

Governor George Anthony grasshoppers received correspondence

Section 5, Pages 121 - 128

Governor George Anthony compiled this series of correspondence on grasshoppers from letters received while in office from 1877-1879. A complete transcription is available by clicking "Text Version" below.

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KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

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THE GRASSHOPPER COMMISSION.
Reports from Texas and South Kansas
that the pestiferous "hoppers" are
already committing serious havoc, and
threaten again to prostrate for a while the
farming interests of the West. This grass-
hopper is a stupendous evil and demands
thorough investigation, and one of the
most sensible things the late Congress did
was to appropriate a few thousand dollars
to provide for the appointment of a com-
mission to carry on the investigations.
The appointments were recently made,
our Prof. Riley being designated chief, Dr.
A. S. Packard, Jr., of Salem, Mass., sec-
retary, and Prof. C. Thomas, Carbon-
dale, Ill., disbursing agent. These ap-
pointments have been received with gen-
eral satisfaction, and if science and human
effort can do anything to stay or palliate
the evil we may confidently expect its ac-
complishment by these gentlemen. Prof.
Riley's appointment is not only a compli-
ment to a gentleman, who, as state ento-
mologist of Missouri, served his state
with honor and credit, and accomplished
untold good; but is a guarantee of useful-
ness from the commission.

The headquarters of the commission
will be at St. Louis, Mo., while there will
be a nominal office, with a clerk to attend to
certain routine business, at the rooms of
the geological and geographical survey of
the territories, at Washington, D. C., Dr.
F. V. Hayden in charge.

The locust area assigned to each com-
missioner the present year, to facilitate
labor, and the general scope and intention
of the commission, as we have taken pains
to ascertain from Prof. Riley himself,
are as follows:

1. Prof. Riley takes for his field the
region east of the mountains and south of
the 40th parallel, the west half of Iowa,
and, conjointly with Dr. Packard, British
America west of the 94th meridian,
where the principal source of the de-
vastating swarms will probably be found.

2. Dr. Packard will take for his field
West Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Idaho,
and the Pacific Coast.

3. Prof. Thomas takes all the region
east of the mountains not enumerated,
including Nebraska, Minnesota, etc.

The publications will consist of circulars,
bulletins, memoirs, and the annual report
of doings and results of the work of the
commission.

To Prof. Riley are assigned more par-
ticularly the following divisions of the
subject: Biology, or Natural History; In-
sect Enemies and Parasites; Remedies, and
Devices for Destruction.

To Dr. Packard: Anatomy and Em-
bryology.

To Dr. Packard and Prof. Thomas, con-
jointly: Meteorological Bearings and
Migrations.

To Prof. Thomas: Geographical Dis-
tribution, Enemies not Entomological,
Agricultural Bearings of the Subject.

The commission expects to secure co-
operation with the United States Signal
Bureau in affording meteorological data in
connection with a study of the migrations
of the locust; also, to secure the aid of
the Canadian government in co-operating
with it in its investigations in British
America.

It is the determination of the commission
to confine its operations more particularly
to the practical bearings of the subject,
with a view to ascertain all possible reme-
dies against these destructive insects. All
desire for a display of entomological
knowledge will be made subservient to the
great object for which the appropriation
was made, to wit:

1. The best means of fighting the plague
as it occurs in the states to which it
migrates, but in which it is not indigenous.
2. The thorough investigation into its
habits in its native home, with a view of
preventing, if possible, its migrations
therefrom.

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C. V. RILEY, *Chief*,
St. Louis, Mo.
A. S. PACKARD, JR.,
Sec'y, Salem, Mass.
CYRUS THOMAS, *Disb'g*
Ag't, Carbondale, Ill.

Department of the Interior,
OFFICE OF THE

HEADQUARTERS,
N.W. cor. 6th & Locust,
St. Louis, Mo.
EASTERN OFFICE,
Hayden's Survey,
Washington, D. C.

U. S. Entomological Commission,

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Circular No. 1.

Mr.

Dear Sir,

The Commissioners are desirous of collecting, as soon as possible, all ascertainable facts in reference to the migrations of the Rocky Mountain Locust (*Caloptenus spretus*), and also regarding its appearance, habits, and devastations, in your section.

