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RECEIVED: 18TH MAY, 1979 REF.NO. 79/131

DATE

COMPLETED: 23RD MAY, 1979 FILE: AGRICULTURE

REQUEST: From perusal of Hansard, legislation, etc., what date appears to mark the establishment of the Roseworthy Agricultural College.

COMMENT: ROSEWORTHY AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

1. Following a proposal by the Hon. Thomas Playford, a Commission on Agricultural Education was formed on 6th July 1875. The Commission made several important recommendations including:

The formation of a Department of Agriculture  
The appointment of a Professor of Agriculture  
The establishment of a model farm near Adelaide  
The establishment of other experimental farms. (1)

2. On 27th August, 1879, Mr. Basedow moved in the House of Assembly:

"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the Government should take steps, with as little delay as possible, to establish in connection with the Adelaide University a College of Agriculture; and also, as a necessary appendage thereto, and within a convenient distance from the city, an experimental farm, for the purpose of encouraging a more rational mode of farming than at present obtains in South Australia." (2)

The debate is reported in Hansard of 27th August, 17th September and 8th October 1879 (columns 760-769, 1000-1009 and 1318-1322).

The Treasurer, Hon. C. Mann moved to amend the resolution so as to read

"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that steps should be taken to establish a School of Agriculture, and also, as a necessary appendage thereto and within a convenient distance from the city, an experimental farm, and to appoint an experienced and skilled Professor of Agriculture, for the purpose of encouraging a more rational mode of farming than at present obtains in South Australia." (3)

1. Rural Development in South Australia by W.S. Kelly OBE
2. Hansard 27th August 1879 column 760
3. Hansard 8th October 1879 column 1318

2. cont Mr. Basedow accepted the Treasurer's amendment. The motion was amended and then carried by 14 to 6.
3. In the House of Assembly on Thursday July 22, 1880, the Treasurer in reply to Mr. Basedow said

"That by some oversight it had been omitted to place a line on the Estimates to provide for appointing a Professor of Agriculture in connection with an Agricultural College, and promised that the omission would be rectified in the Supplementary Estimates." (4)

4. In the House of Assembly on January 4, 1881 Mr. Basedow asked whether any steps had been taken to secure the services of a Professor of Agriculture for this colony.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. T. Playford) stated that a letter had been sent to the Agent-General instructing him to advertise for applications for the position, and to appoint a suitable person. The Agent-General in London at the time was Sir Arthur Blyth. (5)

5. " Professor D. Custance was appointed, and he arrived in 1881. Unfortunately a political crisis had intervened. There was considerable confusion when Custance landed, and no one seemed to know what his duties were. The Commissioner of Crown Lands adhered to the general formula, and in answer to a question by Mr. Mortlock, he said, "The Professor was to recommend to the Government the best means of promoting the well-being of the agricultural community." (6)

In the House of Assembly on August 10, 1881 Mr. Mortlock asked when will the Professor of Agriculture commence his series of lectures to the farmers of the province on the improvement of the agricultural system now in vogue?

The Commissioner of Crown Lands (then Hon. A. Catt) replied that the Professor of Agriculture has received instructions to put himself in communication with the President of the Farmers' Association, with a view of making arrangements to deliver lectures in the farming districts of the colony. He added further that the Professor on his arrival in the colony at once placed himself in communication with the Government, and was instructed to prepare a report as to what he would propose respecting the formation of a farm and the establishment of an Agricultural College in connection therewith; and also as to whether it might not be made self-supporting. That report had been furnished, and the Professor had been instructed to confer with the Surveyor-General as to the site for the farm and college. He would shortly visit various places suggested, and report as to the best. (7)

4. Hansard July 22, 1880 column 467  
5. Hansard Jan 4, 1881 column 7  
6. Rural Development in S.A. by W.S. Kelly OBE  
7. Hansard Aug 10, 1881 column 530

6. On 24th August, 1881 in the House of Assembly, the Hon. T. Hogarth asked

- "1. By whose authority the Professor of Agriculture has been engaged for South Australia, and who engaged him?
2. From what College of Agriculture did he (the Professor) graduate, and has he produced his diploma and credentials in the colony?
3. To whom has the agriculturists of South Australia ever asked for the employment of a Professor of Agriculture?"

