

Oral History
Herbert Hain
"Harlowe"
Cooma

S: This is Edie Swift and I am recording with Herbert Hain at his house on his estate, near Cooma and the date is February 6th, 1991. I am recording this for the Kosciusko Huts Association.

I would like a five minute survey of what you did before you started working.

H: Starting with my father owning the store with his brother in Cooma, I used to meet quite a few of the old mountain people coming in for their supplies, as the store was the main shopping place in Cooma for all of these old mountain people. As a young boy, I used to go with my father to various properties inspecting sheep and cattle and I got to know a lot of the properties around the Monaro. Father was involved with property at Providence, Dalgety, Adaminaby and it was there that I learned something about running the sheep in the mountains. As I got older, my father passed away and I was sent to school, Knox College, in 1929. I was there for a couple of years and then I went to Scot's College, for three years and I came back home and worked on my father's estate, with my mother and my brother.

S: What year was that?

H: 1926 when my father died; it was four years after that.

S: What did you do there, what were your duties?

H: My duties were to look after the stock in the mountains. My brother would send me up with different mobs of sheep on different snow leases. One was Foreman's lease in 1935, and 1936. I had quite an experience in that high country seeing it under snow, for many years and knowing the difficulties in keeping the wild dogs out, the fences in order so that we could get a good muster to bring back home. The dogs were very numerous those days and the dog trapper, who was looking after the Kosciusko end, was Mr. Willis. I used to see him

setting his traps. He had a number of stories he used to tell me about the dogs he caught and how he kept them out of the sheep.

The story about Mr. J Adams is related in a book; how I saved his life. He never went back to the mountains after that. Another occasion I sent a lot of horses down into the Tin Mines where I had a lease. There were one hundred and seventy-five. They were branded with W7 belonging to Mr. Jack Smith or Sanko Smith as they called him. He gave them to me under the conditions that I help him muster the cattle over one thousand head. During the early forties, when the ninety-nine year leases they had were terminated, they were allotted to smaller leases on the Monaro and the Riverina, Table Top and in that area and the small leases were given to these people of Monaro and Riverina.

S: What year was that?

H: In the early forties.

S: Can you go into the leases a little more and what you did on a day to day basis?

H: Yes. We had pack horses to get from point A to point B, so that it meant that we were away for a couple of weeks at a time. We would ride out to Table Top and we were mustering the cattle for Mr. Sanko Smith, during the summertime. We would be taking salt out and keeping all of the salt camps loaded with salt, and how we would do that; how it helped us muster the cattle, we would go out and put the salt on the camps and call the cattle and you would hear them bellowing for miles down in the gullies, especially on the Tumut river side. Up in that area you could hear them bellowing and it wouldn't be too long before you would have one hundred and fifty cattle coming out of the gullies. They would come along the ridges bucking and kicking their heels; they were all fat and kicking their heels. It was wonderful country; Table Top is marvellous cattle country. It made it so much easier, mustering those cattle, that when the fall of the year came, and calling them and then we would take whichever cattle we would muster that fortnight, in a paddock at the Nine-Mile diggings. There was a little hut there that we used to stay in and that was Wallace Smith and Jim Smith, and sometimes Mr. Sanko would come on and we would muster from Tabletop right across the Fifteen Mile, Three Mile down to where Cabramurra

township is, all in that area. We would work the cattle back to Kiandra down to Kelly's Plain. After all of the sheep had gone out of the area, we would move the cattle down to the snowline. Many times we were caught in the snow and we had to work in the snow. It felt funny to feel your horse travel on the top of the snow, whenever it was frozen we would have to wait for that time. Soft snow we would just bog down in it and hard snow, when it froze, we could get the stock up and they could just tread along anywhere. We would take them back to Kelly's Plain which was the main base Sanko Smith was using. He lived in Adaminaby township and then we would go home after two or three weeks to Adaminaby.

S: Tell me about the sheep in the early forties?