We present below a series of topics upon which we shall be glad to receive data from your locality. We expect you to dwell only on those topics upon which you have positive information, and shall be glad to receive any facts or views not suggested by this circular. Some of the subjects cannot be reported on till toward the approach of winter, while others can be considered earlier. In responding, therefore, we ask our correspondents to couple their answers with the number of the circular and of the inquiry.

We shall be glad to receive and will determine any of the different species of locusts that occur in your locality, and particularly specimens of their different parasites and

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natural enemies. These are best forwarded by mail, packed in cotton, moistened with alcohol, and placed in secure tin or wooden boxes.

The inquiries have reference more particularly to the present year 1877, and when facts are communicated that have reference to other years, correspondents will please be careful to specify the particular year.

The Commissioners will refund whatever expense may be incurred for postage in replying to this circular, or in forwarding specimens, should correspondents so desire.

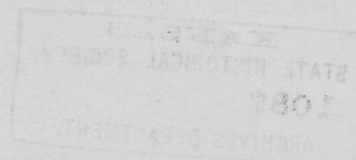
Copies of documents published by the Commission will be sent to correspondents who forward data in accordance with this request. Communications may be sent to either of the Commissioners by the above addresses.

CHAS. V. RILEY,
A. S. PACKARD, Jr.
CYRUS THOMAS.

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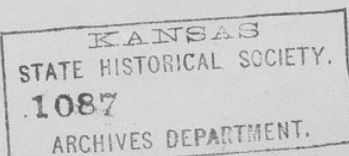
Topics on which Data are requested.

1. Date, and time of day of the arrival of swarms.
 - 1a. Direction and force of the wind at the time.
 - 1b. Temperature and character of the weather at the time, (clear or cloudy.)
 - 1c. Direction of the flight, density, height and extent of the swarms.
2. Date and time of day of the departure of swarms.
 - 2a. Direction and force of the wind at the time.
 - 2b. Temperature and character of the weather at the time.
 - 2c. Direction of the flight, density and extent of the swarms.
3. Date when the first eggs, if any, were deposited the present year.
4. Date when the eggs were most numerous hatching the present year.
5. Date when the eggs were most numerous hatching in previous years.
6. Proportion of eggs that failed to hatch the present year and probable causes of such failure.
7. Nature of the soil and situations in which the eggs were most largely deposited.
8. Nature of the soil and situations in which the young were most numerous hatched.



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9. Date at which the first insect acquired full wings.
10. Date when the winged insects first began to migrate.
11. Estimate the injury done in your county and State.
12. Crops which suffered most.
13. Crops most easily protected.
14. Crops which suffered least.
15. The prevailing direction in which the young insects traveled, and any other facts in relation to the marching of the young.
16. The means employed in your section for the destruction of the unfledged insects, or to protect crops from their ravages, and how far these have proved satisfactory.
17. The means employed in your section for the destruction of the winged insects, or to protect crops from their ravages, and how far these have proved satisfactory.
18. Descriptions, and if possible, figures of such mechanical contrivances as have proved useful in your locality for the destruction of either the young or the winged insects.
19. If your section was not visited in 1876, please state this fact.
20. If visited any previous year, please give the dates.
21. To what extent have birds, domestic fowls, and other animals, domestic or wild, been useful in destroying these insects?





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Department of the Interior.

Washington March 22nd 1877.

*Hon. George F. Anthony,
Governor of Kansas.*

Sir:

*I have the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of your letter recommend-
ing the appointment of Prof. Chas. V.
Riley, State Entomologist of Missouri,
as a member of the Commission of
skilled entomologists to report upon
the depredations of the Rocky Mountain
locusts in the Western States and
Territories, and the best methods
of preventing their recurrence or guard-
ing against their invasions, and*

Sir

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in reply to state that Professor
Riley has been appointed chair-
man of that commission.

The other members of the
commission are Professor Cyrus
Thomas of Carbondale, Ill., and
Professor Alpheus S. Packard of
Salem, Mass.

Very respectfully,

C. M. M.
Secretary.

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