 1: Electrical appliances switched on and left unattended over long periods—often overnight.

This is, without a doubt, the main cause of fire disasters amongst beekeepers.

The heating and drying of honey in combs usually entails overnight heating.

The melting of honey in 60lb tins is in the same category, as is cappings melting in some cases.

No heater in which the element glows should be used. Tubular heating or Pyrotenax wire is by far the safest type for this work.

All hot rooms and ovens should be constructed of non-combustible materials.

If a fan can be dispensed with, so much the better. They are often given continuous service for weeks on end. Failures can and do occur, resulting

in fire. If you must work a fan, attend to its lubrication at regular intervals, and keep it well clear of anything which will burn.

I narrowly escaped a major fire in my hot-room through a fan affixed to a pinex ceiling burning out. Luckily it occurred in daytime and was noticed before the fire got a good hold. Needless to say, my hot-room and heating system were completely reorganised after this experience.

Some time ago I paid a visit to a beekeeper who operated a "top element electric cappings melter." As we approached the honey house I thought I could smell something burning. When I got inside I knew I could. Blue smoke was issuing from his melter in fine style.

I must have looked horror-stricken, for he hastened to explain that "this type of melter gets fairly warm after running overnight!"

If you must use a piece of equipment like this for any purpose, first plough a quarter-acre of ground, set it in the middle, and let it smoke to its heart's content.

2: Mysterious short circuits in electrical wiring.

It is usual for power authorities to carry out a complete inspection of electrical installations once every five years.

Owing to pressure of work and staff shortages, this is not always possible. An inspection will, however, be carried out almost immediately if application is made by the owner.

If your electrical fittings have done reasonable service, this is a wise precaution to take. Such an inspection can ensure greater safety.

3: Beeswax or paraffin wax heated to flash point.

It is very dangerous to heat any wax by direct flame inside a building. When flash-point is reached, it explodes into flame without actual contact with fire. This is most likely to occur when heating paraffin wax in preparation for dipping hive fittings.

Unless you employ steam for wax melting do it in a detached shed or outside.

4: *Sawdust packed into walls for insulation.*

Insurance men frown on this practice. Should it become damp, it heats up, and presents a fire risk.

Urine from rats and mice on confined sawdust is suspected of causing fires. So say the insurance men, who are trained to know all the answers. Moral: Avoid using it.

5: *Smokers left alight after use.*

These have been known to start fires, when set aside carelessly and forgotten.

6: *Smoking by workers.*

In the interests of both health and fire safety, smoking should be prohibited in your honey house.

Insurance

Carry a reasonable insurance cover on the building and contents. Read carefully the conditions of your policy.

Extinguishers

A chemical fire extinguisher is a good investment. It is particularly effective in the initial stages of a fire caused by electrical failure. In such cases it may be dangerous to use water.

Remember, however, to aim the contents of this type of extinguisher at the base of the fire, and keep in mind the fact that the flow is quickly exhausted. In small units it may last less than one minute.

The most effective fire-fighting weapon I have handled is a type of knapsack sprayer with a trombone style pump on the end of its hose. It is in almost general use by Rural County Councils as an effective, portable one-man unit for fighting grass fires and small outbreaks anywhere.

It can be made to send a column of water high in the air, or spray a considerable distance.

It is comparatively inexpensive, and, if kept full of water, is always ready for immediate use. It can be filled from any source of water supply in an emergency, as it does not tend to block up readily, as do most orchard type sprayers.

In no other instance is prevention more desirable than cure.

It will pay you well to take every possible precaution against fire.

Something More Cheerful

And now, if I have any readers left, after this doleful bedtime story, I had better end my tale on a more cheerful note, lest much sleep be lost.

Some Advantages in the Beekeeping Life

In my last "Notes" I listed ten disadvantages in being a beekeeper. Possibly you have considered them. Let me here give you ten advantages, briefly and without undue comment:

1. You can be manager of your own business.

2. Men and women suffering considerable physical disability or disablement, who have the aptitude, can derive mental, physical and financial benefit from beekeeping, on a scale suited to their ability, if living in an area suited to honey production.

