Henry Daniel Williams
Sept. 8th 1893 - 26th June 1981

EARLYFAMILY EVENTS.

1972.

Mostly hearsay but as I believe reasonably true.

Williams family came to NZ in 1837. William Williams and his wife Rose and family came by sailing ship, but William died on the voyage leaving his wife and family to fend for themselves in a strange new country. The eldest boy William was nine and he later became my Grandfather. There were other children also. My great Grandmother Rose came from a family called Griffiths who were a well born family high on the social scale. Two of the sisters were noted for their extra long noses, and were fabled to hold their noses to opposite sides as they passed in the narrow streets of that time. Grandmother had to go into service to provide for the family, but it was said she brought them up well. They landed in Wellington. The town was soon after largely shaken down by a series of earthquakes, which shook periodically for about three weeks. The people got so alarmed that they tried to escape to Australia by sailing ship, but the Govt would not let the ships sail for they realised it would be bad for the country if a lot of the population left at that stage.

My grand father was later taught blacksmith and wheelwright work and worked for Messrs McCarthy and Hunger who still have a place of that name in Hawera. Grandfather later established his own blacksmith and wheelwright business, first in Patea and later in Hawera, and he taught my father the business who carried on after he became a man.

Grandfather Williams married (I donot know who) and there were four children. William became my father, Daniel went more to clerical work and farming and he became Secretary and then Director of MereMere cheese factory, and a Justice of the Peace. There were also three girls, Amy, Kate and Rebecca. My grandfather also took over the responsibility of bringing up a boy whose parents were killed by the Maoris. His name was James J Patterson and his parents were killed when he was nine. Until he was a man he lived mostly with grandfathers family, and he eventually married my Aunt Kate, and they had a family of eight girls. In spite of his all girl family he became a very wealthy man. (More about him later.)

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On the maternal side, my father married Kate Arthur. This family came from Kent in England. Grandfather Arthur had been a cabinet and furniture maker in England and he set up business in Hawera and turned out fine furniture.

I never knew my Grandmother nor where she came from. There were two boys and three girls that I knew in this family, Alf, my mother Kate, Aunt Rose and Alice. Grandfather Arthur was, as I remember, nearly bald with hardly a hair on his head. He was very upright and particular and fussy at times, being very easily upset. He taught his son Alf to be a furniture and cabinet maker, and after Grandfather died, at 84 years, Alf carried on the business.

Grandfather Williams had learned the Maori language and did a lot of interpreting for the Govt. He was liked by the Maoris and could go among them even in the war. At one period he was employed by the Govt to purchase land for them from the Maoris. He was instructed to buy a huge area of Taranaki at 2/6d per acre. Unfortunately, the Govt was changed and the new Govt repudiated the deal. The Maoris became very irate and held Grandfather to the deal, but it had gone too far, and eventually Grandfather had to stand the costs and the land went back to the Maoris. He was unable to meet these costs, so father and Uncle Dan helped him out, but it crippled them financially. They finally got it all paid though father had to sell up his business.

While still talking about Grandfather, he fought in the Maori war. At the end of the war the Govt did not pay the soldiers in cash, but gave them a plot of up to two acres in a town site or village site, and also approximately 100 acres in the then back country, (this was generally in heavy bush). Grandfather's share was two acres near the small town of Wellington. It became known as the Lambton Quay area and the farmland was in the Wairarapa Valley. As there was no use at that time for the town area, he started to develop the farm land and forgot completely about the town section. When he died the papers were found, but if no rates were paid, the land reverted to the Govt after 22 years.

I helped in the cow shed before and after school. The cowsheds were very rough, the floors being made of slabs of wood adzed on top and made reasonably even. They were washed each day, but the water and slime got down in between and became very bad. I walked to school, but later rode a pony, who was usually

alright with me but bucked other people off. He bucked me off once when I showed off by spreading my arms out while galloping. I had some concussion. We lived in an old house near the cowshed while the home house was being renovated.

One of the first things I remember was the old house papered with pictures of the Boer War. The flat paddock near the homestead had been stumped and the stumps and logs were hauled to the outer edges and made a sort of fence to keep the cattle in. A wild boar that had been cut, escaped, and although still half wild became properly wild. He made his home in the log fence from where he attacked the garden and crops at night. A party of the local men tried several times to capture or kill him, and after many attempts finally got him, and he weighed in at 450 lbs. The party came back to the house for a cup of tea and my father emptied his revolver by firing at an old tin can. This suprised me very much as I had never previously heard the report of a gun. I must have been about four years old at the time.

When father bought the farm it was about 200 acres and all in heavy bush, with huge Rata, Rimu, Matai. Tawa and many other trees with thick undergrowth and tangled supplejack vines and lower vines. My father had felled the heavy bush on about 100 acres, but the big trees of about 3 foot diameter and over were left standing. About three months after felling, the whole lot was fired in a very fierce fire which burned all the small and medium timber, but left the stumps and logs, and killed the unfelled trees. A heavy ash was left and as soon as it was cooled the grass seed was sown on the ash. However, it was better to get a light rain on the ash before sowing as otherwise the seed did not germinate very well; but if conditions were right good sole of grass soon developed. Rape seed and soft turnip seed were usually mixed with the grass seed and this made a good bulk of feeding material for the sheep which were grazed on it within a few weeks. The growth of this first sowing was usually very good, and up to seven or eight sheep per acre were fattened. The sheep got very fat. This was all before I was old enough to know and is only hearsay from father.

Unfortunately, at that time there was no freezing for export, and as many other men were doing the same thing with many thousands of acres throughout NZ, there was no sale for the meat.

However, 30 miles away at Patea, was a boiling down works. The sheep were boiled down just for the fat which was put into 40 gallon drums; these were then joined together to make a flotilla and floated out to a sailing vessel and lifted aboard by cranes. There were no wharfs for the ships to tie up to.

The top price for a fat sheep was I/- per head, and that was only for the sheep which had enough fat in the fattest part to bury a butcher's hatchet to the hilt. For those with less fat the price was less. I heard my father say that the sheep had to be driven 30 miles to the works and this took several days. On some days, if it became very hot, the fat partly melted on the sheep and they became lopsided, and if they fell down they could not get up again by themselves. I was the sixth child of a family of seven and during this period I was too young to go to school. All the elder children had to walk to school over a bush track of three to four miles and across the Whakamaru gorge to a school there. A six foot wide track had been cut across the steep gorge and formed by pick and shovel, with a log bridge across the Otoki Stream. This area often flooded and was then impassable.

This stream got its name as follows..... During the Maori War, a much wanted Maori was being hunted by the soldiers down a long flat ridge at the back of father's farm. He had to cross this stream which ran between Papa rock cliffs, about twenty to thirty feet high. Unfortunately for the Maori the stream was in high flood and he, while trying to cross, lost his ax or Toki, as the Maoris called the ax. As he then had no weapon, he was captured and the name Otoki was given to the stream.

After the bush had been felled and burnt, the logs were pulled off to form fences or left to rot. After a few years the outside of the logs and stumps became rotten and in dry weather became a fire risk. One of my earliest memories is of a huge fire which started somewhere near Hawera and spread over the whole country for thousands of acres with a heavy wind behind it. The fire spread very quickly with sparks jumping from stump to stump and log to log. The whole country seemed to be on fire and the smoke was terrific. Several homesteads were burned. The women and children were put into water tanks for safety where possible. The smoke lasted for many days but the fierce fire was soon over as it soon burned off the rotten parts, but the stumps and logs burned for several days.

I mentioned when the bush was felled that the big trees were left standing.

Someof the Rimu trees were very tall and every time a thunderstorm came the dry tops caught fire from lightning and flared away like signal fires while the rain was pelting down. Later these trees became a menace as the roots rotted and they finally fell down, sometimes killing stock.

After the bush had been felled for a few years the stumps on the flat land became a little easier to remove. The roots had begun to rot and they then had to be dug around and the big roots cut, and the stump pulled out with a team of horses. But the roots from big trees often spread over a large area and were sometimes as thick as a man's body, and had to be cut in several places before they could be handled. The tap root of a big tree was the worst to get out for it went straight down and could not be reached to cut on account of the size of the stump. A big, deep excavation had to be dug to get at the root. It sometimes took days to get one of these stumps out. Later it became possible to buy a stump jack which was attached to a solid stump by a cable. The stump jack consisted of several gears and a ratchet with a long lever. It was attached at the other end by another cable and considerable power was exerted by the lever on the gears and ratchet. After the stumps and logs were all removed or heaped up and burned, the land was ploughed and sown with various crops or levelled and sown with grass seed. About two or three years after the bush fire, a fungus, something like a leathery pigs ear, grew on the damp logs as the outer surface rotted. This fungus was gathered and dried and bagged and sold to Chinese merchants who exported it to China where it was used for various purposes, but mainly as a thickening for soups etc. It became quite a source of income especially for the children who did most of the gathering, but there was usually only one crop after the fire.

