

New Zealand Trip by Allan Heaton in 1975

Sheepdog trialling in New Zealand is not the easiest trip to arrange due to the constraints of quarantine restrictions. It usually means a one-way ticket for the sheepdogs, sold on to work homes at the end of the trip. Allan and Mary Heaton made such a trip in 1975, visiting their son Mark who was working out there, and both wrote about their experiences. Allan was given a notebook by his daughter Janet and he promised to write something about the NZ holiday every day. Janet has that notebook, and has transcribed Allan's writing (which is not the easiest to read). "The diary entries are detailed and interesting, and reflect his positive outlook, his thorough enjoyment of the whole trip, and of course, his sense of humour".

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

January 8th 1975

York 7am

Kings Cross 10am

Heathrow 12.30pm

Take off Pan Am Clipper (430 seats about 1/3 occupied) Boeing 747

Seat formation | | | - | | | - | |

Over Windsor Castle, Midlands, Glasgow, N. Atlantic, Greenland, Canada Canadian Rockies visible through gaps in clouds

Sunset over Greenland then flew back into sunshine at 39,000'

Arrived Los Angeles (7 million pop. – aircraft industry & electronics)

4.35pm on schedule

After 11 hours flying and losing 8 hours on the clock.

Had 2 meals on the plane.

Spent 3 hours in L.A. airport.

Found flight tiring but soon recovered after a glass of milk and a walk round although it would have been 2pm if still at home!

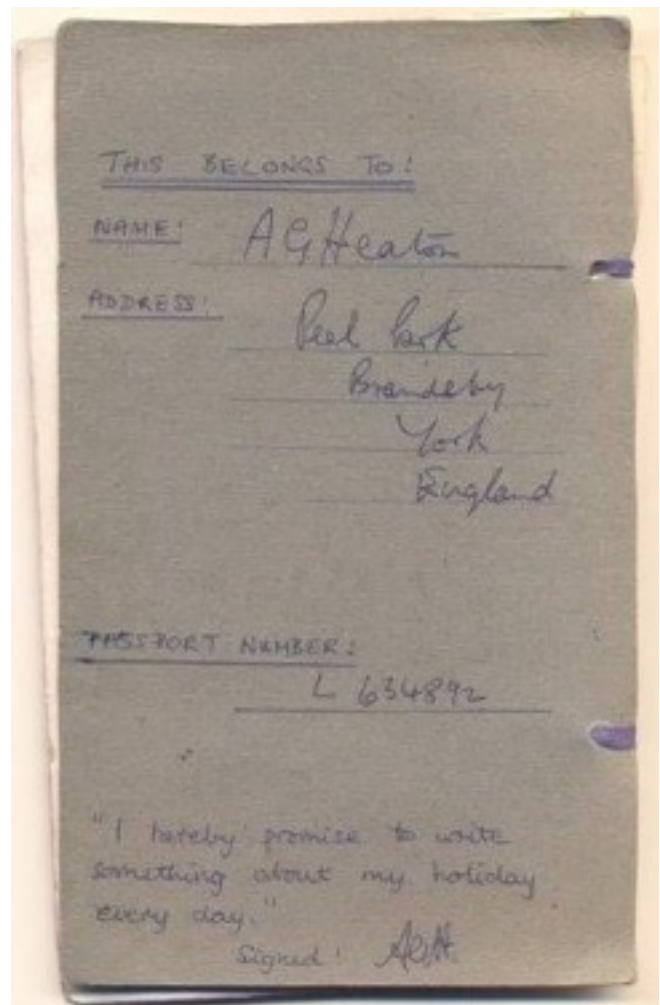
Rate of exchange £1 - \$2.38 (American)

L.A. is known as SMOG CITY – has problems with smog because it is surrounded by mountains and the sea.

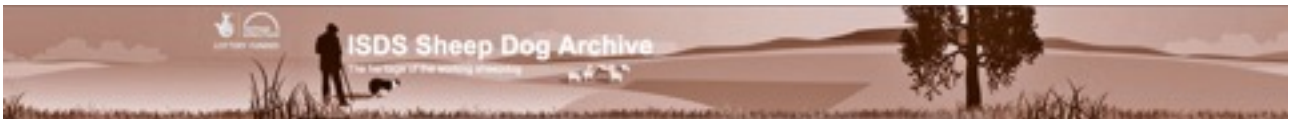
Signs at the airport are in English, French, Spanish and Japan/ Chinese – a lot of orientals about.

Temp. 59°

Left for Honolulu about 9pm (1 hour late)



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January 10th 1975

5 hours flying in a D.C. 10

Rather more comfortable than the 747

Carpets with deeper pile, seats more shaped.

Soft drinks, dinner, orchids on trays, blonde N.Z. "cabin attendants"!

Honolulu – just out of the plane to stretch our legs

Put the clock back 2 hours and left again at 1.30, putting the clock back another 1 hour to N.Z.

Summer Time (11 hours in all from London)

Had supper and slept until dawn over the Pacific

Breakfast at 7am, touched down Auckland 9am

Glimpsing the Great Barrier Reef as we approached N.Z.

Great surprise and delight to be met by Mark!

Looking sunburnt and fit, he had finished his job in the S. Island and was to spend the next few weeks with us. Also met by a hire car which took us the 14 miles into Auckland. First cows we saw on a town supply dairy farm were Holsteins! On the way we visited One Tree Hill – a Maori memorial and

vantage point for the whole of the Auckland area, which covers about as much ground as London, but of course nothing like so densely populated. Great views of the whole city, the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean (the tide of one being in, and the other out). Went down to the centre (Queen Street) and a new hotel "Travelodge" where we met George Harford, a director or something of the Agridome at Rotorua. Enquiries from the shipping line revealed that Mick may not arrive for a week or 10 days, so decided to spend a week with Mark looking round the farms he'd worked on and getting back to Auckland to pick Mick up later.