The Commissioner of Public Works (Hon. J.G. Ramsay), in reply, said

- "1. The Professor of Agriculture was engaged in consequence of a resolution moved by Mr. Basedow, M.P., affirming the desirability of such an appointment, having been passed by the House of Assembly in 1879, and was appointed by the Agent-General under instructions from the late Government.
2. The Professor was formerly Resident Professor of Agriculture at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, and afterwards Professor of Agriculture to the Imperial Government of Japan, and lecturer at the Imperial College, Topio, Japan.
3. See answer No.1." 8

7. Ultimately, on Custance's recommendation, it was decided that an experimental farm and School of Agriculture be established near Adelaide, and in 1882 the Olive Hill farm of 828 acres, three miles from Roseworthy, was purchased at £6 per acre. Custance went to live there in March of that year, and set to work to crop the farm and to establish experimental plots to test the value of phosphate. 9

8. The Experimental Farm

On July 3, 1883 in the Legislative Council the Hon. T. Hogarth moved

"That a return be laid on the table of this Council showing -

1. The total expenditure on the Experimental Farm, at Roseworthy, from its commencement to June 1, 1883, and the returns in cash and produce from the same.
2. The number of acres last year in cultivation, and the produce per acre.
3. The quantity and quality of manure used, and cost of same.

8. cont
4. The number of wells sunk, the water obtained (good or bad), and the cost of sinking and appliances for raising the water to the surface.
  5. Tanks or dams, the number of cubic yards removed, the appliances used for the purpose, and the estimated cost per cubic yard for removing.
  6. By what authority is an Agricultural College being built at the Roseworthy Experimental Farm."

He thought hon. members would agree with him that it was time they should have some information about the Experimental Farm and Agricultural College, which were very likely to entail a considerable expenditure, while the ultimate benefit to the colony was very problematical. It was the opinion of old and experienced farmers that no one system of cultivation could be adopted in this colony. Up to the present time we had expended £8 000 on Experimental Farms, for which we had received no returns, and he therefore thought further information should be forthcoming before greater expense was incurred. As far as the Agricultural College was concerned he was not aware that it had been expressly sanctioned by the House of Assembly or the Council, and besides this he had not heard that any pupils had applied to be received into such an institution, or had applied for information, or that there was any information to be given them. He did not think that this was likely to be a good thing for the colony, or would tend to show farmers how they could get better returns from their farms.

The Commissioner of Public Works (Hon. J.G. Ramsay) said there was no objection to the returns asked for being furnished. (10)  
I have been unable to find any information about the returns.

9. Endowment to the Agricultural College

On July 25, 1883 Mr. Bright moved -

"That it is desirable that there should be a grant of land for the purposes of an endowment to the Agricultural College."

He believed the Agricultural College, whose erection he had warmly supported, would give the scientific instruction which was wanted by our farming population, and would thus prove of invaluable service. Endowments had already been granted to the University and Education Department, and he felt that everything possible should be done to improve the lamentable state of things in the country districts, if it only increased the produce of the soil by one or two bushels. (11)

Mr. Bright's motion was passed on 25th July, 1883.

9 cont. Endowment to the Agricultural College

On August 5, 1886 Mr. Duncan directed the attention of the Commissioner of Crown Lands (Mr. Howe) to the following motion, moved in this House on 25th July, 1883, by Mr. Bright, and carried, viz.:

"That it is desirable there should be a grant of land for the purposes of an endowment to the Agricultural College, and asked - "Is it the intention of the Government to propose this session to give effect to this resolution?"

The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. J.H. Howe) answered "Yes." (12)

On September 23, 1886 the Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. J.H. Howe) moved for leave to introduce a Bill for the endowment and regulation of an Agricultural College.

The Bill was introduced and read a first time. (13)

The second reading of the bill on October 12, 1886 gave a short historical statement of the college from its inception to the present time. (14)

[This endowment was finally assented to on November 7, 1886 - Act No. 384 of 1886 - An Act for the Endowment and Regulation of an Agricultural College]. 14

10. Students at the Agricultural College

On August 12, 1884 Mr. Miller asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands when the Agricultural College would be ready for the reception of students.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. J. Coles) replied that it would be ready about the end of the present month. (15)

11. Opening of the Agricultural College

On September 23, 1884 Mr. Miller asked if the Government had made any arrangements for the opening of the Agricultural College, and if so, when would the opening take place?