Three or four years after the fire a quick growing shrub called Bulaoul (Poropore) grew from under the logs where it was protected from the sheep. It grew about six to eight feet high with a spread of about six feet and completely covered the logs. It had masses of bright coloured berries about as big as a fair sized marble. Flocks of Tuis, Woodpigeons and Quail fed on the berries when they were ripe, and our dogs took great delight in running along the logs and scaring the birds out in great numbers.

When the young grass, rape and turnip seed germinated after the burn, the pigeons became quite a pest as they ate the rape and turnips. In some places Cape Gooseberries came up thickly with the grass but nobody knew where they came from. Also Scotch Thistles came up very quickly and in the second season

after the burn, they took charge and grew higher than a man when they went to seed, and so thick that sheep could not get through and men had to use a slasher. The sheep had to be removed until the growth died down but even then the fleece got full of prickles and became annoying to the sheep and to the men at shearing time.

When some pieces of scrub and fern burned again after many years (thirty or forty-years after the first fire) rape and turnip would come up again, showing what a wonderful preservation power the oil in seed had. About three to four years after a bush fire the roots got a bit rotten and lost their hold of the earth, and on the steep hillsides landslides started in the wet places (small ravines). The Taranaki land consists of a nice dark brown loam about nine inches to a foot deep, then for the next twenty or thirty feet there is a soft clay on a Papa rock base. The Papa rock is a soft grey rock which a man can drive a pick into several inches. It is of a rather slippery nature when wet and the topsoil and clay on the steep faces will tend to slip away. The clay on the steep faces is only two or three feet thick, and in places this slips away down to the Papa rock when the trees have lost their grip, leaving ugly scars. Fortunately the Papa rock having at one time been sea bottom is nutritious and after it weathers for a little while the grass soon grows over it again.

Speaking of sea bottom or sea shore, there is a peculiar formation of the hills in the back country beyond the Patea River. There the country is pretty rough and the ridges rise to hundreds and sometimes thousands of feet above the river. About two-thirds of the way up there is a line of shell in rock formation running for many miles through the hills at the same level. The shells have formed into rock but retained their shape. This was once the sea shore. The rock is about four to six feet thick.

As the water seeps down through the soil and clay and meets the Papa, it gradually works out to the gullies between the ridges. Here there is often a break and drop of eight or ten feet which the dripping water has worn away. On top of this break in the Papa rock, some shrubs of tutu usually grow, as the stock cannot get at it until it gets a few feet high. Tutu is a shrub about ten feet or more high and has very pretty clumps of berries which go black when ripe. Cattle eat them when they can get at them, but they are very poisonous, and the cattle get drunk and flounder, and probably fall over a cliff and break their necks; but in any case they usually die.

If you found them in time, a bottle of kerosene poured down their throat sometimes saved them. The berries are also very poisonous, and are very attractive to children.

In country where there was no bush but fern, the tutu grew everywhere and lots of cattle died. The children in any spare time they had were put to grub the plants out by the roots. Cutting the branches off proved to be of no use, for the young shoots that grew were better liked by the cattle and were also more poisonous. The bracken fern came up quickly in the gullies as the cattle and sheep preferred to stay on the flat and easy country; until fences were erected to keep them on the steep slopes, the fern took charge. Father found that half grown pigs would root the fern up and live on the fern root, and winter very well there. In the spring they were brought back to their styes when skim milk and whey were available as fattening food. When the pigs were brought in from the hillside they were also given small boiled potatoes which were brought from the Maoris in many sacks.

My uncle James Patterson previously mentioned as having been mostly brought up with my grandfather's family, started at a very early age to do business for himself. Since his parents had been killed by the Maoris, he could get no help from that quarter. He collected wild horses which were the progeny from horses that had gone astray in the first Maori war. He made yards and suitable places in the bush, then trapped the horses into the yards and caught them and broke them into work; he then traded them around the country. He drove sheep to the boiling down works and any other jobs that were going. He took a mob of cattle from Patea to New Plymouth, via the seashore all the way, as there were no roads and the area was at war. After a while he collected some bullocks and broke them to a team and hitched them to a wagon and did carrier work, and hauling stones from the beach to the towns etc. He also helped in the construction of the Wanganui to Hawera railway. One episode in Wellington... A big boiler in a ship had to be replaced. There was no crane that could lift it out of the ship and no way of transporting it after they had got it out. The engineers proposed to get a crane from Sydney at great cost. Uncle had a look at it and then offered to take it out of the ship and transport it to where required at a fraction of the cost of a crane from Sydney. They laughed at him but he went to work. He cut the side out of the

ship, plugged up the tubes in the boiler, then rolled the boiler into the sea and floated it to land, where he pulled it out with his bullocks and delivered it. He was a very powerful man, 6ft 4in in his socks, and big in proportion. On one occasion one of his bullocks went sick, so he took it out of the team and took up the yoke himself. As time went on he was able to buy a small farm at Manaia near Hawera, where he built a homestead and reared a family of eight girls. He gradually built up his farms with beef cattle, and later into dairies both in Taranaki and in the Waikato until he became the biggest dairy man south of the equator. During the big slump in the 1930's the market for meat got so low that he could not sell the fat bullocks at a reasonable price in NZ; So he had them killed and consigned the meat from 500 bullocks to England. The price was no better there and the meat did not realise enough to pay the shipping and killing costs, so he had to pay extra. At his death the Guardian Trust took over the management of his estate and a little later I was asked by the family to go around the farms and report on their condition etc. There were 29 dairy farms milking around 3000 cows. Also some cattle and sheep farms. In the Waikato he had his own cheese factory built to cope with the milk from his farms there. During his life time he helped his brothers and sisters. All in all it was a pretty good record for a man who had only the barest minimum of schooling and no financial help.

I was born in 1893. There were four girls, Ida, Lily, Olive, Amy and three boys, Griffith, myself, and Alf in that order. Griffith was eight years older than myself, and of course he used to tell me what to do and how to do it. But there came a time when I objected and a fight occurred. I pushed him into a big boxthorn hedge which has very sharp spikes about an inch long. While he was busy with the thorns I got out of the way. However we got along pretty well together and in later years he took over the management from father. He also bought 700 acres of back country across the Patea river. It was about half heavy bush and the balance in grass. There were lots of wild pigs on it. Soon after he bought it, he and I drove 1500 sheep over the 16 miles from the homestead. It took two days as there was only a track over part of the way. The track had been cut 6ft wide but had slipped in many places, and it was only about 2ft 6in or even less. The sheep had to go in single file over these places. Also there was a high ridge right across the track (later a tunnel was

built). On a hot day the sheep objected to climbing this ridge. Further on we came to the Patea river over which a narrow swing bridge 4ft wide had been swung. The sheep did not like the swaying of the bridge which was over 100 yards long. Later a man was trying to force cattle to swim the river as the bridge was unsafe for a lot of cattle. However with all the noise of the dogs barking and men shouting, the cattle rushed on to the bridge, but instead of continuing straight on the leaders doubled back causing a huge jam. The bridge began to swing and suddenly turned upside down, throwing the cattle into the water 50 to 60 feet below. Several were hurt and had to be destroyed. This bridge was repaired and lasted a few more years, and was then replaced by a wider bridge which was wide enough for single traffic. Also a track was widened and a tunnel put through the ridge, and I believe it is now possible to travel in a car in dry weather. The cable to support the first bridge was nearly 300 yards long, as they had to go across the river and back again. A tunnel at each end had been cut into the rock at a higher level, and the cable was threaded through the tunnels and round the concrete blocks. Owing to the narrow track and steep ridge, the cable could not be taken into the bridge by horses, but had to be carried by a long column of men who were strung out like a very long snake, each man supporting a share of the cable. My brother-in-law Percy Saxton was in charge of this operation.

Several years later, my brother Griff and I had a very long and awkward job taking roofing iron for a hut we had erected on his farm across the Patea river. We had the iron on a narrow sledge pulled by one horse. Where the road had slipped away, we had to drive crowbars into the bank to support the sledge as it was pulled over, and in some places we had to cut the bank away to make the track wide enough for the horse to pass. We had 16 miles to travel so we started at daylight but did not get to the farm until dark, and had to do the return journey in the dark. However there was a shepherds cottage about half way back, and we pulled in there about 11pm. The shepherd was away but the door was not locked, so we went in and hunted round for food as we had not eaten since our lunch. The only food we could find was a big pan of eggs, so we cooked these, and I remember eating nine and Griff ate more. Then we lay down and went to sleep till morning.