3. It is a healthy, largely outdoor, occupation.

4. The work is as varied as the changing seasons of the year.

5. It offers considerable scope for inventors and research enthusiasts.

6. Bees do not require attention every day of the year. In fact, as far as I know, they are the only producing stock which attend to their own requirements for the three winter months.

7. You will find valuable friends among the beekeeping fraternity.

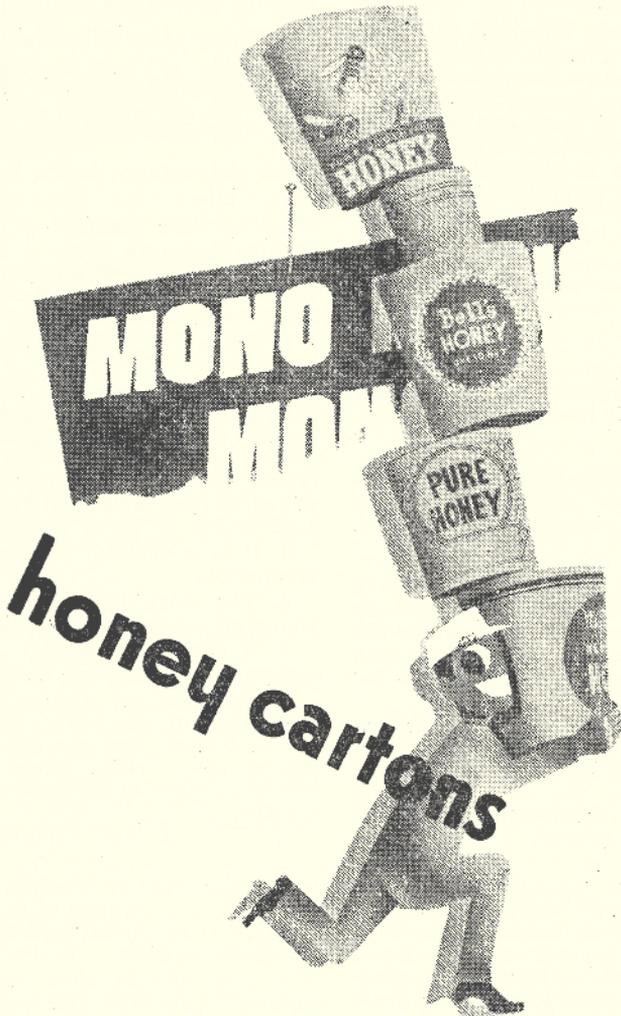
8. Your wife or husband can help you with at least part of the work or hobby. Your mutual interest adds to the domestic bliss.

9. You are in close touch with nature. This will give you a more balanced outlook, and enable you to better discern true values from false.

10. I have yet to find the beekeeper who, having been laid low by 'flu or more serious illness during the winter, does not rise from his bed and want to start life anew, on the first fine day of spring, when the hum of bees is in the air.

Adieu, My Friends

And now, readers, I must say adieu. I have had the privilege of



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being your advisor in these columns for the past two years. During that time we have covered a good deal of ground together.

I hope that you may have gained a little more knowledge of this fascinating subject from my writings, and I know that you will follow with interest the "Notes" of a new "Skep," who will doubtless bring a new outlook and new ideas to this page.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: It is with genuine regret that we come to the end of the present "Skep's" term as contributor to this column. His articles have been valuable in themselves and they have had a heart-warming quality which reflects his generosity in writing them. We extend to him, on behalf of all readers, our sincere thanks.)

BEES ON MONTGOMERY CLOVER IN SOUTH CANTERBURY

By Robert Davidson

Beekeepers in South Canterbury are aware of a steadily growing demand for bees to fertilise small seeds. In the past there have been demands for bees for white clover paddocks, but with apiaries ever getting smaller and closer together, the first request for bees on white clover was usually followed by the establishment of a permanent apiary site. The money from this side line of apiary work could only be looked upon as a temporary benefit from the changed outlook of the small seed farmer.