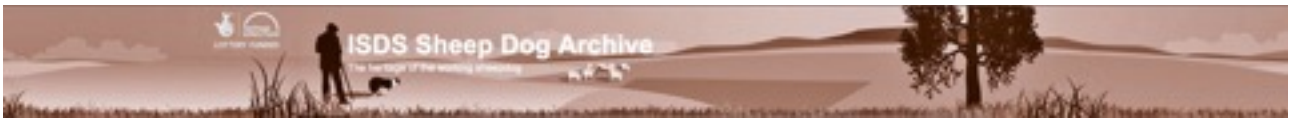
In spite of total lack of signs, we found our way out southwards. Stopped about 10 miles out for a meal, and a haircut and a shave (all off), then on to Te Kauwhata to the farm where Mark had his first lambing last July. Stayed with the shepherd Dick Thornton, and his wife, who is dog mad (has an imported dog, Sweep, by Gilchrist's Spot) in country similar to Northumberland, a drier part of N.Z. with the grass browning.

Walked round the Coopworth sheep (Border Leicester X Romney)

Also 70 acres barley on the 1000 acre farm (2 holdings, the boss Simon Taylor living at the other end)

Extensive views, a perfect evening after thunder.





January 11th 1975

Had a leisurely morning talking and sunbathing whilst Mark took his car down to the garage and welded his exhaust back on. Set off after lunch southwards through Huntly, Hamilton to Te Kuiti, not too interesting at first but south of Hamilton we passed several dairy farms in pleasant country, becoming increasingly greener. Te Kuiti, pop. 5,200, cradled in hills – turned off here into countryside such as we wouldn’t see in G.B., ridge after ridge, not especially high but steep and only a few hundred yards apart.

Soon off the tarmac and on to a metalled surface but still wide and well-graded, climbing up until over the top appeared a terrific view of a valley with steep cliffs at the far side (bluffs) and John Walker’s new farm, house nestling under them. Welcomed by the Walker family into a beautiful open plan bungalow with panoramic views on 3 sides – wild pig for “tea” (high tea later in evening).

Perendale (Cheviot X Romney) sheep – “easy care”, no help at lambing.

Mokauiti.

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January 12th 1975

(51 today!)

Wakened about 7am by a neighbour mustering his sheep on motor bike and 3 dogs (Get back, get further back).

Beautiful morning mist in the valley, venison steaks for breakfast, off in the land rover round the 2000 acres and 4.5 thousand sheep, not to mention Belted Galloways, wild goats, wild pigs, wild turkeys, possums.

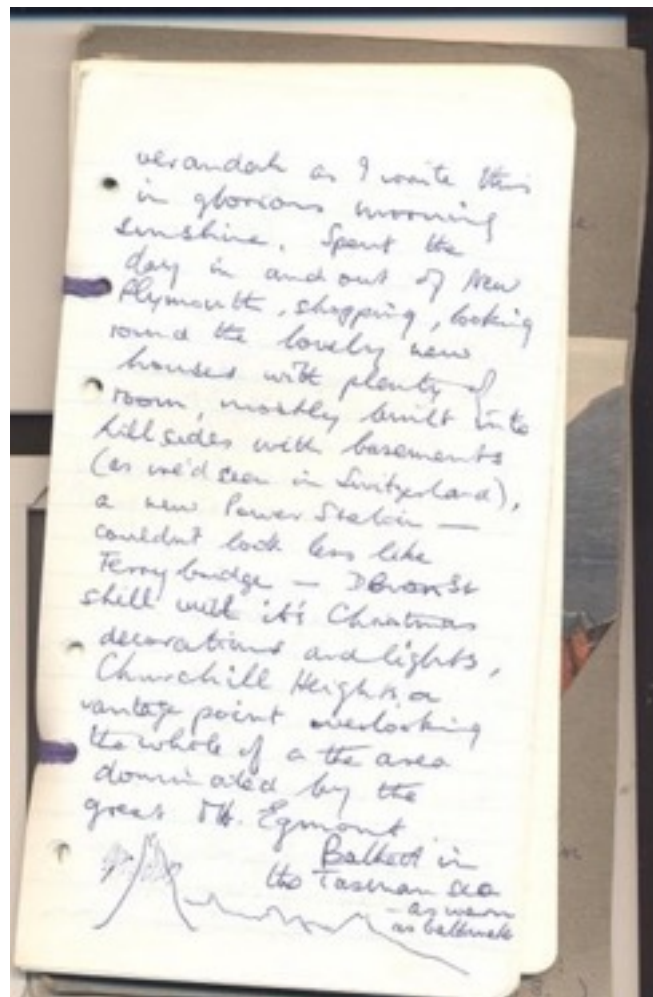
Up to the highest point 2000', a hair-raising ride up "roads" made by bulldozer to the Trig point and a view for 50 miles in all directions.

A drive into the virgin bush, a lot of the farm cleared only within the last 12 years and some only 18 months ago. Back up to the other end of the 6 mile long farm and away again after lunch (at 3pm) south east to the coast and down through a dairying area as we approached New Plymouth and the fantastic Mount Egmont 8200' high.

January 13th 1975

Staying with Vic Cook and wife and daughter (the 2 Latter Day Adventists and anxious to convert us!), the former with his continuously barking 200+ dogs, selling 20 pups a week. Sitting on the verandah as I write this in glorious morning sunshine. Spent the day in and out of New Plymouth, shopping, looking round the lovely new houses with plenty of room, mostly built into hillsides with basements (as we'd seen in Switzerland), a new Power Station – couldn't look less like Ferrybridge – Devon Street still with it's Christmas decorations and lights, Churchill Heights, a vantage point overlooking the whole of the area dominated by the great Mount Egmont. Bathed in the Tasman sea – as warm as bath water.