Speaking about eggs,a man in that area said he was a champion egg eater. He ate 36 raw eggs, then ate a couple more as he reckoned he had spilt more than one on his whiskers. The iron we sledged into the farm was for a building which we erected after pit sawing the timber from a totara tree we had felled. We had further adventures on this same track, as we used horses to carry supplies in for the farm. On one occasion we had four pack horses loaded with fencing wire, grass seed etc. One horse was young and did not like pack work. He chose the most dangerous place and started bucking on the 6ft track, with high walls on one side and a 50ft straight drop on the other side. He bucked for a bit until the fastening around a coil of wire came apart, and the wire sprung apartin big coils and was soon spread several chain down the track and over the side. The horse managed to turn around and get mixed up in the coils of wire, until he too went over the cliff. He was not hurt much, but it took a couple of days to cut a track and get him out.

A year or two later, I50 acres of bush was felled by contract at 25/- per acre. It was then burned and Griff and I sowed it all with grass seed. We tied a corner of a big bag to the top corner of the same side, then put about 30lbs of seed in and put our head through the loop. The bag then supported from the shoulder left our hands free, and we would scatter the seed in great swathes with one hand, while the other hand was used to help get over logs and stumps. As the fire left everything black we were soon black as the logs. We worked long hours and it was very tiring work, as it was on a steep hillside, however we finished the job in about one week. We also split black birch trees into p posts and battens from rimu trees. These had to be carried or packed onto the fence line, and then came the job of sinking the post holes into the Papa rock which was less than a foot under the surface. The post holes had to go down to 2ft 9in, and the strainer post to at least 3ft 6in to 4ft. The posts were green timber and very heavy. When the posts were all in seven wires were strung along and strained tight and the battens put on. We built a stock yard under a big white pine tree (kahikatea)and while we were working there hundreds of wood pigeons fed on the berries, and we were able with the aid of a pea rifle, to get plenty of poultry for our food. There were also large numbers of Kakas and Tuis.

The Kaka is the New Zealand parrot and is a pretty bird. If one is wounded, he will hold on to a branch and call his mates who flock round to help. The Maoris used to come into this area with several pack horses and they would load them up with birds to take away for a hangi. Wild pigs were very plentiful, and they came in very useful for meat, and very nice eating. A little more gamey and less fat than the tame pigs. While we were working on a fence we pitched camp near the job. Coming back after dark Griff pulled back the tent flap-- there was a terrific noise in there and the dogs joined in. Presently a big pig rushed out and Griff was left lying on his back. The pig ate our potatoes. Most of the back country episodes were soon after I left school, which I did at 12½ years. Having passed the 6th standard I went to high school in Hawera. However the work at home became pressing, and I had to leave although the headmaster tried to get my father to leave me there. All the rest of my schooling was at Meremere 12 miles from Hawera. My schoolmaster was Mr Louis Bassett (he won the Military Cross for capturing a blockhouse on his own during the first world war.... he crept up to the concrete and put some grenades through the vent). Louis Bassett was a good teacher even though it was his first school. He lived with our family while teaching, but because he was my cousin, he did not spare the strap on me. However I and two other boys got even with him. One playtime we robbed a hive of bees from the next paddock. We were reported and got quite a lot of the strap. Shortly afterwards we put a swarm of bees into his school desk, and of course there was a great commotion when he pulled out the drawer. He must have known who did it but had no proof, so the matter was left to drop. A good many years later he came to visit my wife and myself while he was on leave in England during the 1914-18 War. I offered to take him for his first flight. He looked very pale and scared and didn't seem at all happy when we landed. While living with us and teaching, he taught me to play chess, and we had many good games. He was also a very keen footballer. Talking about bees.... Just before leaving school I saw an advert for bees for sale in Hawera. I got permission from father to attend the sale and buy them if they went at a reasonable price. Anyway I bought half a dozen boxes and left them there, but went back after dark to block up all the holes. I then went home and harnessed two horses into a wagon, went back to town, and started for home an hour before daylight. Things went well until about three miles from home, the sun started to rise. The vibration of the wagon must have shaken the boxes open. First one or

two bees came out, but soon there was a string of bees trailing out behind. This did not matter, but more boxes must have opened and bees came out in clouds and started stinging the horses, and they were soon getting into a gallop. The faster they went the more bees appeared, and the horses got out of control and really bolted. I knew the horses would go straight home but I was wondering if the big iron gate at the entrance would be open. Luckily it was open, and we dashed through at racing speed. Facing the entrance was a big boxthorn hedge which had not been cut for years, and was about I2ft high and over 20ft through. The horses were mad, and went into the hedge at full speed. The pole of the wagon caught in the hedge, and the wagon somersaulted. There was great commotion, the horses were tangled in the chains and hedge, and were squealing with fright, the farm dogs were barking for all they were worth, all the bees were out and stinging everything they could get at. My brother came to help free the horses, and by the time we got them free we had stings everywhere and so had the horses.

I had another experience with bees. A year or two previously Griff and I felled a big dead tree that had a nest of bees, we were after the honey. Usually when a tree with bees in it is felled it stays intact, but this one broke into several pieces where the bees were. The combs full of honey were thrown about, but as the bees were all free we could not concentrate smoke on to them. I rushed in with x buckets to collect the honey, but I met the bees in full force and got horribly stung. I yelled to Griff to fight them off my face, but the nearer I got to him the further he backed. I could not see for days afterwards.

Years later, more trouble. Bees do not like the sweat on horses. One of my teamsters was driving a six horse team with implements along the road. He had to pass about fifty boxes of bees which were about a chain or two from the road. The wind must have carried the sweat smell to the bees and they came out in swarms and attacked the horses. Horses got tangled in the chains and implements and some were down on the ground. However the teamster stayed with them until he got them free, but both he and the horses were in a bad state. The man could not work for many days and two of the horses nearly died. There was a similar affair on another of my farms. The teamster was working up some ground near the boundary when the horses were attacked by swarms of bees from the neighbours property. This teamster did not stay to releasethe horses and the poor things were nearly killed and had to be put off work for months.

My first big job after leaving school was to split firewood (rata) to fire the boiler at a factory a mile or two away. Father gave me permission to get the wood from his farm and I signed a contract for fifty cords at twenty five shillings per cord, delivered. The wood had to be in four foot lengths and the cord measurement is eight feet long by four feet high and four feet thick. The rata trees were usually about three to four feet in diameter, but some were as much as six feet. I sawed them into lenghts with a six foot six inch cross cut saw; it was hard work both sawing and using a ten pound hammer to drive the wedges home. With the big trees I generally bored a hole with an auger and used blasting powder to halve the logs, this made the splitting easier. I was able to average one cord per day. When I got the cheque it went into the general farm account, for in those days the family worked as a whole and there was no question of wages, but food and clothes were supplied and occasionally we got a shilling or two. About this time, father's health gave out and he did not do much work on the farm but did the blacksmith work required.

The area of farming had been increased by one hundred acres bought from Mr Ingram,(three hundred acres adjoining the homestead had been purchased several years previously) and this place went by that name afterwards; also father got four hundred acres of Maori Lease. Both these farms were very good country. Ingram's was nearly all flat, and the other farm which was called 'Tobbies' had a big proportion of flat ground with a gully running through it. This extra land made more work for Griff and my brother Alf who was four years my junior. We employed Maoris to help with the work; a Maori Pa was handy, but their dogs killed a lot of our sheep, usually about two hundred a year. This extra land brought the total up to eleven hundred acres at Meremere, plus the seven hundred acres in the back country across the Patea river. The sheep total was increased to well over two thousand on the home farms and about the same on the Patea river farm. As dairy produce could now be refrigerated butter and cheese factories were erected and milking machines were used. Father's first herd was milked by hand for several years. We had two herds, one of fifty and the other of one hundred cows. An employed man and myself milked the herd of one hundred for one season, then both herds were milked by share-milkers. The man and I got up before daylight, milked the cows, delivered the milk to the factory, and in our spare time erected fences and did general farm work.

I remember a humorous episode....Some bonedust had been ordered to sow with a crop, when it arrived at lunchtime, the working horses had been let loose in the yard with their collars still on and nose bags hung over their heads. ~~The~~ The gate on to the road had been left open for the bonedust to be brought in. One of the horses was broken-winded and made a lot of funny noises as he breathed. When he got the smell of the bonedust he started to snort, and his terrified snorts scared the other horses and started the dogs barking as well. The horses tore around the yard and then down the road with the broken-winded one behind them. The faster they went the more noise came from the broken-wind. They bolted down the road for about two miles, then across the Whakamaru gorge where they met a grocer's cart. Since the road was narrow there they pushed the cart over the side and it rolled down into the gully, leaving the groceries scattered in it's wake. They still went on at high speed for a good many miles scaring everybody on the road, then they split up and went on various roads and it took several days to collect them again. The one that went the furthest was at Manutai, twenty miles away.