H: I built a hut the fourth year after I got my lease. It was one of the famous blocks in the mountains, belonging to the Lampie family from Coonamble. Mr Fred Lampie was the owner of Goandra. He also owned a very big property in Coonamble, named Neabia. He used to truck his sheep down from Coonamble, sometimes to Gundagai. They would be driven up by road and drovers would look after them after they unloaded them from the train. They would drive them to Goandra. He had those ninety-nine year leases and that involved looking after the fencing. He had a lot of men fencing for him and very good huts at Goandra. They built the woolshed there for looking after the sheep, for crutching and wiggling which in the summertime can be very bad. [X]

It is a great worry not having any woolsheds or sheepyards; it is a worry to wig and crutch them. They were the people who had a very good woolshed at Goandra. Also at Currango the Australian estates had a very big woolshed. They used to crutch and wig their sheep at Currango plus running their cattle and horses as well. During the summertime the sheep would be crutched and wigged because the blowflies would blow the sheep very badly. My experience when I got my lease, that was 1943, I built a hut, now called Hain's Hut. It is respected by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. I built it for my men to trap rabbits and for my men to look after my sheep in 1947.

I used to manage the Dulhunty sheep and Mr. Alan Caldwell, who passed away last year, syndicate at Goandra, about seven of them

and Alan and I were in the same paddock and eventually we fenced our paddocks off. We put Dulhunty and mine together and Mr. Caldwell ran his other big syndicate. That involved a lot of fencing and a lot of work. The big problem was the rabbits. Herb's staff put in during the wintertime. They caught twelve thousand rabbits, and camped in my hut. The next year they caught ten thousand rabbits, the next year eight thousand. It was down to six thousand the next year. We had the rabbits just about beaten. It is an interesting thing about the rabbits, you will find that they don't go digging much over five thousand feet elevation along the rivers and the sheltered places where the snow comes; in the wintertime they get down underneath those river sides. They bred like flies in those times in the forties. There were many huts and the huts were used by these old trappers who used to go in and stay in those huts and made quite a bit of money out of rabbits. They would have their packhorses, they would trap for a week or a fortnight, then they would take them in and sell those rabbits' skins at Adaminaby. Arthur Blake was probably the man that I was referring to and Squeaky Dan McGregor was trapping on at Currango. They had a lot of men working on fences and looking after the stock. In 1950 the rabbit skins made £1 per pound of skins, a record price.

The drovers used to bring their stock from Gundagai and Tumut to Currango. They would look after them during the summer. Currango was one of the big places that was managed by the Australian Estates, and Mr. Clapperton was the director of the whole outfit. Ted Brazil was the man that was in charge of supervising all of the stock. I remember very well that on one occasion we marked eight hundred calves over in the cattle yards. I personally roped eighty-nine horses to be marked with Australian Estate's brand. Mr. Clapperton and seven or eight other men were there and saw it all happen. Ted Brazil managed Wambrook Cooma.

S: One question about your hut, how did you bring the material into the hut?

H: That is a very good question. I would think that very few would understand how difficult it was to get that hut in there. I am glad you asked that question because it is seventy miles from Cooma to where the hut is, by the road. I had it precut by Mr. Bottom, then I picked it up from Cooma with five horses and a boy of thirteen years of age,

Bill Thompson. He and myself took it up on the wagon. It was the first time that a wagon had been through from Boggy Plain to where my hut is. We got bogged seven times, in the week, trying to get through the bog to where it is today. We finished up on top of the ridge above the hut site. It is a very high ridge, and that is where we finished with the wagon and the five horses and the material. I had to carry the table and the chairs down on my back; the boy helped me. We dragged the timber down with a horse and slide to where the hut is and where we built it. The hut is near the creek, a lovely sheltered spot and I never ever regretted putting it there. It took a lot of timber to be cleared. We had to cut the trees down to get the wagon and the five horses through. We followed the Ridge all the way to my hut. My head man, Dan Broadhead, found a much better track in later weeks which is the present day road down to the hut. Dan was an old timber cutter, wonderful old man. He helped me muster the horses at the Tin Mines in 1940 and helped me out a terrific amount in working for me. He also worked twenty years for my father. He worked nineteen years for me. I don't think we had a bad argument all of those years. He was a wonderful man. He raised a wonderful family in Cooma. He was a man that I could leave. He would look after the stock when I wasn't there. You could trust him; Nature's gentleman.