The trend last year and this year is something entirely different. Last year it was requests for hives on red clover paddocks, with payment if there was no other way out. This year it amounted to short notice demands for large hives in large numbers. Farmers with permanent apiaries of up to 25 hives on their properties were demanding twice as many hives on adjacent paddocks of red clover, and only the thought that perhaps they were being robbed induced them to settle for smaller numbers.

To my way of thinking, this service

to the farming community must be organised and developed, if we are to fulfil our proper function in agricultural development. This year we were caught flat-footed with honey on hives that were the most convenient to shift. Farmers must be prepared, in early January, to say if they want hives of bees, how many, and when they require them shifted on to the paddocks. Hives can then be stripped of their surplus honey, prepared for shifting well in advance, and shifted the first cold spell in February. On many farms in recent years there has been a tendency to take the clover to the bees, that is the paddocks of Montgomery clover were situated, in rotation, around the apiary. This practice is still being carried on—on some properties—but the latest move is for large numbers of big hives, all around the paddock, or at least at both ends, in a concentration from one to three hives to the acre.

Some Practical Aspects of Shifting Hives on to Red Clover Paddocks

Some years ago we decided that full sized hives of bees must, in future, only be shifted in the winter, when hives were frozen to the ground, and entrances need not be blocked. Alas for such good resolutions, farmers will readily pay 30/- per hive for bees on red clover, so the shifting screens are got out and we are involved in hard work again; usually in the rain, with conditions very unpleasant for us, and the bees not in their friendliest mood. We find that we have forgotten a lot; this shifting business has to be well thought out and planned in advance, if hives are not going to be lost through overheating or suffocating. As the honey gathered from red clover is practically nil, care must be taken to leave plenty of stores on the hives before they are shifted, or hives may die of starvation with the clover in full bloom. Hives situated within fifteen miles of the coast will lose weight on red clover paddocks.

My suggestions for successful shifting are:—

1. Only shift to properties where the farmers will eventually pay

for the services rendered.

2. Be prepared to give full value by only shifting full sized hives. This is very important to gain the confidence of the farming community in your district.
3. Use a screen that is six inches above the super combs. Like an empty half-depth super with a gauze screen on top.
4. Strap or wire the hive and screen together, with a strapping or wiring machine.
5. Shift the hives on to and off the paddocks promptly, when the farmer wishes.
6. If no cool weather comes along in early February, water is beneficial if sprinkled through the screens, from a can or hose.
7. This is one section of beekeeping practice where "Be Prepared" really pays dividends, saves stings, and prevents loss of colonies.

As far as charges go, it pays us at 30/- per hive, if lots of not less than 20 hives are shifted to one location; but if beekeepers contemplate taking up this service to the farming community, I advise them to carefully work out their costs for the double shifts, double this cost to allow for mishaps and loss, and contemplate the final figure.

For lucerne the request may come for hives spread evenly over the paddock, so that there is one or two hives on every acre. This means real work, not only on locating the hives on the paddock, but afterwards, as honey may be gathered from this crop. Three pounds per hive would not be too much to ask, or perhaps a percentage of the crop, but personally I prefer a flat rate per hive payable when the bees quit the paddock.

The time to organise and prepare for this shifting is in the winter when good gear can be prepared. It was at the last Gore Field Day that Mr T. Winter reminded Otago and Southland beekeepers that they had bottom boards and bottom boxes to their hives. When shifting it is unpleasant to find that, not the beekeeper, but dry rot or perhaps mould, has taken possession of the bottom board.

For this fertilisation service to be a success the farming community must have a high opinion of a beekeeper's honesty, his good gear, his quiet bees, his trucks, his ability to shut gates, and generally to make a fast, efficient job. Under these conditions he does not mind paying for the services rendered by the bees.