The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. J. Coles) said the college would be opened on October 15. There would be no formal demonstration. (16)

Later in Parliament, on Tuesday 14th October, the Commissioner of Crown Lands said the Government intended granting free railway passes to the students of the Agricultural College and their parents on the occasion of the opening, but not to their friends, who might be innumerable. This was also reported in the Advertiser of 15/10/1884. (17)

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12. Hansard Aug 5, 1886 column 641  
13. Hansard Sept 23, 1886 column 1096  
14. Hansard Oct 12, 1886 column 1243-1248  
15. Hansard Aug 12, 1884 column 580  
16. Hansard Sept 23, 1884 column 1070-1071  
17. Hansard Oct 14, 1884 column 1275

It is interesting to note that Roseworthy College preceded the Department of Agriculture by at least ten years.

The establishment of a Department of Agriculture was not carried out until 1894, when the Minister for Agriculture took charge of the Department, the Agricultural College, the Inspector of Stock and Brands and other allied activities. (18)

SUMMARY

From information gleaned from the various sources listed, the establishment of an experimental farm and School of Agriculture occurred in March 1882 under the guidance of Professor D. Custance.

On August 12, 1884 Mr. Miller asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands when the Agricultural College would be ready for the reception of students.

The Commissioner (Hon. J. Coles) replied that it would be ready about the end of the present month (August).

Newspaper articles and Hansard mention the date of 15th October 1884 as the opening of the Agricultural College.

Please find enclosed copy of Rural Development in S.A. by W.S. Kelly OBE pages 36-40, and Act No. 384 of 1886.

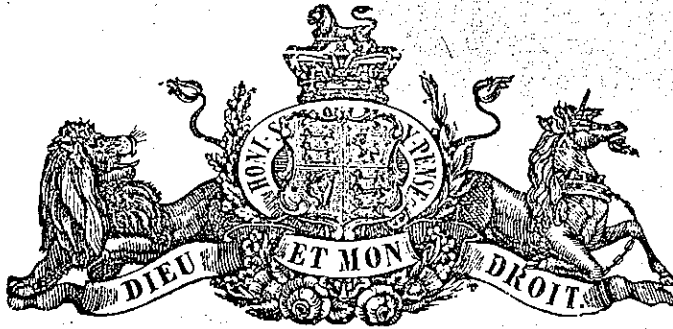
Mar 1882 Purchase of Olive Farm + Prof Custance  
Took up residence

25 July 1883 Endowment of grant of land to Ag Coll.  
Assented to 17 Nov 1886.

15 Oct 1884 College opened "without demonstration"

17 Nov 1886 Act assented to

Feb 1883 Building started.



217-1881.  
1404-1919.

ANNO QUADRAGESIMO NONO ET QUINQUAGESIMO  
**VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.**

A.D. 1886.

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**No. 384.**

An Act for the Endowment and Regulation of an  
Agricultural College.

[Assented to, November 17th, 1886.]

**W**HEREAS it is desirable to make provision out of the lands of the Crown for the endowment of an Agricultural College—  
Be it therefore Enacted by the Governor of the Province of South Australia, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of the said province, in this present Parliament assembled, as follows:

Preamble.

1. This Act may be called "The Agricultural College Endowment Act, 1886."

Short title.

2. The Commissioner of Crown Lands for the time being of the province, and his successors in office, shall be a body politic and corporate, under the corporate name of "The Commissioner for Agricultural Endowments," and by that name may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, in all Courts and before all Justices, and shall have perpetual succession and a common seal.

Incorporation of "The Commissioner for Agricultural Endowments."

amended by 1404-1919. 5-4.

3. The Governor may reserve and grant to the Commissioner for Agricultural Endowments, hereinafter called "the Commissioner," any Crown lands: Provided that the lands so granted to the Commissioner shall not exceed in the aggregate fifty thousand acres.