When I said the wagon was bogged, I meant bogged. The whole wagon had on it one ton of timber, and half a ton of iron. It meant that the whole wagon had to be unloaded and loaded, so you can imagine by the time that we took the stuff off into the bog or out of the bog, then pulled the wagon out and reloaded it, there wasn't much of a day left. That went on for seven days. Time meant nothing and while you were building the hut there were wonderful people that you met, they were down at the Boggy Plain hut and down at the old Saw mill. They kept the road in pretty good order. They put in all those corduroys. Perhaps the bushwalkers didn't realise what they were for. The Broadheads were responsible for putting in the corduroys. If you ever come across corduroys, they are rails that are put down over the tops of the bogs, for fifty yards, a hundred yards sometimes, the remains of them are still there in places. They are called corduroys over these bogs and that would hold the wagon and the jinkers for bringing the timber out of the mountain - the alpine ash. The Broadheads were the first to set up a waterwheel at the foot of Alpine Hill; they were the first to send timber to Kiandra for

paling for their fences. The first skis were made out of the paling. Dan Broadhead's wife was the post office mistress from 1912-1915 and Mr Broadhead worked for Mr Lampie at Goandra. Bill Butler, a bullock driver, was staying at Boggy Plain Hut. He was driving bullocks for the Alpine Saw Mill.

In later years I went away to Coonamble as a jackaroo for a couple of years, who should I meet, but Mr. Lampie. He wanted me to go and work for him at his place at Neabia when I was working for Mr. A B Fisher at Emby, Coonamble.

S: What year was that?

H: 1937.

S: Could you tell me a little more about some of the tracks that you used to get into the hut and where they came from?

H: The main track in to the Hain's Hut was from Providence to Boggy Plain, then to Witses' Hut which adjoins Dulhunty's Block. We would take the sheep from Providence to Boggy Plain the first day. We would travel in the morning early, would be there at night first day Boggy Plain Hut. The next day we would be down in the Boggy Plain country, on the side of the timber where the walking tracks would be now, down on the Tantangara Creek. We would cross it to Witses' Hut. Witses' Hut was the place where we had big sheepyards and that is where we did all our drenching. We did some crutching with the old hand blades, no machines. No cars to get in there, just pack horses. Many times, the old spring cart would be turned over and you would lucky to get in there without turning the spring cart over and the horse, going down some of the hills, they are that steep. If the river was boggy or there was heavy rain it would be flowing pretty high. You would have to wait a day or two on the other side of it, before you could cross it. Our block was just over the Tantangara. We would have great work getting the sheep across it when it was full. You could lose a lot of sheep if you weren't careful because you had to feed them into the current; in so many at a time and if they all started to come in, they would jump on top of each other and at the first bend in the river you would have fifty or a hundred sheep smothered in the river. Mostly we would wait until the river ran down so that it would be reasonably safe for the sheep to get across. Then we would put the sheep in our paddock. They

would feed away for the summer months and they would enjoy themselves, and live on the beautiful feed and fresh water. The country was always green. There was no scrub; the cattle and the sheep kept the scrub down.

The little sheep camps, the bushwalkers will notice now, are all green with white clovers, that is because of the sheep, the fertiliser from the sheep. The sheep would travel through the day feeding from one camp to another. You would see them, they would pick up the early morning sun, and they would be off the next day to feeding grounds.

S: You didn't have cars at the Hain's Hut until the fifties?