WORLD NEWS

Australia

The Australian Bee Journal mentions the registration of a new company in New South Wales on January 24th, Australian Honey Producers Pty. Ltd. The Directors are D. G. Weidenhofer, L. A. Gardiner, Leslie A. Furness and G. R. Hopkins.

The company was registered with a nominal capital of £50,000 and its objects are to acquire, sell and dispose of honey and beeswax and other apiary products. The names of the Directors suggest a close affiliation between Australian Honey Producers' Co-operative Society Ltd., of South Australia, and Walworth Industries (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., of New South Wales. The latter company is, in turn, a subsidiary of Walworth Industries Ltd., of New Zealand.

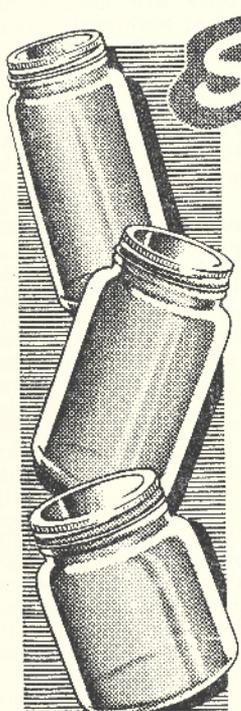
Canada

"We used to think that we had to export a certain amount of our honey to avoid a surplus on our market, but once we got a steady advertising programme under way we were able to liquidate our surplus and increase domestic demand to more than consume our production. We now feel quite sure that if we are able to keep our advertising programme in force it is quite possible to keep demand ahead of production, particularly since there are definite limitations on the amount of honey which we can produce in Canada."—From a statement by R. M. Pugh, Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Beekeepers' Council, in the "Australian Bee Journal."

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CREAMING PROBLEMS

(By A. J. Shaw)

At the Field Day held at Clark's Dam near Maheno on Saturday, 12th February, Mr C. R. Paterson, a Field Instructor, gave an interesting demonstration of a new appliance for creaming honey. His introductory remarks dealing with the advantages and disadvantages of current methods of improving the spreadability of granulated honey were comprehensive and attentively followed by a large audience, which appreciated his humorous references to the effectiveness or otherwise of some of the methods that have been used in the past.

The appliance used by Mr Paterson was a small compact machine which rotated several small paddles at high speed while partly granulated honey passed through. It was not a pump but depended on gravity for the flow of the honey, and the result was all that could be desired. Not only was the texture and spreadability excellent but the colour lightened considerably. Among Mr Paterson's numerous examples of honey treated by this method were some of the darker N.I. honeys, including Rewarewa, and the colour improvement in these was quite remarkable. Experimenting has been carried on for a reasonably long period to show that the creaming is not only immediately effective but lasts satisfactorily over several months.

Most beekeepers would welcome an appliance that would do the job well and at a lower cost than the present methods. If this machine processes the quantity in a reasonable time it should be the answer to their requirements.

After the demonstration there was a break for tea and the assembly quickly resolved itself into small groups, most of which discussed the demonstration among themselves. A bystander, listening in to some of the bigger commercial honey producers, was highly entertained by their

accounts of disastrous experiences with their processing plants. One prominent South Canterbury producer said his apiary yard was littered up with bits and pieces of machinery broken while trying to stir granulated honey. He overcame the difficulty by having everything constructed on a massive scale right back to the motor. The merits of various gears were thoroughly explored. All favoured steering boxes from old motor trucks as the best reducing gear, although some used an ordinary gear-box as well. One fortunate man had available a good supply of steering boxes from a garage, as these frequently break down if the honey granulation has gone too far before stirring commenced. Another recalled the time when he switched on only to hear the motor protesting and groaning under the strain. Realising he had left the transmission in top gear, he had to rush upstairs and change over smartly. Of course with these plants, belts are useless for power transmission; nothing less than heavy chain and sprocket will carry the load.