(See Diagram)



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January 14th 1975

Left New Plymouth southwards, stopping to bathe at a creek a short way out, for Rahoitu (about 30 miles south of New Plymouth), to the farm of Ted Morrow, a coastal farm of 300 acres + 100 acres sand dunes, flat, in 10-15 acre paddocks divided by high wide Hydrangea (?) hedges in full bloom. After a dry spell, the paddocks were brown, but full of clover and we were told that grass would grow about 3" overnight if it rained. This would also cause *facial excema* in the sheep, a disease caused by ingesting fungus spores causing damage to the liver. Very little is known about the disease, its cure or prevention, but it causes heavy losses (300 ewes lost out of 2000 up at Te Kauwhata). The farm carried 1500 Perendale ewes and 300 bulls for hire to dairy farmers. Ted Morrow and son Richard are sheepdog mad – the old man's living room is furnished lavishly with articles bought or won with dog winnings and decorated with cups, shields, sashes, etc, etc. Both men took out 3 dogs each and demonstrated the method of work in a small paddock as done at "Show Ring" trials. Went into all the rules and technical details and learnt as much as we could. Mark had a go with Nell, she ran very well but he showed lack of experience, not in handling the dog or the sheep, but in going round this type of a course. Yarned about dogs, trials, farming on both sides of the world. The housekeeper, Mrs Snell, an ex school teacher, was a very lively, interesting and intelligent woman.

We walked down to the beach (¾ mile) in the evening, after a picnic tea in the garden under a willow tree, and saw the sunset. Mount Egmont was magnificent, seeming to rise halfway into the sky.



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January 15th 1975

Half an hour's run to Oeo, to Mr Good's farm, another flat coastal farm, sheep and beef, where we spent a couple of hours with Mr and Mrs Good, who were pleased to hear about their son John who came to our New Year's Even party. A neighbouring dairy farm had been sold recently for \$900/acre.

All the small village dairies had closed down and a big one established at Hawera. The area was mostly flat, the dairy farm paddocks being divided by large (up to 16') boxthorn hedges for shelter. The cows, mainly Jerseys, were all docked.

On to Wanganui, a particularly smart town in the estuary of the Wanganui River, and we turned north along the river bank (very wide and full of silt). Soon into 40 miles of sheep farms in the country like a thousand Dovedales!

Nearly all the farms were working with the sheep and many had the large flocks in the yards or nearby paddocks (they appeared to be weaning the lambs, as we went through one flock of lambs and met another flock of ewes). There must have been rain as the river was in flood. Through Raetihi and the sky had cleared to expose the volcano Mount Ruapehu 2797m. The country we had come through was mountainous by British standards, then suddenly this mountain appeared head and shoulders above anything else, it's top 1/3 covered in snow even at this time of year.

Into the Tongariro National Park and the valley opened out into a wide plain with 2 more mountains on our right as we dropped down to Turangi at the southern end of Lake Taupo and pulled into a Motel.

January 16th 1975

Travelled up the eastern side of Lake Taupo on a beautiful morning, on northwards past the Geothermal Power Station into State Forests (pine). Trees grow much more quickly here, even oak trees grown so quickly that the wood isn't harder than many other species. Saw a few large Timber Yards and Pulp Mills near Tokoroa and then turned west into a dairying district to stay with Dick Maddern and daughter Betsey Langley at Te Awamutu. Dick (78, retired agricultural contractor) drove us round the town after tea to see the rose gardens (Te Awamutu is the "rose town of New Zealand"), the Dairies – one alone had 60 tankers in the yards and 12 off-loading pumps – and a short trip out to Pirongia, just under the mountain of the same name, through the typical dairying countryside of the Waikato. Quite a lot of maize is being grown in these parts (for harvest, not for silage), and vineyards, grapefruit, nectarines, etc.



January 17th 1975

100 miles to Auckland on the main road we had come down and a call at the New Zealand Express Cargo Office to see when the Durango was due in – tomorrow, Saturday! Decided to go into the Northland and visit John Harrison and family. Made 'phone calls and set off quietly for Whangarei, passing some lovely East Coast resorts and seeing the Northland in sunshine, parts of it rather droughty.

Kathleen met us on the outskirts of Whangarei and escorted us the 10 miles or so to their farm near Ruatangata, a new house on top of a hill with lovely views all around, a lot of the land steeper than Peel Park and 100 acres of the 270 still in bush.

January 18th 1975

Had a walk round the farm in warm sunshine – the Harrisons have been here about 3 years after doing 4 years share milking in the Waikato. They were milking 100 cows (Jerseys) in a newly constructed herringbone shed – very simple, no expensive equipment, making a bit of silage to feed back in the dry summer or later in the winter. They seemed very happy and certainly not wanting to go back to the West Riding! John said he couldn't have got his own farm so quickly back in England.

Back down to Auckland to the wharf to see the Durango berth and after a panic when we thought they weren't going to let the dogs off and the N.Z. Express man wasn't there with the papers, we finally took Mick off the boat, looking particularly well, not excessively fat, and pleased to see us! Stayed overnight at Dick Thornton's again at Te Kauwhata about 45 miles south of Auckland and found that Mick was still keen to work and take my commands.

January 19th 1975

Up early and out with Mick who was running more freely and looked like getting over the journey quickly. Walked right up the farm after breakfast to Simon Taylor's house, a really attractive farm of 1000 acres, undulating land divided into 15-20 acre paddocks, most of it could be seen from the house.

Set off after lunch for Rotorua (110 miles) through typical Waikato country, again in bright sunny weather, to Matamata where the farms looked very prosperous, green, plenty of grass and clover, hedges in pats and trees and shrubs well developed round the houses and the back drop of the Kaimai Range not far away. Then we rose up into wooded country and into sight of Lake Roturua. Saw some activity on the hillside at Ngongotaha and on closer inspection saw a Huntaway* trial taking place up a hillside that was about vertical. Went across, met the dog men and gave our dogs a run, “pulling” the sheep down from the top; great fun.

Settled in with Mr and Mrs Jack Gear – secretary of the “Expo” Trials, who live just on the outskirts of Rotorua.



*The Huntaway is a large, strongly built breed of dog used for general sheep herding tasks in New Zealand, where they originate, but especially for driving sheep away from the shepherd, hence their name. They are usually black and tan coloured and were bred to use their loud, deep bark to herd sheep. The breed is relatively new, dating as a distinct breed from the late 19th century. Dogs that win at trials may be registered by the New Zealand Sheep Dog Trial Association in their studbook, but the breed does not have a defined appearance or lineage, and is distinguished only on working ability.

January 20th 1975

Jack is up at 6.30am and the telephone is going soon after. His grandson took us for a ride out to the Blue and Green Lakes and a buried Maori village (buried by a volcanic eruption in 1886 from the volcano Tarawera).