H: It was somewhere about the fifties before we could get a car in there. It might have been fifty-five before any cars were in there. Once we put the sheep on the Block, the fences had been attended to; we would come on home. One man would stay there and look after them and make sure that they didn't get through the fence. We would drive a car up to Goandra, that was a station held by the Caldwell's syndicate. I used to leave my three horses there. I'd leave the car, get my horses, and I would ride over six miles to my hut where I had more horses. We would be checking the fences and make sure that the neighbours' sheep didn't get into our sheep and that our sheep didn't get into the neighbours' sheep. There was a terrific understanding with the neighbours. We seldom lost any sheep to the neighbours; each person was looking after each other's interest. You would help one another. There were many occasions when people were moving out, that had snow leases in other areas, that used to take a few sheep to make up their numbers. Mostly they were caught out because you would see them on the road travelling back to Gundagai, or Tumut and if they saw them on those roads, people would report them and go back and get them. They kept a pretty good check on them.

An interesting story that I think that I should tell you is that people do not realise that there were a hundred thousand sheep just around Kiandra, Currango and Tabletop and they were all snowed in for about fourteen days in 1944. It was the same time that the big fall of snow stopped the train from Nimmitabel to Cooma. It was snowed in as well. It was there that on that occasion Mr. McGufficke, a

neighbour of mine here, had a block at Kiandra and Mr. Rose and Jimmy Pattinson, of Kiandra (he was the ranger) and I had a little rubber tyred cart and a horse. We picked the ranger up after about three days of snowing and we decided to go into Kiandra. Jimmy Pattinson was the ranger. He was known as the great skier; he was from a skiing family. Bill Patrick was the postmaster at the time. All of these sheep that were snowed in, we had great difficulty getting into the different blocks. In my particular block we had them all mustered into a mustering paddock and so did the Caldwells. I rode from Boggy Plain down into Goandra with Mr. Cliff Rose. We carried our skis on our shoulders on horses and we got to Boggy Plain and the snow was four feet deep. We couldn't travel any further that day so we stayed the night in the Boggy Plain Hut and put the horses in the stable. Next morning we started down towards Goandra on our skis. The snow drifts got lighter as the wind could get to them. I said to Cliff Rose I think that our horses would get through it because I don't think that we would make it on these skis. We skied back to the hut and got our horses. We carried our skis on the horses again, got down to Goandra at night. The two men who had been snowed in all of the time with the sheep at Goandra had just about run out of supplies, other than plenty of meat: they killed their own sheep all of the time. We had some wonderful meat that night. That was all that saved us when we got in there. One of the men was Harry Waterson from Bombala, and Mr. Ossie Caldwell as well.

Tape I Side I

To get the sheep out, it took about three days of mustering the two lots together - different owners. I suggested to them with the experience that I had had, many years before, mustering all of that country and seeing those conditions with all that snow, I was that much ahead of these people they were only too pleased to listen to what I said. They took my advice. We put all of our sheep together, Caldwells and Dulhunty's and mine. I drove the sheep over from Witses' Hut over Blanket Plain, on to Nungar Creek. The snow was nine inches less than if I had gone up Boggy Plain, the way that we always brought our stock in. On our way out who should come along but Alan Caldwell and his brother who had walked ten miles in

the snow in gum boots. They were completely knocked up, and here we were sitting on the flat waiting for the snow to soften a bit to get the sheep moving again and the Caldwell brothers wanted to know what we were going to do. I told them that I was taking the sheep over to Witses' Hut on the Nungar Creek and I could get the sheep out for them. They turned around and they left it to me. They walked back ten miles to Boggy Plain and the Main Road where they left their car. That night it got so heavy at a place called Gang Gang; it was written up on the map pretty well. It is Gang Gang Mountain, around which the road goes into the Tantangara Dam. The sheep completely bogged down. There was Harry Waterson and two other men who were with Caldwell Sheep, and me. We lit a fire and I camped in a hollow tree. The others just slept around the fire. We couldn't go anywhere because we couldn't move. That was the night we put in here at Gang Gang.

The next morning the snow was pretty frozen. So we were able to get the sheep up, and we came down to Providence the next day, and got the sheep out of the snow. Caldwells thanked me very much for that. That is the story of the hundred thousand sheep that were snowed in. The others were all from different huts and different yards and had to get their sheep from Kiandra and back to Providence then back to Cooma. Tumut.