The girls of the family all helped in the house, and Olive did a good deal on the farm. On one occasion we were haymaking and rain was threatening, so we decided to work until finished and do the milking afterwards. Olive got the cows in and went on milking; when we finished haymaking she was just finishing milking about II pm, having milked the fifty cows on her own and all by hand, as it was before machines were in use. Amy ran a barbed wire into her foot and the wound turned to a bone disease from which she suffered terrible pain and many operations for most of her life. Mother was always a very busy woman and looked after us verywell, was good to us and was very sweet. She seemed quite happy although she did not have the conveniences of today; she died at the age of sixty seven. Alf died at sixty four and was a happy go lucky boy and man, he died from a heart attack. Lilly died at forty four, after a life of very hard work and rearing a family of seven; she had married Percy Saxton (who afterwards married Anne Cook). All I remember of Ida's wedding.... There was junket served in the evening, and one man while passing it to another man let it slip and the next guest got a pocketful. Ida was about eighty three when she died and Olive died in her seventies. Amy is still alive, aged eighty two. Griff died at seventy nine years, and both my father and grandfather Williams died at eighty four years as did my grandfather Arthur.

Alf was always up to tricks and he trained the farm dogs to climb slanting trees where he hung a can from a branch. One dog would get on the can and another would bite the rope and let him fall to the ground. Other dogs could balance a jug of water on their noses.

We did not have much time for fun away from the farm. I remember being taken to the seaside at Mokoia (nine miles away) on two trips, and twice to Mt Egmont where we stayed the night, and each time I climbed to the top. There was a school teacher in the party named Naomi Rowe and she was determined to get to the top, but at Fanthom's Peak she was dead beat and would not give in. Uncle Jim Patterson, Griff and myself carried her the rest of the way, but coming down we thought of an easier method. There was a ravine full of snow about five or six chains long, so one of us went to the foot of the ravine while the others pushed her off. She came down fine and was caught at the bottom end. Her only complaint was that her seat was nearly frozen. Once a year there was a school picnic which all the people of the district came to and a lot of fun was had. Also in later years sports were held with very large gatherings from all over the province. Foot races and wood chopping, sawing trees with big crescent saws etc. Griff and I won the cross cut sawing event and beat the Taranaki champions one year.

While we were going to school all the spare time was filled in, apart from milking and school time, with such jobs as weeding and thinning the Mangold, swede, turnip and carrot crops. We hated these jobs as they were very back-breaking and monotonous. When the Mangolds had finished growing they had to have the leaves cut off and be stacked in long Vee shaped rows, then covered with hay, with dirt thrown on the top of the hay. In the winter they were fed out to the cows. The crops were very heavy, sometimes over one hundred tons per acre, and weeding and ~~thinning~~ harvesting five or six acres was a big job. It was also tiring as some of the Mangolds would weigh up to one hundred pounds.

The next year or two went on much as usual except that Griff went for a holiday to North Auckland. While there he bought a farm of twelve hundred acres, and I was sent to Maungakaramea fourteen miles from Whangarei to manage the farm for him. I was seventeen years of age at the time and I farmed it until war broke out. It was easy country but had been poorly farmed. There was one hundred acres of bush in which there were about twenty five huge Kauri trees, some of them six, seven or even eight feet in diameter, and very high to the

first limbs. A neighbour and I felled one of these trees and pit sawed it into timber from which I built a woolshed. There was also a swampy place of about ten acres on which huge white pine (kahikatea) grew. The big trees were so close there was hardly room to swing an axe. The trees were sold and the man who bought them had them felled. He made a slipway from the trees to a stream that ran through the property, this was done by half burying small timber about nine inches in diameter and about six or eight feet long and placed like railway sleepers, but about eight or ten feet apart. These sleepers were then greased. The trees were shamphered at one end and were then pulled by bullocks along the slipway and placed along side the stream. The next thing was to wait for a flood which usually occurred twice in the winter. As the water rose the trees were rolled into the stream and were intended to be carried to the river. Unfortunately the flood was not big enough and went down before the trees were carried far enough, and they spread into lagoons and low places all over the river flat. They were spread out for miles and became a dead loss to the owner for they rotted before they could be collected.

I farmed this place for a little over three years and employed one man to help. The farm gradually improved until towards the end of that time it was carrying two thousand sheep and a good many cattle. Griff bought yearling dairy heifers from the best herds in Taranaki and railed them via Marton and up to the railhead at Wellsford. I met them there and took them off the trucks and then drove them the last sixty miles to Maungakaramea. There would be about one hundred and fifty cattle in each consignment. Somebody had to travel in the t trucks with the cattle, for there was a lot of shunting and bumping which knocked thecattle down; the floor of the trucks got wet and the cattle could not get up without help.The man who was with the consignment had to climb from one truck to the other the whole length of the train, and then back again while the train was going.It was mostly through the night,and crossing the Waimarino Plains on the high country past the mountains was a cold and often wet, miserable job. There was no train through to Wellsford so the cattle had to be derailed at Remuera. They were let out into paddocks along side the station for one day and then had to be put into trucks and rushed to the railhead at Wellsford. Griff brought the first lot up and I think I went through with two lots, having had to go to Hawera to get them. These heifers were held at Maungakaramea until they were in calf and within a month or two of

calving. They were then advertised, a sale was held and they brought very good prices. They became well known as good cattle and people got keen on them and tried to find out when a train load was expected. They even came to the rail head hoping to buy them there, but this did not suit very well because they were worth a lot more when in calf and ready to go into the herds. About this time the Waikato and particularly Hauraki Plains were starting to develop, and there was a small rush from the north to buy land there; a lot of these heifers were bought from me and shipped to Thames.

There was very good shooting on the farm. Pheasants were plentiful, also a few wild turkeys and a flock of geese. A great footballer at that time 'Jimmy Hunter' who made a great name for himself with the 1905 All Blacks, came up from Meremere for the shooting on Griff's recommendation. He, a neighbour and myself soon had more that we could carry, and had to hang some in a tree and go back for them the next day. He took as many as he could carry back to Meremere and my friends were very pleased to help me dispose of the rest.

While I was at Maungakaramea Father asked me to go to Paihia, Bay of Islands. He and three others had purchased 3600 acres of the old Mission Station. I had to send in a report. The land was good quality, nearly all ploughable and a fair depth of soil, it sloped gently towards the sea. It had originally been ploughed and gorse seed had been drilled into the whole area. That was the idea of the first settlers to provide feed for sheep. The young gorse makes good sheep feed provided it can be stocked heavily and not allowed to get into bush size. If it did get away, it could be burned and the young growth would soon be there again. However, about 3000 acres had been left to go wild, and when I saw it, the whole area was about eight to ten feet high, and looked a pretty formidable job to bring into good pasture. The manager had got a paddock or two into grass and had some sheep on it. The method seemed to be working out well. He had burned it off, and then with a team of bullocks, pulled a heavy roller over the land. This flattened and broke the big stems that had not been burned then it was ploughed with a big, heavy plough by the same bullocks. This plough was massive and turned a furrow over two feet wide, and to a depth of one foot to fifteen inches. It had to be ploughed in the same direction as it had been rolled, so the plough was able to turn the stems in with the furrow. The ploughed land was then rolled to make the furrow lie flat. A light disking produced a reasonable surface, and a temporary grass or crop was sown.

When the temporary grass or crop was finished, it was ploughed again with a light plough, but only to a depth of four inches to prevent disturbing the roots and gorse seed that had been on the surface but was now buried. I had a look at this land fifteen or twenty years later, and it looked beautiful with a good sole of grass and no sign of gorse except a little along fence lines etc. When the farm was mostly in grass it was cut into smaller farms and sold, and I believe the partners did pretty well financially. While at Maungakaramea, I lived for a time with the married employed man on the farm; but later I lived at the village boarding house run by the Miller family. It was about two miles away and I rode back and forth. All money earned was paid into Griff's account at Whangarei, and for money spent he sent me a cheque to settle. I did all the buying and selling of sheep and cattle except for those he sent from Hawera. This brings me to the end of this farm for the 1914 War broke out, and as I held a commission in the Territorials, I volunteered, put a temporary manager in and went to war. The farm was then sold.