One producer thought he would cap these various tales of woe when he told the sad tale of what happened on one occasion. A ton tank full of honey had granulated a little too far, but he managed to get the paddles turning and hoped everything would be all right. The resistance of partly granulated honey, however, manifests itself in mysterious ways. The paddles turned all right but the arms carrying them gradually bent downwards until they cut through the bottom of the tank. Quite a quantity of very sticky honey escaped before this disaster was discovered. This story was received sympathetically enough but was immediately eclipsed by one of the others, who very briefly said: "The worst experience I had was somewhat similar. I thought the granulation might be a little too far advanced but determined to risk it. My gear is really powerful—inch and a half shafting throughout—so I risked it and switched on. To my absolute amazement, the whole tank began to turn."

VOLCANO NEWS

A South Island apiarist, peregrinating in the North, writes as follows, inter alia:—



WHEN THE LID IS OFF

This is what you see when an improvised covering is put over the top of a chimney; in this case it was a piece of tin large enough to keep the rain out—and that is just what the bees wanted. The owner had put a built-in cupboard or drawers in the fireplace recess, so that was another problem.

When the farmer's little boy was stung, he thought something should be done about it, so an attack was made with the help of an insecticide, at the top of the chimney.

Viewed from a "flying egg-beater" or from any other contrivance, it looked good honey, but I have an awful feeling that there is a drip-dripping, on to the top of some built-in drawers. A cap of cement is the only worthwhile lid, and it won't need to come off.

—"Tingle."

"You ought to have come on a tramp with me up Mt. Ngauruhoe last week. I wasn't able to get up to the top (about 7500ft.), for she was ACTIVE and sending out great volumes of gassy fumes which, as they met the colder upper air, would condense into great billowing smoke, white and pale blue. Looking at it through a telescope from the Chateau (8 to 10 miles away) the smoke could be seen to be surging upwards at a tremendous rate and splashes of hot cinders or scoria would be tossed out over the rim of the crater. At night one is fascinated by a red-hot or sunset glow above the mountain peak, so I guess one could make enough toast up there to supply the whole of New Zealand every morning for breakfast. The mountains of Ruapehu, Tongariro, and Egmont away to the east, are also devoid of snow (mid-April) except for some of last year's on the ski-ing field at Ruapehu, and it is said to be the driest for 30 years. The fine volcanic ash or dust in the smoke is evidently very abrasive, for if the smoke should drift across from Ngauruhoe to Ruapehu (perhaps 10 miles between) and settle on the ice-field it will scratch and score the skiis and would severely damage them, and so the ski-ing could come to a standstill till the next fall of snow. A roadway continues past the Chateau another 4½ miles up Ruapehu and then a chair-lift can take people another two miles up to the ski-ing field. The chair-lift will make the place very popular. The lake in Ruapehu crater is warm and surprisingly large. On a volcano you are in the presence of contrasts: nearby there is the fiery smoke and the surrounding barrenness of shattered stones, scoria, cinders and pumice; and below all this great heap are the tremendous forces of the underworld. Looking away to the distant purple plain you sense the "breath of God" and "the gentle touch which brings fertility."

PREPARATION FOR COMB HONEY PRODUCTION

(By Carl E. Killion, in "American Bee Journal")

To produce a crop of any agricultural product requires planning and preparation far in advance of the harvest, and the production of a crop of section comb honey is no exception to this rule. We sometimes wonder just when the preparation for the 1955 crop began. It could have been in mid-June, 1954, when we carefully selected breeding stock and began rearing queens to head our honey-producing colonies for 1955.

All our comb honey is produced on single hive bodies. Soon after the last comb honey supers are removed from the colonies, we are eager to give the colonies their second brood chamber to ensure more brood rearing space and food for winter, also food for spring brood rearing. Several of our colonies are used each year just for storing honey and pollen in full depth hive bodies which may be used in the fall on hives which were selected for comb honey production.