It is interesting to look back and see the difficulty that we had getting all of these sheep out. No one unless you were experienced could understand the difficulty. I tried my best to explain it to you. All of that country was under four feet of snow, or more, and looking for your sheep is quite an experience that you only want to see once in your lifetime. The sheep, when they were snowed in, would be under the big trees. They would have no way of getting out four feet deep. How we got them out was with our wonderful horses, and our wonderful dogs. We would ride in under the tree with the horse and break the wall down, and make it so that we formed a little ramp so that the sheep could scramble out. Then we would put the dogs in and they would bark and once one sheep started to go, the rest would follow. It was a very pleasant sight, I can assure you, when you saw those sheep, forty or fifty under a tree or more, walking single file on top of the frozen snow and we finally got them out, and then the little mobs building up, with four or five men doing this. We soon put seven or eight hundred sheep together.

- S: How did you feed the sheep when you got home and what did you do when you got the sheep to safety.
- H: Once you got them up on the top of the snow they would eat the eucalyptus leaves of the trees and the scrub. They would start to get strength, every day from then on. There was no feed as far as grass was concerned until we got to Providence; it meant six or seven days with practically nothing to eat. The scrub that they would eat, that was on top of the snow, was blown out by the wind.
- S: You were going to tell me Herbie about your leases in general.
- H: Some of the leases that I had consisted of Dr. Foreman's former lease on Kosciusko around the Blue Lake. That was the first lease that I had with my brother. Later on I had a lease with the Tin Mines, where I ran all of these horses among the brumbies, in the country right back to the Victorian border. It was lease R7. After that I got a lease at Tantangara, Lot BT10 and U10.
- S: Could you elaborate on Block B a little bit and where it was and what did you do there?
- H: Block B was on Zinc Range, it was one of the famous Ranges in the Goandra Area, it belonged to Lampie originally and it was a ninety-nine year lease. When it was taken away from them and it was divided up, I was able to get one of the best paddocks in the mountains.
- S: Why was it taken away from them?
- H: Their lease had run out and the ninety-nine year lease this new act was brought in by the Labor government. They put the small lessees in from the Riverina and the Monaro. The block that I selected because I had seen it many years ago when I was mustering cattle, and horses for Sanko Smith. I saw all of that country with four feet of snow.
- S: What years are we talking about?
- H: The late falls of snow that I am talking about before 1944-1947, three years before 1947 when I got my hut there. The big heavy falls of snow repeated themselves quite often and you didn't know when they were going to come. Zinc Range was a paddock that Mr. Caldwell

had an interest in. Dulhunty had a snow lease in the same paddock as mine. It was a very sheltered block and I had a block B because it was a safe block beautiful grazing along the Murrumbidgee River, and a very rough hill. The rough weather would cause the stock to seek shelter from the snow when it would fall either from the South or the West, so that when it fined up the reverse would happen; it would blow the stock down into my country, so when it fined up the reverse would happen, my stock would go up into the Dulhunty Block T10 which was rated as one of the heaviest stocking blocks in the mountains. When they were selected, it was my suggestion that Mr. Dulhunty apply for this particular block, and he was successful in getting it and they lived here on Monaro. They owned another place up on the peak, and he sent fourteen hundred sheep to the mountains. It was my job to look after them, drench them and I would drive them back to Cooma, at the end of the summer.

S: Then what would happen to them after that?

H: They would have their own stock back here at Cooma and I would bring mine home. We would draft them off. On our way down they would take theirs down over the Peak. I would bring mine home to Cooma.

S: Were they put on the train?

H: It took roughly twelve days to take the stock from Cooma to our block B. The reason for that for people who are inexperienced and wouldn't understand the stock, they were like race horses, and if they weren't handled correctly, by experienced people, you would have a lot of sick sheep, and sheep that would never ever make the mountains. On the gravel road, there were no bitumen roads in those days that would jar their feet, their muscles become stiff and sore and wouldn't travel; they would have become lame sheep. You had to leave them on the side of the road, if they couldn't travel, that was where the management came in. The oldtimers were very careful. You would have one man in front and they would make those sheep walk instead of running and trotting and letting them go. Sheep are quite capable of doing fifteen miles per day but they aren't capable of doing it the next day. This is why today you are compelled to move your stock every day along the highway. They must go at least six miles per day.