When I returned to New Zealand at the end of September 1919, I had been away four and a half years. I was then a married man and had one little daughter Zetta who was a few months old. I had met my wife who was then Miss Muriel Lowrey. It was soon after I had been wounded On top of Chunik Bair ridge, several miles inland from Anzac Cove, Gallipoli. I had been sent after a few weeks to a hospital in Alexandria and then to a less crowded hospital at Staines in England. I was beginning to get about, and one day another officer and I were taking a walk, or rather a limp, as we both had leg injuries. Two girls riding bicycles collided in the street, and we went to their rescue. From there our friendship, and later marriage, developed, but I was again returned to the Suez Canal where my regiment was starting to push the Turks back into Palestine. I was not on duty here but had got permission to go back to see General Russell, and later, the general commanding that area, General Birdwood. How I came to get the permission is as follows....When I was recuperating from hospital in Staines, I was sent with other officers to a Mr Montgomery in Scotland, who had ppened his house and estate to the wounded NZ officers. Mr Montgomery had been farming in Hawkes Bay NZ, and had married a cousin of General Russell who became the general commanding the mounted troops of NZ and Australia. Mr Montgomery was a brotner of the father of Sir Basil Montgomery who later became famous. Milnathorp was the home of the Montgomeries, not far from the Firth of Forth Bridge.

As the inside of my thigh was blown away, it was decided I would not be able to ride properly in my Mounted Rifle Regiment, so I was to be sent back to NZ. However this did not suit me as I wanted to join the Flying Corps. So through Mrs Montgomery I got permission to go back temporarily to my regiment and to see General Russell, as up to that time no NZ officer had been transferred to the British Flying Corps. General Russell sent me to see General Birdwood who was the top man. Anyway I was allowed to transfer but had to drop my rank from first Lieutenant, which I had gained at Gallipoli, to second lieutenant and finally got a commission in the British Forces. There was no flying school in Egypt so I joined as an observer and was sent away a few hundred miles to the Karga Oasis, about eight degrees off the Equator. This place was in a huge crater perhaps ten miles across and surrounded by cliffs, five hundred to a thousand feet high. It was really an army out-post, very hot about 130 degrees, hot springs, tarantulas and pale coloured spiders about

two inches long and over an inch thick, also scorpions. We slept on beds with mosquito netting all around, but even so, it did not look too good to wake up and see half a dozen of these spiders on the netting. They were supposed to be harmless but I did not trust them. This place was below sea level. It had quite a lot of date palms, a small hot lake and there were a few houses. Our job was to fly over the desert for about one hundred miles to keep an eye on a big Senussi tribe, and perhaps drop a couple of twenty five pound bombs. There was no opposition to contend with, but as our machines at that time were very primitive and had fabric wings, the fabric expanded with the heat and the wings became too floppy to fly, so we could only fly in the early morning or late evening. Our flight was soon ordered to go to Greece, or rather Salonika, to help the Serbian Army who were being driven out of their country. Our Aerodrome was on the banks of a nice warm lake and our tents almost on the beach. We could hire a boat to go for a sail, and a hospital was very close, with some pretty nurses. However an epidemic of Malaria was in full swing and patients were being sent away by boats, as many as six hundred per day.

From Salonika I was sent back to England to learn the rudiments of flying, engineering, map reading, photography, theory and various other things. Here I lived at Oxford and studied at a college for a couple of months. Then we had an exam and those who passed were sent to a flying school to learn to pilot a machine. There were six hundred in the course at Oxford and I was fortunate to get fourth place for marks. It was from here that I was able to get by train to Staines, and so could see more of Mona (Muriel). There were several men in the course who later became famous in air fights; men like Bishop and Ball, both of whom got a tremendous lot of victories over the enemy. There were many other famous fighters, but most of them did not survive the war. Bishop was a Canadian and he came through all right. I remember him celebrating at a Pass Out dinner. He got merry and collected a huge bottle about two feet long and nearly a foot thick. He had this under his arm trying to do a hornpipe among the dishes on the table, and of course he was soon in a trouble. Ball was killed in a tremendous fight. The top German fighter pilot had formed what was known as 'The Circus' of sixty planes. A German pilot had to have had a considerable number of victories before he could join the Circus. It was commanded by Richthofen. There was rivalry between this man and Ball

as to who had the most victories. The whole Circus came over our lines and sent down a challenge to fight. Ball only had eleven machines, but they went up and shot down thirty three Germans with the loss of six.

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When I volunteered to go to war, I left the farm at Maungakaramea in charge of the man I had employed for some time. However I was told that as soon as I got away from NZ this man sold £600 worth of stock and cleared off with the money. He was caught but most of the money had been disposed of. The Magistrate gave him the option of going to gaol or to the war. He went to war and was killed.

I was sent to a newly established camp at Trentham in the Hutt Valley, some miles from Wellington. We were all under canvas and when the rain came there was mud everywhere, especially in the horse lines. As an officer, I was entitled to take two horses and was allotted a man to groom and look after the horses. Father provided the two horses for me and the Government paid him £25 apiece. They were two fine horses, especially a big black mare with a star on her forehead and white fetlocks. She had some Arab blood and was very fiery, and could buck with great enthusiasm. She behaved pretty well with me and only bucked when very excited, but she hated having a groom, and bucked him off until he asked to be relieved. This happened to four grooms in succession, both in Trentham and later in Egypt. After a couple of months in training at Trentham, we were put on board a ship for overseas. The day of embarkment, I happened to be Orderly Officer of the day, and it was my duty to get the men and equipment and horses on board. Actually I handed them over to the Embarkation Officer who allotted quarters for the men and had the horses put into their stalls. I started the mounted troops off in columns of four abreast, and everything was going well until about half way, where my nose began to bleed and I could not stop it. There was blood all over my tunic and saddle, and over the horse. I had to hand over command to another officer while I pulled into a small stream to wash it off and try to plug my nose. Luckily a Medical Detachment soon came along and they were able to fix me up temporarily, so that I was able to catch up the troops and take command again before they reached the wharf. That night we were all given leave to go into Wellington. Some of the others officers had arranged a party with some girls, but I had lost a lot of blood and did not feel like going out, so I

sent down word not to expect me. They were not satisfied with this, so all the party came aboard and finally had the party in my cabin.

We had five hundred horses aboard and each horse had a stall to himself, but only wide enough to stand, and for six weeks on the voyage he was unable to lie down. They had to be fed and groomed and their legs massaged, also hosed down with sea water, taken out of the stalls and led around for exercise. The poor things looked miserable, and in the rough weather they were not actually sea sick but stood with their heads hanging down, looking as if they did not mind if the boat sank. For the first three days out of Wellington the sea was very rough and nearly all the men were sea sick. The blood letting must have helped me for I was not sick and could attend to things.

Six weeks later we landed in Egypt, having lost only three horses out of the five hundred. I shall always remember the luscious oranges which we were able to buy on land. They seemed very cheap to us even though we soon learned that the price was trebled each time a boat arrived.

We then trekked across Egypt to a camp called Zeetoun, near Heliopolous, out from Cairo. Here we stayed for several weeks and the horses got very fit and full of good oats, chaff and lucerne; they were soon to the bucking stage again. We went into solid training and manoeuvres away out in the desert. When we dismounted for attack on foot, the number three of each four would ride his own horse and lead the other three to the rear. This had to be done at the gallop and if it happened that there were trenches to cross, often one horse would pull back as the others jumped and the man leading them would often get pulled off into the trench.

In camp the horses were tied to a long rope, the horses facing each other across the rope. On each side of this double line of horses the tents were pitched a few yards back. One day a cyclone or dust storm spun right down these lines. The tents and bedding were whirled hundreds of feet into the air. The horse were terrified, broke loose and took off into the desert after wrecking what was left off the camp, but they were eventually collected again.

A similar thing occurred later. A shipment of wild mules had been bought in Argentina, and a lot of them were sent to us to break in to saddle and harness. They could buck through the eye of a needle. The horses hated them as much as our men did and if a bucking mule got into the horse lines there would soon be a terrific mess.

Well, after a time we were needed in Gallipoli and we had to leave our horses behind. They were later used in the Palestine fighting, but I was not with the regiment then, as I had transferred to the Flying Corps after recovering from my wound on Gallipoli.

When the war was over, the horses could not be brought back to NZ because of the various diseases in those countries that NZ did not want. They could not be left to the Arabs to a cruel living death, so they had to be destroyed. They were a very fine lot of horses.

When I was wounded I got part of the way from Chanak Bair but was eventually picked up by stretcher bearers and carried down to Suvla Bay beach. Here the whole beach for miles was a mass of wounded (seventy two thousand in the battle). Some lay there for a week before they could be taken away by boat to hospital. I was lucky in that I only had to wait for four days. Then we were laid out on the decks as close to each other as possible. After another two days on the ship we got to Alexandria in Egypt and to a hospital where our wounds were treated. We had been given drinks of water, but there were far to many casualties to be all attended to on Gallipoli.