After lunch Jack took us to the Agrodome – a sort of “theatre” in the show fields belonging to the Ngongotaha A&P (Agricultural & Pastoral) Association, where a show is put on 3x a day every day of the year except Christmas Day, for tourists – mostly coach loads doing organised tours. Ivan Bowen introduced 19 rams of different breeds found in N.Z., each one in turn runs up into a rostrum, the 19 finally making a tableau. He then demonstrates the shearing of a sheep, all with great showmanship and in a theatrical manner (it would turn farmers sick but seemed to go down well with a non-agricultural audience).

Finally, outside in a paddock, he demonstrated the commands and working of a Huntaway and a Heading dog. Mark and I brought our dogs out (after the spectators had dispersed!) and had favourable comment. Ivan Bowen showed us 3 or 4 young ones in training. I was impressed with the way these N.Z. Heading dogs move up to the sheep at close quarters without fear of grip.

In the evening (another beautiful one after a few heavy showers in the afternoon) Mark and I walked about 5 miles through a sheep farm on the outskirts of Rotorua, the grass green and well managed, very heavily stocked, the paddocks rising, hill after hill up to about 2000' with glorious views over the Lake.



January 21st 1975

Went across to the other side of the Lake to Ngongotaha to Ken Hindman's – a retired farmer and sheepdog enthusiast, a past keeper of the Stud Book in N.Z. Helped him set out a paddock with obstacles, races, pegged out the drive a chain wide and put up a yard (pen) and had a go with our dogs, not too successfully at first (the sheep were newly clipped lambs!) but better in the afternoon at the 2nd or 3rd attempt. Saw his dogs – mostly very large, heavy, smooth Black, White & Tan, claimed to be bred from dogs brought over by a Yorkshire man called Oliver about 100 years ago. Dropped Mary off at the hairdressers and Mark and I went to the Blue Lake for a swim – absolutely the perfect place, warm water as clear as crystal, smooth beach falling away to 6' in about 20 yards, only 2 or 3 others about, completely unspoiled and natural.

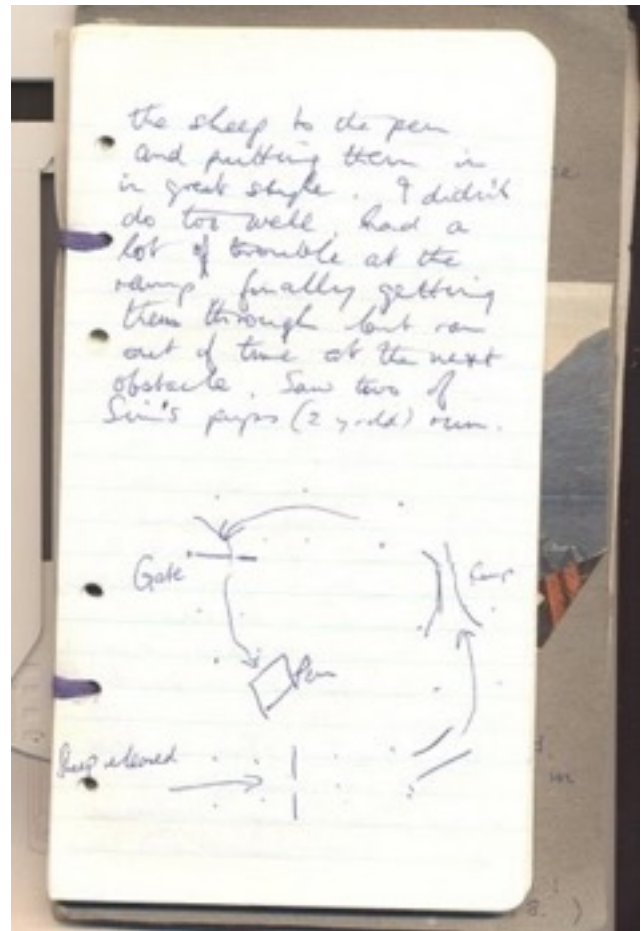
January 22nd 1975

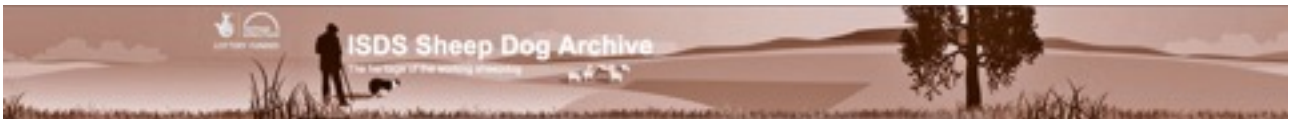
Morning spent practising, then looking round the shops and bubbling mud holes in Rotorua; afternoon spent down at the Show ground helping to set up the course for the Bay of Plenty Championships. Had photographs taken and tried our dogs over the river (10 yards wide, deep and fast flowing) over at the Expo course. After tea had a walk round Lynmore (suburb of Rotorua where we're staying) admiring the new houses all in ¼ acre sections, beautifully kept gardens with shrubs and flowers, every house a different style at a different level, all overlooking the lake.

January 23rd 1975

Our first N.Z. sheepdog trial. The Two Tooth Romneys not very good to handle. Mark had a good run, a bit of trouble at the ramp, but his bitch showed up tops, lifting the sheep to the pen and putting them in in great style. I didn't do too well, had a lot of trouble at the ramp, finally getting them through but ran out of time at the next obstacle. Saw two of Jim's pups (2 yr old) run.

(See Diagram)





January 24th 1975

At the trials all day, seeing some of the top men compete. John Evans arrived with three dogs. Only one run beat Mark's (Ted Morrow) and he ended up 2nd in the Open Class, also winning the Maiden Intermediate Classes, in all \$80 (=£50)!

January 25th 1975

The Rotorua A&P Show, a well run local show in a lovely setting, good classes of livestock and horses. Also Sheep Shearing Champs, wood chopping, Scottish dancing, etc.