Power to the Governor to grant 50,000 acres to the Commissioner.

Struck out by 1404-1919. 5.5.

4. The sections of land situated in the Hundred of Mudla Wirra, County of Gawler, numbered 686, containing one hundred and

Vesting clause.

*The Agricultural College Endowment Act.—1886.*

and twenty-four acres, or thereabouts; 687, containing one hundred and five acres, or thereabouts; 690, containing one hundred and eight acres, or thereabouts; 691, containing one hundred and fifty-five acres, or thereabouts; 693, containing one hundred and twenty-acres, or thereabouts; and 694, containing one hundred and twenty-four acres, or thereabouts; being all the land comprised in certificate of title, Register Book vol. cxi., folio 249, are hereby vested in the Commissioner in fee-simple; and the Registrar-General is hereby directed to issue to and in the name of the Commissioner a certificate of title for the same under the provisions of "The Real Property Act of 1861," or any Act amending the same or substituted therefor.

Commissioner may demise lands and grant mineral licences for purposes of Act.

5. The Commissioner may from time to time demise and let any lands granted to or vested in him, either from year to year or by lease for any term not exceeding twenty-one years, and may grant licences to any persons to search for and to remove minerals and metals from such lands, and may charge and recover such fees and other payments, and may impose such terms and conditions in respect of such licences as may be charged, recovered, and imposed under the laws from time to time in force respecting licences to search for minerals and metals on Crown lands; and all instruments of letting and leases of such lands (except leases for mining purposes) shall be construed as if they contained an exception of minerals and metals and a power to grant licences in respect of the same, as is provided for with respect to Crown lands and waste lands by the "Crown Lands Consolidation Act," and by "The Gold Mining Act, 1885," concerning mining for gold, and as shall for the time being be in force under any Act extending or amending or substituted for the same or either of them, and any regulations made thereunder; and the Commissioner shall, with respect to gold, have power to grant all such licences in regard to lands comprised in any lease for mining purposes as may under any such Act or regulation as aforesaid be granted with respect to gold in regard to lands comprised in a mineral lease granted by the Crown.

Sections 7-12 inclusive of the Educational Lands Act to form part of this Act.

6. The provisions contained in sections 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of "The Educational Lands Act, 1881," shall apply, so far as applicable, to leases under this Act, and the said sections shall be read, *mutatis mutandis*, as part of this Act; the expression "Commissioner" in the said sections being read as meaning in this Act "The Commissioner of Agricultural Endowments," and the reference in the said sections to leases under "The Education Act, 1875," or any Act incorporated therewith, being read in this Act as a reference to leases under this Act.

Application of income.

7. All rents, royalties, fees, penalties, and annual or other payments received in respect of any lease or licence to be granted under the authority of this Act, shall be paid into the Treasury, and shall be applied by the Treasurer towards the maintenance and enlargement of the building called the Agricultural College erected on the land



*The Agricultural College Endowment Act.—1886.*

land mentioned in section 4, which building and land shall be used for the teaching of the science and practice of agriculture and the branches of knowledge connected therewith, and towards the payment of salaries and other expenses in respect of the said College and the purposes thereof, but so that no such moneys shall be expended without the sanction of Parliament.

8. The Commissioner may, from time to time, make regulations for the following objects:—

Commissioner may make regulations which are to be laid before Parliament.

- (a) For prescribing the course of study and practice to be pursued at the College:
- (b) For prescribing the duties of the Professor of Agriculture, and of other teachers in connection therewith:
- (c) For regulating the admission of students at the College, and the management thereof; and
- (d) Generally for carrying into effect the object of this Act.