I was reported to my people as among the dead. However as soon as I got to Alexandria, I had a cable sent to Mother and Father so they knew I was still alive. The Army still thought I was dead and packed up what gear I had and the surplus left in Egypt, and sent it back to NZ. However only a pair of old boots and my sword arrived home. The Army had officially written me off as dead so my pay ceased and I did not get any NZ pay all the time I was in hospital, and until I got my Flying Corps pay (about eight months). I took the matter up and even went to see the NZ High Commissioner. He had the matter looked into and even went to the bankers responsible for all payments. The bank produced receipts in my name for the pay out they were obvious forgeries. Someone must have seen my name on the death roll and collected the money all that time. I had to drop the matter as I was again sent out to Egypt and then to Salonika, and eventually back to England to get my wings, then to France and Belgium where I did nine months flying over the lines.

In France I was transferred to No. 7 Squadron at Poperingham near Eprey as we called it. We were flying RE 8tns, slow machines, about 100mph. They were built for photography and reconnaissance and keeping in touch with troops in battle, but mainly for observation and ranging our guns on to enemy targets

by means of dot-dash wireless. The machine was tricky to fly and was not meant for fighting and was not very manoeuvrable. The pilot did all the gun ranging and ground observation as well as flying the machine. There was an observer in the back seat and his job was to warn the pilot if any enemy planes were about. The pilot had a machine gun on the outside of the cockpit. This gun was synchronised to fire through the propeller, but sometimes it was not set right and the bullets would cut the propeller blades and cause a forced landing or crash. The observer in the back seat had a Lewis gun fitted on a ratchet, and he could swivel it around to fire in most directions. One day while I was ranging a battery, there was a whoof along side of me and when I looked for my gun it was not there, a shell had hit it and taken it off quite cleanly, but the shell must have been timed to explode on time and not on contact. In another case, a shell tore through the body of the plane between the pilot and the observer leaving a huge hole, but nobody was hurt. It was quite usual to see the big Howitzer shells go past, and you could see them for quite a way as they went higher and higher. Some of the long distance ones could rise to 30,000 feet. We often had a bit of a brush with enemy machines as their fast machines made a dive at us as they shot past. If they missed in the dive you were all right, but on one flight, when we got back to the aerodrome, my Flight Sergeant counted twenty seven holes in my machine, but I did not know we had been hit. However we got the enemy machine as he overshot us, and I was able to get under him and shoot him down.

While ranging the guns we usually flew at about five or six thousand feet, and photography eight to ten thousand feet. But in a battle we had to go down to two or three hundred feet to where we could recognise the troops (both our own and the enemy), and we would keep HQ advised by morse code. Flying at that height we were in the trajectory of the field guns from both sides.,as well as being in rifle and machine gun range, but were too low for Anti aircraft fire which we had to contend with while gun ranging. While ranging our long range guns, we were well into enemy country, for these guns had a range of about ten miles and were usually up as near to the trenches as possible. We lost a lot of men and machines on this work. In the nine months I was on this front my Flight Officers had to be replaced completely four times and most of them were killed. This period was the worst fighting of the whole war for it was then that we finally got air supremacy over the Germans. The troops on the ground were having a terrible time, living in water and mud. Duck boards were

laid over the mud for supplies to be taken to the trenches, but if a man got off the duck boards in the dark, he often drowned; to get the wounded out it could sometimes require eight men. The mud and water in places was about four feet deep. The country was low in the first place, and shelling from both sides had blocked the drains and turned the whole area into a sea of mud, and later a lake of water. Our side had a gun to every five or seven yards and so did the enemy. Although our casualties were high we thought we were lucky as we got back to good quarters a few miles behind the lines, after our job was done. I think I was the only pilot of this squadron to last the nine months without leave. It was during this period that I knew Leonard Isitt who, after the war, was put in charge of the NZ Air Force, and later was knighted. He held this job for many years. He was sent out to France as a replacement and came into my Flight. He made a bad landing and partly crashed his machine. He was then a second lieutenant but rose to captain at the end of the war. He did quite well while under me and we were both returned to NZ on the same ship. I was then a major or squadron commander (as they are called now). A good many months after we returned to NZ I got a letter from the Government asking if I would be interested in taking control of the flying in NZ. But by then I had bought the Tauhei farm and the Waitoa farm, so I turned the offer down, and it was given to Leonard Isitt. I have never had any regrets.

I had my first flight on a Maurice Farman Shorthorn. Then on to a BE 2B, then BE 2C, then Avro with a rotary engine. Later I flew an RE 8, Bristol Fighter, SE 5A, de Havilen with engine behind, DH 9 and Sopwith Pup for personal use in England.

While learning to fly over the New Forest, my engine failed and I was forced to go down. I could not reach clear ground so pancake landed on a spreading tree top. The body of the machine broke off behind me and I was still in my seat. I had to get out and climb down the tree. I used the propeller to make various things including a Lollie pot and a walking stick for Amy, both still in use.

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When I arrived back in NZ, things had changed a great deal. The demand for land by the returned soldiers had forced the price to nearly twice pre-war prices. Housing and furniture doubled and everybody seemed to want to make the returned man pay dearly for everything. The Government did help to put some men on the land. I applied for this help but was refused as I had transferred to the British Forces when I went flying.

At home, things had changed too. Father had pulled down the old house and replaced it with a fine new one. He also bought a new Rover car which was nice, but too heavy for the tyres of that time and punctures were frequent. Father could not drive it although he tried to learn, so Olive, Griff or Alf usually drove. Griff had married just before the war and built his house next door to father's. Father did not seem to take much interest in actual farming and Griff ran the whole show, and most of the land seemed to be his now. In fact he was a wealthy man.

A farm of two hundred and forty acres had been bought for £16 per acre. It was in Father's and Griff's name as equal partners. The farm was only partly improved but a small herd had been started and a sharemilker milked the cows. The farm was at Waitoa in the Waikato. Father had always said if we worked on his farms when we were young he would give us a fair start when we were ready. He now said I could have 'Ingrams' 100 acres, which was a nice little farm about one mile from the homestead, or take over his share of the Waikato farm; they were recorded to be of about equal value. But Ingrams did not give much room for expansion and I would have had to milk cows, and there was only a poor house. Whichever I chose would not have to be paid for but would become my share of the Will. Father's Will said the three boys were to get about £3000 each, the balanceto go to the girls.

Although I did not like having to go into partnership with Griff, he could finance his share of the bigger farm, and also give me backing to raise a loan for my part from the bank. This together with the good name of father allowed me an advance of £3000 from the Bank in Morrinsville. So I chose the half share of the 240 acres at Waitoa.

It was agreed that I was to have complete control of the Waitoa farm and any other assets the partnership would buy, and this applied to finance also. Griff could come and inspect and give advice but could not control in any way. I was entitled to draw a small amount from the partnership for living expenses,

but anything further had to be repaid plus 5 % interest. I first toured the Waikato and Bay of Plenty for another farm, but prices for farmland had gone mad, as anybody prepared to sell were prepared to make the most out of the soldiers' quest for land. The Government seemed prepared to pay big money to procure land for soldier settlement. Land I looked at near Whakatane was deep raw peat through which a few drains had been cut, and it was covered with stunted Ti tree; the price was £55 per acre, and partly improved farms were much higher. Finally I settled for 550 acres at Tauhei. The price was £35 per acre for 400 acres, and £15 per acre for the other 150 acres, which was very deep peat about forty feet deep. The 400 acres had been grassed but most of it was covered with heavy rushes with grass in between. These rushes were so high that only the backs of the cattle could be seen. I eventually had the rushes dug by hand at a cost of £3 per acre. There was about fifty or sixty acres of the four hundred which was a few feet above the rush country, this was in good grass. About three hundred acres was partly improved peat swamp which had been drained for a few years. It all looked nice and level above the rushes, but as the years went on the country sank and drains had to be deepened, and fence posts were left with very little grip and had to be taken out, with fresh holes dug and the fence re-erected. The first season I put on one hundred dairy heifers and when ready to go into herds, I held a sale and they netted £22 apiece average, which left nice profit as they had cost £16 each a year previously.