We have considerable table and bench work to do each winter. We enjoy this work as we are indoors and feel sorry for those who must work outdoors, especially in one of our "old-fashioned" Illinois winters. Part of our winter work is scraping propolis from all separators and supers. If new sections come in contact with ridges and bumps of propolis on the separators, the wood stains and, of course, the parts of the supers will not handle quite so easily. Each winter we try to have all sections folded, the foundation fastened in them and then painted with paraffin so as to be ready before the season starts. The past season we did not get all the supers ready in time for the flow and many times we were obliged to work until near midnight in order that the supers could be made ready to be placed on the hives the following day.

We are using more package bees in the production of comb honey and each year like the idea a little better. The packages are not supposed to

swarm the first year of installation, but sometimes they do. Years ago, when we produced a little liquid honey, we could turn our backs upon packages as far as swarming was concerned. We find that our overwintered colonies swarm at the start of the flow, while the packages start later on, toward the middle of the flow. The same swarm control methods are used with the packages as with the overwintered colonies. In the book, "Honey in the Comb," are several pages devoted to swarm control and requeening.

I would like to mention the method we use in getting both our package bees and our overwintered colonies ready for the expected honeyflow. We will start with our overwintered colonies. The earliest that we remove the winter wrapping is about the first week in April, but sometimes not until the middle of April. The first inspection is naturally for any dead colonies, amount of food, disease and queenlessness. All dead colonies and the very weak ones are immediately loaded on the truck and brought to the shop, the weak ones being gassed before loading. These bodies of combs are used later for package bees.

The colonies which need feed are marked and given sugar syrup and a pollen cake if necessary. We try to keep all colonies in the best condition for brood rearing by feeding and reversing the two brood chambers, as queens like to work in the upper hive body. This reversing puts more empty cells in the upper body and keeps the queen occupied with egg laying. A third hive body is sometimes necessary for the expansion of the colony. The bees are kept in the two or three hive bodies until the honeyflow actually starts, when the colony is reduced (cutting down, we call it) to a single hive body with the queen and most of the bees. The extra bodies of brood are used for increase, making a stack of about four or five bodies and two days later giving them a young queen or a ripe queen cell.

It is well to mention here that all our requeening is done during the honeyflow or about two weeks after

this cutting down procedure. The queens or cells given to the stacks of increase were grafted before our honeyflow to colonies being fed, so as to encourage as good cell building as possible.

Our bees are wintered in sheltered areas near here and after the cutting down to the single hive body they are hauled to the summer locations the next morning. The hives are screened on top and entrances left open. The trucks are carefully checked so that no stops are necessary while the bees are en route to their destination.

In most cases we have some foundation and the rest drawn combs in the hive bodies to receive the package bees. During the past few years we have been increasing the number of colonies each year and are always short when it comes to drawn brood comb. Some of the combs we use contain honey. A division board feeder holding about five pounds of sugar is placed in each body to receive a package. We also give our packages a pollen cake immediately. Here in east central Illinois for several years we have received our packages on May 1st, this last season on April 21st. We now like the latter date as the bees can store some pollen from dandelion. I feel that the pollen cakes given the packages at the time they are placed in the hives may reduce the supersedure of queens. We have had a very small amount of supersedure in all our package bees and this pollen cake feeding may account for the small percentage. In using package bees for comb honey, one must know what kind of bees he is getting as some bees do not do the job of comb building and finishing properly.

Our overwintered colonies have given us more sections per colony than our package bees have, but the packages give us less work. We expect to continue having our own colonies produce the bulk of our crop and buy only enough package bees to make up any winter loss and to provide for any possible increase that we may want.

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Reflections

... from the Editor's Desk

Overseas Visit

We welcome the announcement that Mr T. Palmer-Jones is visiting overseas research stations to investigate recent movements affecting the beekeeping industry. Mr Palmer-Jones has done very good work already at Wallaceville and a first-hand knowledge of developments in other countries will allow him to avoid duplication of effort and to bring all the available data to bear upon future research work. Now that the beekeeping industry is gaining recognition as an important phase of agriculture this overseas visit should be regarded as a good investment not merely for beekeepers but for New Zealand.