January 26th 1975

Invited by Bill Twyman (he entertained Harry Huddleston 2 years ago and has a good young bitch by Jim) to see his (or now his son's) farm about 15 miles south of Rotorua. In a beautiful position commanding a 300° view round the valley to the hills 10-15 miles away, this was really 2 farms in one, about 220 acres, all divided up into paddocks for the 100 cow herd, 40 of which were pedigree, plus 100 odd followers and 120 Perendale ewes. The N.Z. Friesans were like smaller Canadian Holsteins, the extreme dairy type being favoured, but not as large as the Canadian, although some Canadian semen had been used including Linmac and Agro Acres Revenue.

In lots of ways the farm compared with Peel Park, in size, stocking rate, labour employed (farmer and 2 lads), some of the land being level, some steep gullies impossible to cut. Surplus grass was cut throughout the summer, some for hay, some for silage made in clamps out in the field. Some swedes were grown also for winter feed. The fencing was first class, also some barberry hedges which grow at a phenomenal rate, and after recent heavy rains (contrasting with 2 or 3 summer droughts in previous years), the growth of grass and clover was terrific.

Had another swim in the Blue Lake after a meal in Rotorua.

January 27th 1975

On the move again, up north to the coast towards Whakatane, calling at the Knight's farm at Ohope but finding Doug and Pam Knight away at the beach having a few days' holiday. By-passed Whakatane and made for Opotiki and a marvellous run along the coast, past bay after bay of deep blue sea and steep cliffs and hills, stopping for a swim at one of them, right to Hick's Bay and a motel in a commanding position overlooking the beautiful bay with its surf 10ft high. Walked down, after dinner, a steep scenic path to the beach.



January 28th 1975

A leisurely start to the day, moving down the last coast to Ruatoria and a first glimpse of the spectacular Hikurangi mountain. Further south to Te Puia Springs, a short detour to Waipiro Bay and a bathe in the terrific surf waves, then inland over metal roads winding and rising, bending and turning for perhaps 15 miles, past one large sheep station like a village and eventually to Tuakau Station, the home of Dave and Pam Hamilton. As usual we had a good reception and as 2 of their daughters had been in England for 2 years (and enjoyed it), we had a lot to talk about. Gave the dogs a run after tea. Dave was busy next day blood testing 300-off beef cows for brucellosis so

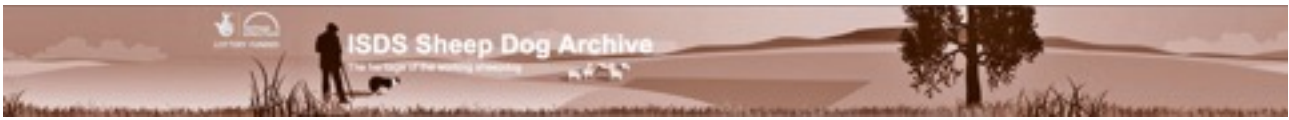
January 29th 1975

We spent a couple of hours wandering round seeing some of the 3,500 acres on another beautiful morning in a world which seemed so remote from anything we knew. We only had about 35 miles to travel to Tolago Bay, where Captain Cook anchored in 1769 and described it as a second paradise. We had a bite in the local "Dairy" and spent the afternoon sunbathing and swimming in the very pleasant bay, where the sands were beautiful and the sea warm. Walked along the ½ mile long wharf, now never used. A few miles inland we dropped in on Stan and Diane Smith, Stan being another prominent sheep dog triallist and judge, farming 500 acres, some flat fertile land, all of it well farmed, excellent fences, very tidy, carrying 1100 Romney ewes and 100 beef cows. No regular help employed, but contractors called in for shearing, hay-making, etc. Stan ran round the district in the evening to see the local Trial sites, all fit up with permanent huts, bars, toilets, etc., some of the land being owned by the Sheep Dog Club.

January 30th 1975

Looked round the farm, ran the dogs, a couple of steep paddocks just behind the house being ideal training ground. After lunch set off for Gisborne, through the town (30,000), the first city in the world in which the sun rises, it being further east and nearer to the dateline than anywhere else, and round towards Young Nick's Head (the first land sighted by Young Nick) and up a valley to Hinenui Station, the home of Bill and Elaine Teutenberg, their 4 sons (3 away from home now), and a famous Coopworth Stud. The Poverty Bay "flats", i.e. the large area of level land behind the bay, was cropped with a great deal of maize, some of it being 10' high, and vines, lemon trees, etc.

The Hinenui flock is the largest registered flock in the Coopworth Stud Book (Border Leicester X Romney) and some 500 rams are sold annually. A new shepherd was engaged and we looked round the empty "cottage" - a marvellous house with all mod cons, the new man would get \$80/ week plus free house, free electricity, 'phone.



January 31st 1975

Up early and off to the Poverty Bay Championships, first run at 7.30am! A short head and then a show ring type course with gate, ramp, water bridge to be negotiated before the pen.

Mark had a good run but had trouble at the ramp, nevertheless impressing everyone with his cool handling and his firm bitch.

1st and 2nd February 1975

These "Charity" Trials were well organised, no admission being charged but raffles galore (a pup : raised over \$300; a dog kennel, etc.), barbecues, teas and so on. I ran on Sunday morning, not doing too badly, but failing to pen. Gave a demonstration in the afternoon which interested the dog men (the driving). Went down to the Beach at Gisborne in the evening, had a swim and watched the surf riders. Went up to Captain Cook's Memorial.

3rd February 1975

Set off back towards Rotorua through Waioeka Gorge – a narrow gorge with bush covered cliffs about 2000' high, 35 miles long, down to Opotiki and along the coast road to Whakatane, stopping off for a bathe at Ohope beach. On a bit further to Doug and Pam Knight's at Te Teko (Freda's pen friend) – a dairy farm in undulating country milking about 120 Friesian X Jersey cows in the usual 16 x 8 herringbone open sided shed. Had an interesting evening talking with Doug about farming both sides of the world.

4th February 1975

An hour's run to Rotorua and down to Riverdale Park, and the Expo Trials had started.

Pleased to hear we were to stay with the Twyman's for the rest of the week.