The farm had a four roomed house and two unlined rooms. Also a woolshed. The timber was totara. I pulled the woolshed down and had a cow shed erected, and started a herd of 100 cows milked by a sharemilker. There was enough timber from the woolshed to partly build a house, and with the addition of a little more, we had a house for the share milker. A year or two later we built another house and cowshed, and started another herd, and a little later a third house, cowshed and herd were started. A few more years and I bought 190 acres of adjoining land, and a house and shed were built on it and a herd started there on part of it; one of the other herds was increased to use this part other part as the land was brought into production. In the meantime the homestead had been improved by doing up the back rooms and adding two rooms to the front and an office to the side. Also a new implement shed and stables had been built. I leased a farm across the road for some time and put a herd on there. On the Waitoa farm the herd had been increased as the farm was improved so a

house and shed were built, and another herd started there, making 150 cows on this farm. About this time I went to a Mortgagee sale of 100 acres adjoining the Borough of Morrinsville. I went for curiosity but ended up buying the farm at £35 per acre. It was a nice farm all in grass with a cow shed but no house. I had a house built and started another herd there. I also bought another 200 acres of unimproved land at Kiwitahi Water Works road; on the third year I had improved the farm well enough to milk on, so had another house and cowshed built there, and started another herd. The leased farm had been given up when the lease expired. This left a total of eight dairy farms (about 800 cows), a lot of replacement heifers, and a few hundred sheep. Then I purchased 550 acres on Kawhia Harbour. This had been quite a good farm but the previous farmer had paid too much for it, and had finally left it, over the years it had gone back to fern and practically no grass. The fences were all lying flat under the fern. There was a good house which did not require much more than paint. I employed Maoris to cut a fire break around the boundary where it was needed; then a fire was lit and the whole area was soon a mass of flames. The grass seed was sent in to the Maoris who sowed the whole area by hand. The fire had left some of the big fern stalks and the Maoris had to scramble through these; after a week of getting through these fern stalks, they had very little clothing left and were very pleased to see me with fresh supplies. In fact they were pretty short of skin in some places. The fire uncovered some good trees for fencing material, the posts were split and the fences erected. The fire had not damaged the wire as it had been lying flat before the fern got away. The farm was then stocked with sheep and cattle which were bought in Morrinsville during the slump of the 1930's. The sheep were young two tooth ewes and cost 7/6d each.

Then the Second War came. After I had farmed the land for three years I found it too far from home, and the petrol for cars was rationed, so I sold the farm at a very good profit. The buyer of the farm bought the sheep at 35/- shillings per head. I had had three crops of wool and lambs from them. There were ninety fat bullocks which we decided would sell better in Morrinsville. They were driven over via Te Awamutu and Cambridge. On the drive, since the bullocks were wild having seldom seen a man, one man would drive ten or fifteen of the leaders to force them past the traffic, while another man kept the remainder close up. This worked well until they reached the narrow bridge

at Cambridge. A motorist forced his way passed the main lot while the leaders were on the bridge, of course the main body closed up, but the leaders got frightened half way across and doubled back on to the car which was now engulfed in the ninety wild and mad bullocks. At one stage it looked as if the side would be smashed from the bridge. The car was almost a total wreck but luckily no one was hurt. I bet that man remembered that time for the rest of his life.

Our total holdings were now as follows:-

Waitoa	240 acres	2 herds	
Tauhei	550 acres	3 herds	)
Tauhei	190 acres	I herd	) Plus some sheep and
Kiwitahi	200 acres	I herd	) about 150 dairy heifers
Morrinsville	100 acres	I herd	
		800 cows	
Kawhia	550 acres	sheep and beef cattle	
	1830 acres		

At this time I was also farming 1850 acres of my own with 3000 sheep and cattle.

With eight lots of dairy milkers there was usually one lot in trouble.

There were two four horse teams for ploughing and pulling stumps etc, and we grew the chaff or oats for chaff on some Maori ground about five miles away. There was about 100 acres of this ground, and I got the use of it for two or three years for breaking in and putting into pasture. Usually a crop of swede turnips was grown, followed by oats. We had our own machinery and harvested and cut up more chaff than we required, and sold what we did not need.

Five of the houses and sheds were built mainly from a sale of houses from a firm that was giving up business in the King Country. My brother and his men pulled down the houses in sections which were numbered and railed to me, and erected in the same order. They were all five or six roomed and were bought very cheaply by taking the lot. Griff helped me finish one after I had it nearly erected, the others I did most of the erecting and finishing, with the help of a little farm labour when it could be spared.

Water was a big problem and we had to use tanks, but this was not sufficient especially for the cowshed. I had one or two bores sunk but they were very costly, so I made my own boring outfit and derrick from old farm machinery and it worked very well. I found that by boring to about two hundred feet depth

at Taunei we could get Artesion water which would rise about four feet above the surface and could be let into troughs for the cattle, but had to be pumped to higher levels for the cowsheds. These Artesion bores were fine for the cattle and I sank one in each paddock so that it could be led into four paddocks. Unfortunately, after a few years the water did not rise enough to go into the troughs and had to be pumped. The water came up beautifully clear but after standing for a while it oxidised and went brown and would stain clothes. Some of the bores were not quite so bad if they had been sunk through the little hillocks which appeared as the peat soil sank, and we had to use them as much as possible. Over about forty years the peat consolidated to about four feet of beautiful soil and is now very productive. The peat had sunk in that time twelve to fifteen feet, and clay knobs had come through. The farm was now almost rolling country whereas it had been almost dead level except for one ridge. All this had been done between the first and second wars and although our finances had been strained at times, everything had been paid for and there was no debt owing on anything.

In 1944 we split up partnership. A value was put on each farm and stock and machinery. Griff and I took certain farms each, and the whole thing was done to the satisfaction of both of us. I kept the homestead and the bulk of Taunei, seventy acres of waitoa and all the Morrinsville farm. Both the Kiwitahi and Kawhia farms had been sold and 100 acresof the 190 acres was also sold.

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From then on I was farming for myself and family. Mona and I then purchased eighteen hundred and fifty acres of fairly easy hill country, also in Taunei. It was totally unimproved except for about a hundred acres of flat in the front which had been sown in grass, but was in poor condition with rushes and blackberry. The whole of the remainder was in Ti-tree and looked a pretty tough job. However the crawler tractors were just becoming available and I hired a man with tractors and giant discs to crush the Ti-tree and disc the ground. The method was to burn as much of the Ti-tree as possible then the tractor hauled the discs over and chopped the Ti-tree about. It was sometimes possible to burn the sticks a second time, after they had been chopped up; where the sticks were not too bad the tractor was sent over again with a very heavy harrow. This pulled the sticks into heaps which could then be burned, and then a more or less temporary grass was sown. A couple of years later the ground

was worked again and permanent grass sown. Five hundred acres was done this way in the first year and boundary fences erected. Also I built a woolshed and implement shed from huts I had purchased at £5 apiece from a big camp; a lot of unemployed had lived there while a large drain was dug through the big swamp not far from our homestead. I bought seven or eight of these huts which were built of good, new timber, and there was enough timber and iron to build a pretty big woolshed and implement shed etc. with quite a lot left over. As I did all the building, it turned out very cheaply. We broke in a few hundred acres each year, and stocked with sheep and cattle. Then I sold 600 acres of a rough and steep corner of this farm which left 1050 acres of pretty good farm land. We took my son Clive into partnership and later he and his wife Elizabeth bought out the rest of our share.

Although this has been written in the first person mainly for convenience Mona and I have been partners in all assets under a deed of Partnership for many years. Her part has been a very important one which she has carried out extremely well. She has looked after the home and family, and brought the family up under conditions which most women of today would consider very hard. When I married her in England she knew very little about farm life, and then coming to a new country and hard life, and leaving her home, her mother and sister and friends twelve thousand miles away. Her first home in NZ was pretty austere with none of the appliances available today, and eleven miles over a bad unmetalled road to a small village. She had to have two employed men besides myself to cook for and look after, as well as bring up a family of five, and arrange their education etc. At harvest time when big numbers of men were employed (sometimes twenty), they had to be provided with food and drink morning and afternoon, and all kinds of other things that came along, sickness etc. I was usually away all day from early morning till dark or later. I always took my lunch with me as the farms were spread over a considerable area of country. However she managed alright and we were both happy, and I am very proud of the family she reared; we were very hurt when our son Keith was killed during the second war.

Since 1944 when we dissolved the partnership with Griff we have gradually transferred our farms to our family. Clive and his wife got the 1050 acres, also the 70 acres at Waitoa. Meryl, Zetta and Pauline each shared the Tauhei homestead farms in various amounts. Zetta, Meryl and Clive still have these

farms, but Pauline transferred her portion to Meryl. These transfers of Ownership all had to be at Government valuation. As in most cases no money was paid but held on mortgage which was gradually forgiven, and in some cases Gift Duty was paid by us. It was all arranged so that each of the family received a fairly even amount in some shape or form. They are all doing well.

In 1944 we had a new home built on the Morrinsville farm; we lived there for eighteen years and then sold the farm, or what was left after some town sections had been sold. It is all in the Borough now. We sold the house and six years ago came to live in Howick where most of my time is taken up with the garden and bowls.

Our family consisted of five children. Zetta, the eldest, was born in England. Then Keith, who finished his schooling in Auckland, (Mt Albert Grammar). He helped on the farms for a few years and when the second war started he volunteered. He learned to fly and finished his final flying instruction in Canada as a Warrant Officer pilot. From there he went to England on his way to France, but while flying there his engine failed. The Aerodrome he got to was fully occupied and he was not allowed to land until a runway was cleared. In the meantime he had to fly with a failing engine which stopped altogether and he was forced to land away from the Aerodrome, the machine crashed and burnt and Keith did not get clear and died shortly afterwards.