Another point worthy of mention is the generous co-operation to be found among many countries in the study of beekeeping and other agricultural problems. Indeed it is one of those encouraging signs of international amity which appear not too frequently in this 20th century world.

Bee Breeding

Ever since the introduction of the movable frame hive about one hundred years ago beekeepers have been improving their bees by breeding from the best colonies. The development of the honey bee enters a new phase, however, with the trend towards specialisation. Nowadays some beekeepers concentrate on honey production and others on queen breeding, and unfortunately it is the honey producers, although they have ceased raising queens, who are in the best position to select breeders in the environment of commercial honey production. To what extent is this factor frustrating our efforts to establish improved strains?

The suggestion made recently by Mr T. S. Winter in this connection deserves careful thought, i.e., that commercial honey producers might

club together to place bulk orders regularly for young queens and put into the pool each year one or two selected breeders from their own stocks. The peculiar problems of breeding honey bees certainly demand a concerted effort.

Creamed Honey

Methods of creaming honey are legion and the amount of air churned into the honey seems to vary accordingly. One or two cases which have come to our notice indicate that the standard containers will not hold the full weight of honey when it is creamed by some of the current methods. Producers who encounter this difficulty might do well to re-examine their particular processes.

Bacteria in Honey

Why is it that bacteria do not thrive in honey? Has any research been done to determine what substance gives rise to this very unusual phenomenon? This question is answered in "American Bee Journal" by M. H. Haydak (with scientific references) as follows:

"Honey has bactericidal properties. This is due partly to the fact that honey has an acid reaction and the pathogenic bacteria do not thrive in acid media. Another cause is the high sugar content of honey and the consequent hygroscopic property. Because of this property, moisture is absorbed from bacteria, which causes their destruction. Recently a bacteria-killing substance, "inhibin," which is sensitive to heat and is destroyed by the sunlight was isolated from honey."

"Fatal Monogamy"

Mr J. W. Fraser came across an article under the above heading in a recent issue of the magazine "Time," and with his usual eye for an opportunity conceived the idea of using the technique described therein to exterminate the wasp in New Zealand.

Incidentally, it is about time someone gave us a balanced verdict on the wasp. Like manuka blight, it has its protagonists as well as its antagonists, but now that it has been with us

for a decade we should be able to decide whether it is actually a menace or not.

Anyway, here is the article, a somewhat gruesome tale. Mr Fraser has referred it to the Department of Agriculture for its consideration.

The female screw worm, a serious warm-country cattle pest, mates only once. Dr A. W. Lindquist, of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, told a Tampa meeting of entomologists how this determined monogamy may be the screw worm's undoing.

The adult females, which are ordinary-looking flies, lay eggs on wounds or scratches in the hide of cattle; the larvae that hatch burrow into the flesh, sometimes eating the poor beast alive. Since screw worms breed in wild animals as well as tame ones, they are almost immune to extermination.

After pondering the problem, Entomologist E. F. Knipling, U.S.D.A., had an idea. The male flies, he mused, hunt and catch the females with single-minded enthusiasm. Why not draft the males into the extermination service?

So Knipling and his associates raised male screw worm flies and exposed them to X-rays. The flies suffered no obvious ill-effects and were as successful as unexposed males in the pursuit

of females. The difference was that the X-rayed males were sterile. This meant that every female with which one of these mated would lay infertile eggs for the rest of her life.

Knipling's Machiavellian scheme was given a preliminary try-out in Florida with good results. Then last year an entomological task force invaded the Dutch island of Curacao in the Caribbean, where screw worms were strongly in possession. Supplied by air with males raised in Florida (on blood and horse meat) and sterilised by gamma rays from Cobalt 60, the experimenters released them at the rate of 400 males a week for each sq. m.