5th February 1975

A high standard of work in the morning with the sheep running extremely well. Mark again put up a good run in the afternoon – 88 ½ points, well in the top 20 at this stage. Drinks and talk in the Agrodome after the day's running.

6th February 1975

I'd been sick during the night, so stayed in bed and didn't go down until after midday. Ran last-but-one on the programme, 82 ½ points, not so bad but not good enough to beat 2 of John Evans' dogs. As the rules stood, the top 2 U.K. dogs went forward. Godfrey Bowen apologized for the way it was worded – actually I was higher pointed than 3 of the 4 Australian dogs which were guaranteed a place in the semi-final. Mark was 22nd, missing qualifying by ½ point!



7th February 1975

Semi-finals run over the "B" course. Enjoyed our day watching although a little disappointed we weren't competing. Never short of company and people to talk to. Fred Morgan's son, Keith, was there (managing a farm on the West Coast) with his N.Z. wife and young family – I enjoyed his company greatly. The Morrows and Mrs Snell were particularly friendly, giving us tea and sandwiches. Ted had 2 marvellous runs in the semi-finals.

8th February 1975

The finals proved very exciting, the first runs being on Romney sheep and 7 out of 8 high scoring runs. The second run over course B proved very difficult with the Perendale sheep and really brought the best out of the top dogs and handlers. Bob Wilson just pipped Garry Brennan – after a lot of trouble at the bridge, he penned with seconds to spare. Evan's bitch gripped (most thought he should have been disqualified) – sour grapes!

Prizes presented in the Agrodome afterwards – I had to say a few words and present Bob Wilson with a trophy. Went out for dinner in the evening with the Twymans, also Lou Blackwell and wife and 2 Australians.

9th February 1975

Another good crowd on another beautiful day to see demonstrations and an international competition. Duncan MacGillivray gave a very good demo. with 4 red and white dogs. A Maori - Pakeha Huntaway competition was followed by the international competition – head and pull U.K. style, gate and bridge N.Z. style, ramp and pen Australian style. I managed well up to the pen, where the competitor stands in a tyre about 2 yards away and isn't allowed to assist in any way to block the sheep. One b* sheep found a way through between me and the gate and I've never felt so frustrated in my life! I penned with about 2 seconds to spare and caused some amusement!

Gave a demo. of U.K. style work – ran a national course and as the sheep were good, I put up a really good run, commentated on by Matt Mundell.

Again we were never alone, people so friendly and wanting to meet and talk to us. A final cocktail at the Agrodome and good-byes to the people who had made us so welcome.

We had an earlier finish this evening so the Twymans took us for a trip round to the Waikite Valley (really well farmed dairying area) and a dip in the Thermal pools, 100°F! a really great experience.



10th February 1975

Farewell to the Twymans and on our way to the South Island. Perfect weather as usual and a lovely run alongside Lake Taupo over the Desert Road with the volcanoes looking magnificent then down the Rangitikei valley with its white cliffs to the flat rather burnt up but good farm land round Bulls. Pressing on through Levin (where Godfrey Bowen had invited us to stay), we thought we should get to Wellington, so as to be ready for the ferry the next morning. Found a Motel without too much trouble.

11th February 1975

Down to the ferry soon after 7am to be sure of a place in the queue (actually everyone got on!). There was a strong wind and the sea was choppy but the crossing was one of the highlights of the trip. The view of Wellington as we sailed out, sighting a school of dolphins, and the first view of the South Island and the lovely trip through the Marlborough Sounds to Picton. From Picton to Blenheim (the sunniest place in New Zealand) and a long pull over extremely dried out hills, almost yellow in colour, the along the coast, with the Pacific surf a few yards away on our left, and mountains on the right.

Kaikoura was the loveliest place overlooking a small plain and Mount Fyffe and the Seaward Kaikoura Range behind. Then we left the coast along a winding road eventually opening out into a



wide valley at Cheviot with barley crops, lucerne, very attractive farmland, down as far as Omihi, where we turned off to stay with Philip and Millie Moss, who came to N.Z. 12 years ago from Lancashire, and who is now managing a hill farm carrying about 1500 Corriedale ewes and 200 A.A. cows. Phil imported a bitch from Tom Leedham, Tess, about 7 years ago and she has won trials and bred quite a few successful trial dogs. (Tess is by Wiston Cap x Anderton's Jill.)



12th February 1975

Mark and I spent the morning running our dogs up a steep hillside, then Phil took us all round the farm on the tractor box, a really smashing place. Bob Wilson and wife turned up in the evening and we saw some of his dogs in action.

13th February 1975

Down to Christchurch, not to the city, but to the Airport to arrange our flight home, and further south through Ashburton to Hinds and the home of the Watsons where Mark helped at lambing. Looked round the 800 acre holding with its intensively stocked 3000 Corriedales, wonderful lucerne crops, border-dyke irrigation, high shelter hedges and pine trees (100') and the back drop of the mountains, Mount Peel in particular.

Saw some slides of Peel Park, Brandsby taken by Gavin when he was with us in November.

14th February 1975

South again making for the Dog trials at Middlemarch. Through Timaru the countryside was reminiscent of the Yorkshire Wolds. Trouble with "Hilda" forced us to stop at Oamaru and hire a Hillman Avenger estate car which took us on in greater comfort to Palmerston and then west through increasingly interesting country over Macraes Flat with its unusual outcrop rock formations, to Middlemarch, a small place (200 population) in a wide valley with the Rock and Pillar Range to the west. The trial was held on the slopes of these hills, the long head about 600 yards long, pretty steep and rough, mostly tussocks!

The short head was equally rough, the sheep being out of sight of the dog about 300 yards away. I had a good run with Mick but couldn't just pen the sheep (only 2 had penned all day). Mark had a rough run and got them in just after time was called. To me there was a feeling of great space, the hills being so high, the valley so wide. Three trial courses all going on together, no sheep being folded after running, just turned further down the slopes amongst the tussocks.

We stayed the night at the nearest farm with Jack and Dorothy Grant who gave us a good evening in their very attractive house – a little older and bigger than most, it being the homestead of the big station before it was split up.