Zetta married a fine young man Arthur Sutton. Unfortunately he was killed after only a few years of married life, while duck shooting on the farm.

All three girls, Zetta, Meryl and Pauline had good secondary education and helped at home when possible. Then they went to most countries for a few years, finally returning to NZ to marry, and are now busy bringing up fine families. Meryl married Arthur Sage; Pauline married Peter Bolton and after a long period of years Zetta remarried to William Lumley. Zetta had in the twenty odd years in between, brought up and educated her son and daughter from the first marriage, Roger and Jocelyn. Jocelyn became a nurse and travelled and nursed overseas for five years, Roger is a pilot in Australia, and both are married. Roger and his wife now have a little daughter, our great granddaughter. Clive married Elizabeth Main of Tirau, and they took over the sheep farm of 1050 acres at Tauhei, and the 70 acres dairy farm at Waitoa, and have since bought the Main homestead of 350 acres at Tirau. Clive finished his education at New Plymouth Boys School. 1953 He and Elizabeth have brought up 5 children.

When our family were young we used to go camping. We had a Dodge car with a carrier on the back, and a big canvas hold-all strapped along one side. This carried a tent and blankets, groundsheets etc., and a lot of clothing and provisions; with the family in the car we were independent and visited many sea sides and places in the North Island over the years, and twice we took our car to the South Island.

Our first trip to the Mount at Tauranga about 1920 was not so good. We had a left hand drive Ford T car and it could go almost anywhere through mud and rough roads etc. The road over the Kaimai range was unmetalled and badly ridged by cattle tracks. The Ford rattled and bounced from one cattle track to the next. Zetta was then a baby in arms and her mother could not keep on the seat and hold her at the same time, so Mona had to get down and sit on the floor. However we arrived in one piece and enjoyed the Mount. There was only one house and that served as a store at that time, and I remember a sale notice for one acre of land at £10 per acre, and it was where the main part of town is now, along the sea front.

Several families of our relatives often joined up with us and on one or two occasions there could be up to thirty or more all in the same camp.

On Fathers' farms there was a gully running through each farm . This made things awkward for moving stock and machinery around and we had to do a lot of pick and shovel work to make roads for the machinery, and tracks for the cattle and sheep.This was mostly done by hand with the aid of a wheelbarrow and sometimes a one horse scoop. The Papa rock often had to be blasted, especially where the road had to be wide enough for machinery and wagons. On very steep gullies where it was not possible to get a reasonable gradient the track had to be made in a zig zag pattern.

As there were no streams or water on the flat land but small streams in the gullies, we dammed these streams sometimes to a depth of twenty to twenty five feet of water. A two inch diameter pipe was inserted fairly near the bottom of the filling. This pipe was led downstream and a hydraulic ram connected at the bottom. These rams consisted of a dome about eighteen inches high and perhaps nine inches wide, in the bottom were two or three valves and an inlet for the two inch pipe and an outlet for a three quarter inch pipe. The force of the water from the big pipe compressed the air in the dome until the compression overcame the water force, the air then forced the water back and into

the small pipe, and the surplus put through a valve. Only a small portion could be forced into the small pipe on each compression but this occurred nearly every minute and a valve stopped it from returning. Each time this occurred the water was forced further up the small pipe until it went into a tank on the high ground, and unless something got into the valve and jumbled it, the process would continue for weeks and months. About one foot of fall in the big pipe would lift the water in the small pipe about ten feet, so twenty five feet of fall would raise the water two hundred and fifty feet.

HUNTING

As a boy I did quite a lot of shooting with both a shot gun and a twenty two rifle. When working in the gullies I usually carried the shot gun and was often able to get a pheasant or a few Californian quail. In the back country there were plenty of pidgeons when required and I would sometimes get up very early and visit some of the dams for ducks, so we had quite a lot of poultry. Also on the back of the farm there were wild pigs for which I used the twenty two rifle. The wild pigs were a nuisance as the old sows and boars killed and ate the young lambs. They were particularly plentiful on the Patea river farm and did a lot of rooting up the grass on the good paddocks. The half grown pigs made very good eating and we much preferred them to the tame pigs. They were very much on the alert and it was hard to stalk them, so we used our sheep and cattle dogs to find them in the fern and scrub. The dogs could scent them and the first dog to find them would give a yelp and the other two or three dogs would join in the fun, the pigs would take off through the bush and scrub. They usually ran with the dogs in full cry for about half a mile, or until the dogs got too close, then they would turn on the dogs with their backs to a big tree and make fierce plunges at the dogs. Our dogs would not really tackle the pigs but keep one bailed up until I could get close enough to shoot, or if the pig was not too big it could be caught and killed with a knife. Proper pig hunting dogs were usually big and powerful and would go right in and hold the pig, but sometimes they got badly torn about if the pig had tusks.

The old sows and boars were the worst to handle and could be quite dangerous, especially the old boars with tusks about six inches long. They were very quick and could use their tusks to great effect, They usually had their own tracks through the bush and if you met one on his track you were the one who had to get off the track and very quickly too. I met an old boar one day coming along a ridge, I grabbed the branch of a tree and clambered up but the pig ran his tusk through the heel of my boot before I got high enough.

Some tusks grow very big and strong and form almost a half circle. My Father found a skeleton with one tusk which had completed a full circle and grown right through a tooth and one inch beyond. I guess he must have had toothache. The tusk with the tooth still on was given to the Wanganui Museum.

After we were settled on the farm in the Waikato and our family was growing, I did quite a lot of duck shooting on the lakes near Rangariri, and later on

a small lake I made on the farm. Pheasants became very scarce. Then on several occasions I went deer stalking on the Mahia Penninsular and on the mountainous country behind Lake Taupo, where the Government is now diverting some of the rivers into Lake Taupo. I was with my brother-in-law, Percy Saxton, when deer stalking. On one occasion we had walked in about twenty miles from the road with a tent and our gear to a part of the Kaimanawa Range intending to stay about one week. After a few days we had had good stalking but the weather broke and we packed up and walked out as snow was falling. During the snow storm we walked into a mob af pigs. We shot one and the remainder all raced past us nearly knocking us over, as the snow muffled the sounds and they did not know where we were.

I also did some trout fishing in Lake Taupo and Lake Tarawera. While fishing in the mouth of the Tongariro River where it enters Lake Taupo, we were anchored in the river and our lines were carried down to where the river water met the lake water. We had caught a few fish when suddenly there was a roar behind us and our boat was torn away from it's anchorage and was heading for the lake. On looking behind us we could see the river falling over a three or four foot fall and a lot of muddy water came up. This only lasted for a minute or two when the river and lake went back to the original flow with no waterfall. We went back and reanchored the boat and started fishing but the same thing happened again so we pulled up and went home. There were eruptions at Mt Ruapehu at this time so we think there must have been a connection with the disturbance on the river and lake.

The fish in Lake Tarawera were very big and plentiful. On one occasion Percy Saxton and I were returning from deer stalking. It was dark when we reached Roterua so we stayed there for the night. We had earlier in the day shot a nice, fat, young deer, but thought the meat would not keep while we went fishing; so we put the lot in a sack and put it in a steam hole in the ground. It cooked beautifully and was very tender. Next morning we hired a boat on Lake Tarawera and in two hours had caught twenty seven big trout.

DOGS

We usually had three or four dogs for the sheep and cattle work and some of them developed rather humorous traits. One dog named Tiger when sent half a mile away up a hill to muster sheep would travel up a ridge, but when he got to the top lot of sheep he would go quietly round the side of the ridge and come up again right on the sheep, barking loudly and scaring them out of their wits. Also when sheep packed tightly in the race he would run along on the sheep backs and bark hard to make the front ones run. He liked riding on a horse or even an implement, even a set of disc harrows being pulled by a tractor or horses, but I think his best performance was as follows.... I had a Dodge car with foot boards, he would ride on a foot board. I used to go most days past a farm where there was a big, heavy dog that Tiger could not master. This dog would rush out growling fiercely as I passed, Tiger would use the pace of the car and would leap off the running board and hurl himself straight at the other dog, bowl him over, get a few bites in, then race after the car and on to the running board while his enemy was picking himself up. He had many other things he could do. On one other occasion he nearly got killed for he was asleep in a coal box in my forge. There was a big circular saw mounted on top of this box. The door had been left open and I did not know the dog was there and I switched on the power. He was very badly cut and all his skin from his back and under his belly was ripped right off, except a little under the belly. I used disinfectant and he just lay there with no fuss while I sewed him up. He soon got better and his skin healed well and the scars did not show much.

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