

The Poultry Farms

Reg W. Escott

Only three commercial poultry farms are known to have existed in Taroona. The first of these was established by Mr Roy James who commenced poultry farming in 1924 after leaving the electrical trade through ill health. The original home is now 28 Nubeena Crescent, but was then set in several acres of land. The flock varied between 800 and 1000 white leghorns and new stock was hatched on the farm in large, kerosene heated incubators.

Mr James drove to Hobart every Friday morning in a Model T Ford lorry with the weekly quota of eggs. He returned with fowl feed which was bought in Hobart from Ferguson and Co., produce merchants. A regular passenger was an old Taroona identity, Mr Donald Vicary, of the Quarantine Station. As there was no road between the farm and Channel Highway, and only a muddy paddock in winter, often chains had to be used to reach the highway.

Being an electrician by trade, Mr James had all the sheds wired to electric lights, with a master switch beside his bed. On hearing a noise in the sheds one night he switched the lights on, just in case. Sure enough, next morning he found several sacks of fowls lying on the shed floor and signs of a hurried departure by the would be thieves. Mr Roy James died in 1936.

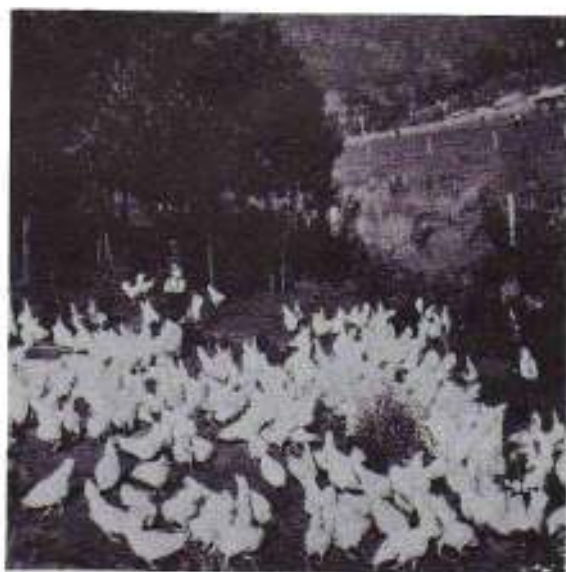
The second poultry farm was commenced by Mr W.L. Escott in 1933 on 4 acres of land which he bought from Frank and Lucy Purchas of musical fame. The Escotts drove a Model T Ford car which was kept in a garage, called "Lizzie's Boudoir", on the Channel Highway. Their home is now 120 Channel Highway on a half an acre, but in 1933 the property extended from the highway to the foreshore. After several years of shed building the farm consisted of about 800 birds of various breeds, but mainly Australorps. Hatching was done on the property in a large electric incubator and a chicken sexer would attend each hatching season. Mr Escott regularly entered birds in poultry shows and egg laying competitions with a fair amount of success.

A 1927 Triumph motor cycle and sidecar was used to take the eggs to Hobart and fowl

feed was delivered by Mr Charles Crowden who ran a freight service to Taroona in the years 1930-1940. The food was purchased from Ferguson and Co. For years the fowl manure was bought by Jim and Charlie Tringrove for their vegetable garden at Tinderbox.

Mr Escott died in 1969 and his wife, Florie, kept some fowls on for a time but after several years they had all gone. Mrs Escott still lives in the old home.

The third poultry farm in Taroona was run by the well known poultry identity, Mr Trevor Young, at the Shot Tower from 1938 to the mid 1940s. Mr Young was a member of the well known Young family of Bruny Island. Besides egg producing, Mr Young bred many pedigree birds and was successful at various poultry shows. He was also chairman of the Egg Marketing Board for some years and a judge of poultry at various shows.



Part of Roy James' poultry farm taken from the bottom of the present 26 Nubeena Crescent looking west, with the outbuildings of "Kendalville" in top right hand corner, c1928.

KEN JAMES.