15th February 1975

Up early and up to the trials on a beautiful morning to run early on the long head. Mark's bitch crossed, then had a good pull. I had a good head with Mick but the sheep took off to one side and I was miles off course pulling them in. It was a great thrill getting him out that distance under those steep, rough conditions.

Left about 10.30am up the Taieri Valley and then west through Ranfurly and a great wide plain between mountain ranges, all very dry, swinging south to Omakau and the Central Otago Show. We had to go on the show ring course, but the Merino sheep proved too difficult, and enjoyed the show, which was about the size of one of our village shows. There was a very good turnout of sheep – Romneys, Corriedales, Halfbreds, Border Leicesters, Merinos, Southdowns, Suffolks, etc., and I talked with a local farmer who carried 2200 ewes and 200 cattle on 800 acres which was flood irrigated and top-dressed each year with 1 cwt Supers or Sulphur Supers.

We left the Show about 5.30pm for Alexandra and Cromwell, the hills being absolutely barren, looking like a moon landscape. The valleys and plains all showed signs of irrigation and we learned that Alexandra was one of the driest places in N.Z. (11 or 12 inches/ annum).

We pushed on through the spectacular Cromwell Gorge to Frankton and Queenstown, finding all Motels full up, but lucky to get a small room for 2 at Frankton – Mark had to sleep on the floor!

16th February 1975

Found Queenstown a beautiful place, with the spectacular “Remarkables”, the lovely Lake Wakatipu (52 miles long, over 1000' deep), Cecil Peak and Walter Peak. Went up the chair lift (didn't like looking over the side!) to the look-out and restaurant; coming down was even worse!

On a launch (boat) in the afternoon to the Cecil Peak Station – the “Viking” took us over the lake where we were met by “Pop-Eye” Lucas, the owner of the station (35,000 acres) of Airforce fame (was stationed at Dishforth at one time) and taken in an old Daimler bus about 1 mile to the old homestead. The large Merino sheep flocks are no longer kept (a severe winter in 1968 caused heavy losses and wool prices in recent years have made it less profitable – cattle are now kept and the tourist business keeps it going). Had afternoon tea at the homestead and a sheep dog demo on the way down! Had a good meal in the evening – eating out is much cheaper than at home, even in Queenstown.

17th February 1975

Set off south on a winding road very close (too close sometimes!) to the lake, passed Kingston, when we saw Donald MacPherson on the letter box – Donald is a “top” dog handler and we were made very welcome for a few hours, staying for lunch and seeing his famous dog Vic and son Snow (Phil Moss has his brother Vic, they are out of Tess). The farm, the house and garden was very well cared for and we found Donald and his wife great people. A Belgian Government official connected with the Department of Agriculture called with interpreter and followers, to see Donald's dogs. I gave Mick a run!

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Down through Garston to Mossburn – saw a load of deer skins and went towards Te Anau, the scenery becoming terrific as we approached the mountains. Booked in at a Motel and motored down to Lake Manapouri on another beautiful evening.

18th February 1975

We would have liked to have had a day or two at Te Anau and gone over to Milford Sound, but couldn't fit everything in. We went up to an observation point just out of the town and had a marvellous view as the mountains cleared of mist.

At Lumsden we had a sandwich and saw the vintage “Kingston Flyer” - a steam engine and vintage coaches in immaculate condition.

Down into Southland and the dry plains (the drought was causing concern) to Invercargill where Mark made enquiries about jobs at the “Stock and Station Agents”. Back up a few miles to Lochiel and the home of Ken MacConachie. Went along to the Lochiel Collie Club's A.G.M. (Ken was Secretary) in the evening, became a member, made one or two propositions – after my opinion had been invited, of course! - and had them carried.

19th February 1975

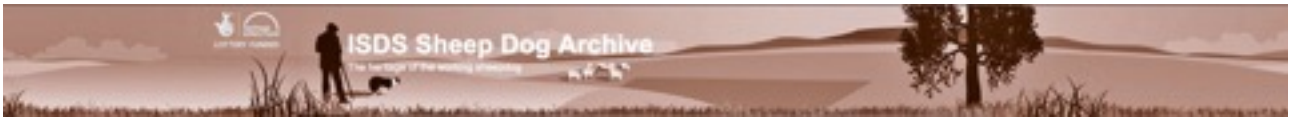
Ken showed us round the farm (flat paddocks, 12-16 acres carrying a heavy stocking of Romneys, some hay being made, a bit of lucern, winter root crops to be folded on), and took us to a local high vantage point where we could see the Southland plains and the Takitimu Mountains in the distance. A very productive area looking rather brown at this time of year but usually a luscious green.

After lunch we drove through more undulating country, very good farming land, to Gore, and to Michael Bannerman's farm at Otama. Saw his Perendale rams and spent an interesting evening with his parents. Stayed the night at a local pub where we met Joe Karam ...

20th February 1975

... the All Black full back, at the breakfast table. Talked about his recent tour of G.B. and his stay at Ilkley and the game against Yorkshire (Alan Old missed a sitter under the posts).

North through Kelso and Heriot to Raes Junction (Gore to Kelso was through very prosperous looking country, large properties, some cereal crops, like the Tweed Valley). At Milton we called on Seddon Hanson who was supposed to want an imported dog (turned out he wanted a bitch), and up to Allanton where we stayed the night with Ian and Dorrie Cunningham. Ian had been a musterer and had managed big stations – he ran his dogs more like our style, breaking them to full circle flank commands and making them go down.



21st February 1975

Up early and down to Hillend Trials near Balclutha. There was some delay before the trials got going and some further delay until the liberators got the hang of settling the sheep at the top, then we learned that I had won the Maiden Event in the Short Head and Yard at Middlemarch, and Mark had gained 2nd prize in the Maiden Long Head.

Mark had a smashing run in the Long Head and I had a 91-pointed in the Short Head (heard later that Mark and I got 3rd prize in the open and 3rd in the Intermediate Event).

This was the first wet day in six weeks and we travelled up through Dunedin to Oamaru, where we picked up Mark's Husky and left the hired Avenger, plodding on up to Omihi where we arrived about 10pm.