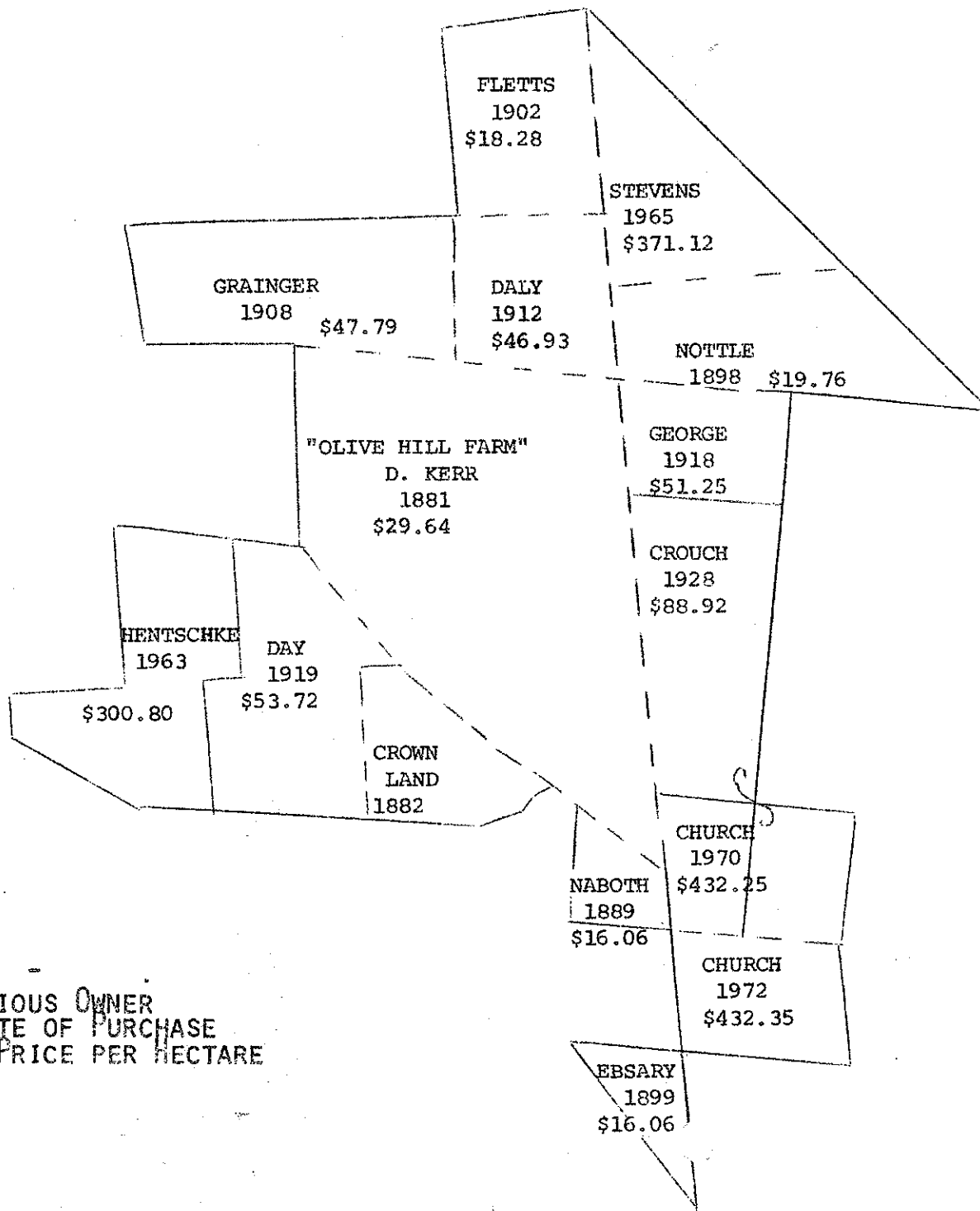
Regulations may be made under this section at any time after the passing of this Act, and shall be of the same effect as if they were contained therein, and shall be judicially noticed.

Such regulations shall be published in the *Government Gazette*, and shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament, if Parliament be in session at the time of the making thereof, or, if not, then as soon as practicable after the beginning of the then next session of Parliament.

If either House of Parliament, within a calendar month after any rules have been so laid before such House, resolve that such rules or any of them ought to be annulled, the same shall, after the date of such resolution, be of no effect, without prejudice to anything done in the meantime under such rules or rule or to the making of any new rules or rule.

In the name and on behalf of Her Majesty, I hereby assent to this Bill.

WILLIAM C. F. ROBINSON, Governor.



R.A.C. -  
 PREVIOUS OWNER  
 DATE OF PURCHASE  
 PRICE PER HECTARE