Results came quickly. Wounded goats exposed to the flies showed clusters of screw worm eggs, but many proved infertile. The females that laid the eggs had mated with sterilised males from Florida. After seven weeks, all eggs were infertile, and the screw worm population dropped to vanishing point.

No eggs at all were collected after mid-October, and since November there have been no signs of screw worms on the island.

Now the U.S.D.A. entomologists are figuring out how many sterilised males will be needed to hunt down all the females in the State of Florida. They are even hoping to use the same method to exterminate other insect pests whose females are equally monogamous.

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CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

To the Editor.

Sir,—Conference and the Executive have lately been concerned with a drop in membership of the Association, and have—properly—taken steps to encourage beekeepers to join in.

I would like to suggest, however, that the association is very much stronger than mere membership figures would indicate, in that from the point of view of hive holdings there are more beehives, if not beekeepers, in the association to-day than ever before. This strength is not reflected in our financial statement, owing to the operation of the maximum subscription.

The recent activities of South Island branches, too, would go to show that in the N.B.A. there is anything but a queenless hive. I refer to the "do" at Timaru last year, and the Field Day this year conducted by the combined Gore and Southland Branches. The energy and initiative displayed at these functions was not confined to the organising officials.

It is worthy of remark that a party from North Canterbury travelled all night in order to attend the Field Day at Willowbank.

As long as this spirit is manifest, the association has little to fear that it will so dwindle as to be unable to properly play its part, either on behalf of the industry or in the affairs of the country as a whole.

I remain, etc.,

OPTIMISTIC.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Mr Winter at the Field Day at Gore made some purposeful remarks re young queens and the advisability of apiarists to purchase these if they were unable to breed them themselves. While fully endorsing these remarks, we venture to suggest that guaranteed quality queens are not available. We now breed all our queens but in the past have purchased from commercial queen breeders. With one exception the time and money spent on bought queens was completely wasted. The quality

simply is not there.

The breeders of these queens are mostly men of experience who have to make a living, and if suitably rewarded could and would turn out a good quality queen. Why don't they? I think that the answer is that beekeepers expect too much for their money. It is quite impossible to select breeders, raise quality queens, sell them for about 7/-, and consistently make a profit. Until such time as beekeepers are prepared to pay a reasonable price for a quality queen, queen breeders will continue to mass produce untested queens for a few shillings apiece. A good queen is worth £1 of anyone's money, but she *must* be good; anything second rate is worse than useless.

There is a lot of work involved in raising quality queens. Short cut methods are not reliable; we have proved it.

These are bold statements and may bring forth a torrent of wrath, but the time has come to face up to realities. Perhaps others will have comments to make. So much the better.

Yours faithfully,

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Per G. E. Gumbrell.

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This Journal is issued free to all beekeepers in New Zealand having 30 or more registered hives, and to others who are members of the National Beekeepers' Association.

Literary contributions and advertisements must be in the hands of the Editor, Mr J. McFadzien, 29 Notting-ham Crescent, Calton Hill, Dunedin, S.W.1, not later than the first of month of publication.

Nom-de-plume letters must be signed by the writer and address given, not necessarily for publication, but as proof of good faith. Letters accepted for publication do not necessarily express the views of the Editor.

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CONTENTS

	Page
Notice Board	3
New Price Order	4
H.M.A. Regulations, 1953	6
Honey Sold Without Seal Levy	6
Honey Drying Plant	6
Floods in N.S.W.	8
Imported Jams	8
Chatham Islands	8
Anzac Day — Press Tribute	9
Wasps May Cause Absence of Flies	9
The Reality	9
Honey Marketing Authority	10
Department of Agriculture	13
Branch Notes	17
Notes for Beginners	21
Bees on Mont. Clover in Sth. Canterbury	27
World News	28
Creaming Problems	30
When the Lid is Off	31
Volcano News	31
Preparation for Comb Honey Production	32
Reflections . . . from the Editor's Desk	34
Correspondence	38
"N.Z. Beekeeper"	37

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