22nd February 1975

Another damp day, but not unpleasant, at Cheviot Field Day. The Long Head was up a particularly steep hill and I was pleased to get Mick up and had a reasonably good run (85 points). Phil Moss had quite a good day getting 3rd in the Intermediate Short Head and 2nd in the Maiden Short Head.

These field days take a lot of running – 4 courses on the go at once. \$300 was given back as prizes in the form of trophies (travelling rugs, sheepskins, electric blankets, cutlery, etc.). Entries were \$1 per dog per event, no Open Event. The Intermediate Event is for dogs which have not won a 1st prize in an Open Event, so this means that quite a few good dogs are eligible. The Maiden Event was for dogs which have not won a Maiden or other event.

23rd February 1975

Down to Tai Tapu, near Lincoln, just south of Christchurch and to better weather and another enjoyable Field Day. Mark had a good run on the Yarding and penned some very nearly impossible sheep – he was 3rd in the Maiden and Intermediate Event, winning a poaching pan and a carwash brush!



A pleasant run back to Omihi through Amberley.



24th February 1975

Goodbye to Phil and Millie Moss, down to Christchurch Airport, more sad goodbyes to Mark, Nell, Tip, Mick and Hilda, and up in the air to Auckland, unfortunately in cloud until we reached the Marlborough Sounds then we saw the Taranaki and the West Coast line all the way up. Spent the evening with Malcolm Bradley and family just out of Auckland at Albany and saw the city lit up as we crossed the Harbour Bridge. Stayed the night (very warm) in a motel in Auckland, ready for our departure from N.Z. at 7.30am from ANZ air terminal the next day.

25th February 1975

Left the airport on time, 9am, on a beautiful morning, arrived Sydney about 4 hours later in heavy rain. Saw parts of New South Wales and the South coast as we flew to Perth; here it was very warm, we could feel the sun hot on our backs, in spite of a strong breeze, as we left the 'plane for a short time.

Up the west coast for a while, it soon turning into a wilderness, and arrived some 5 hours later over the spectacular lights of Singapore – got a particularly good view as the 'plane had to circle for a few minutes before landing. Temperature here 30°C and a storm in the distance with great flashes of lightning about every 30 seconds! Didn't know much about the next 8 hours – couldn't eat the dinner – had enjoyed the meals but enough is enough!

26th February 1975

It must have been the next day by the time we landed at Bahrain, although we'd lost track of time, as on every leg of the flight the clock was put back 2 or 3 hours. An hour's stay and we were on the last leg, 8 hours to Heathrow. Saw some mountains over Northern Italy by the light of the full moon – and lights of the towns and villages of Northern France – the sky was blood red to the east as dawn was breaking.

It was lovely to see Janet waiting for us at the Victoria Air Terminal.

Janet was at University in London at the time, and was able to meet her parents at the airport when they returned to England.



APPENDIX : NEW ZEALAND NEWS : INDEX OF NAMES by A. G. Heaton

PLACES

PEOPLE

North Island

Waikato

Auckland

One Tree Hill

Te Kauwhata

Huntly

Hamilton

Te Kuiti

Mokauiti

New Plymouth

Rahotu

Oeo

Wanganui

Raetihi

Tongariro National Park

Turangi

Lake Taupo

Tokoroa

Te Awamutu

Pirongia

George Harford, director of Agridome at Rotorua

Dick Thornton, shepherd, and wife

Simon Taylor, boss

John Walker, Te Kuiti

Ted Morrow, son Richard; Mrs Snell, housekeeper

Mr and Mrs Good

Dick Maddern, daughter Betsey Langley

Northland

Whangarei

Ruatangata

John, Kathleen Harrison

Waikato

Rotorua

Matamata

Ngongotaha

Blue and Green Lakes

Ngongotaha

Lynmore, Rotorua suburb

Rotorua, south of

Whakatane

Ohope

Opotiki

Hick's Bay

Ruatoria

Mr and Mrs Jack Gear, and grandson

Ivan Bowen

Ken Hindman

Bill Twyman



Te Puia Springs	
Waipiro Bay	
Tuakau Station	Dave and Pam Hamilton
Tolago Bay	Stan and Diane Smith
Gisborne	
Young Nick's Head	
Hinenui Station	Bill and Elaine Teutenberg
Poverty Bay	
Waioeka Gorge	
Te Teko	Doug and Pam Knight (Freda's pen friend)
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Godfrey Bowen
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Fred Morgan's son, Keith
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Bob Wilson
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Garry Brennan
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Luo Blackwell and wife
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Duncan MacGillivray
Riverdale Park, Rotorua	Matt Mundell
Waikite Valley	
Lake Taupo, the Desert Road	
Rangitikei valley	
Bulls	
Levin	
Wellington	

South Island

Marlborough Sounds	
Picton	
Blenheim	
Kaikoura	
Mount Fyffe	
Seaward Kaikoura Range	
Cheviot	
Omihi	Philip and Millie Moss
[Omihi	Bob Wilson and wife]
Christchurch Airport	
Ashburton	
Hinds	Watsons
Mount Peel	
Timaru	
Oamaru	
Palmerston	
Macrase Flat	
Middlemarch	Jack and Dorothy Grant
Rock and Pillar Range	

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Taieri Valley
 Ranfurly
 Omakau
 Central Otago Show
 Alexandra
 Cromwell
 Cromwell Gorge
 Frankton
 Queenstown
 "Remarkables"
 Lake Wakatipu
 Cecil Peak
 Walter Peak
 Kingston
 Garston
 Mossburn
 Te Anau
 Lake Manapouri
 Lumsden

Donald MacPherson and wife

Southland

Invercargill
 Lochiel
 Southland Plains
 Takitimu Mountains
 Gore
 Otama
 Otama pub
 Kelso
 Heriot
 Raes Junction
 Milton
 Allanton
 Balclutha, Hillend Trials
 Dunedin
 Oamaru
 Omihi
 Cheviot Field Day
 Tai Tapu, near Lincoln
 Amberley
 Albany, Auckland

Ken MacConachie

Michael Bannerman and parents
 Joe Karam, All Black full back

Seddon Hanson
 Ian and Dorrie Cunningham

Malcom Bradley and family