- S: When were they taken to the abattoir for processing?
- H: That was after they came back from the mountains. That is a point that you would be interested to know, that those sheep who were sent away to the mountains, were to get out of the grass seed down on the plains, the corkscrew would eventually penetrate (into their body). The corkscrew spoils the wool. It penetrates right through the wool to their body. They can't walk; they can't move. That is why the snow leases were so valuable to the wool growers around Monaro and around the Riverina because it was clean free wool grazing country and they would get green feed and clean water. That is why the snow leases were sought after so much.
- S: How were they brought to the abattoir?
- H: There was no such thing as bring them to the abattoir, the abattoirs in those days were in Sydney and when you brought your stock home, anything that was fit for the abattoirs would be trucked away to Sydney.
- S: Before the trains.
- H: The train came here in 1889. It opened up an expanse of country from Coonamble to the Riverina and that is how these big squatters were there in the early days, because they had these snow leases and their own country was so much more susceptible to drought. The Monaro was considered one of the safest places in New South Wales as far as the drought was concerned, that was why those mountains were held by those bigger snow leases with a ninety-nine year lease. The reason for that was they were able to fence it and spent money on it and it contained their sheep in a certain area - big leases ran twenty thousand sheep at a time, forty thousand, fifty some of the big places. The sheep would grow clean free wool. They were always healthy when the big droughts were on. They would bring them to the mountains. The story was, as it turned out, the graziers were overstocking the country in the big drought seasons. In the good times they wouldn't bring them there, so the country was rented out to someone else.
- S: What happened to Block B when did you finish your lease with that?

- H: I had with Block B, a fourteen year lease and a seven year lease, and it extended from back in the forties and that is why I built the hut then. I put my men in there to catch the rabbits.
- S: Can you give me some information on Rules' Point and that was in 1959 that and what did you have to do to keep up the lease, and when did you finish with the lease and why did you finish with the lease?
- H: I was in partnership with another man named Neil Hulm 1959, with M8 and L8 over the two leases. Neil Hulm was looking after my stock when I was away and we only had that lease for twelve months. The reason for that was that it was a very bad lease; it wasn't wise to go back into those bad leases and loose stock. The man who was able to select another lease next year or whenever those leases became available, you get out of those bad leases. It is written up in that book of Mr. Neil Hulm's where there were six weeks of snowing. My two sons were trying to help him muster his sheep and mine. They were six weeks doing this and made very little headway. They did get them into a little area. You must realise we had to wait for all of the other lessees to move out of the good country, before we could muster those bad leases. We had one paddock that we could muster when the other lessees had left, and we would head for home. In that particular year we had a very bad fall of snow, Mr. Hulm drafted his sheep off at Rules' Point, took them down toward Tumut. The first night they got out of the break and he was a couple of weeks gathering them up at the foot of Talbingo Mountain. He had the help of Mr. George Day and a few other people who lived down that way. He also had a lease up at Rules' Point, so we had to help him pick most of his sheep up but my two boys, had to leave and come through to the higher country through to Kiandra where the snow is much heavier and they had a terrific times; their pack horses got bogged in the creeks that are covered over with snow - three or four feet - and after seven days getting them from Rules' Point, started to Kiandra. Fortunately the grader came and opened the road up. It was blocked for the week for traffic. My eldest son spoke to the grader man and he was good enough to run the grader off the road to where the sheep were all bogged in, and they got them back to the road. When I knew the position that they were in, I was able to organise a load of hay and delivered it to Kiandra in the middle of the night, and feed the sheep

in the middle of the night by the side of the road. The next day we were able to drive them from there because the grader had opened the road. We were able to drive them back to Providence, nearly twelve miles away.

S: I wanted to ask you about Rules' Point and you had that lease in 1967, 1968 and 1969? If you could elaborate about that Z10 and where it was and what happened there?

H: It was permissive occupancy and you got that from year to year, not a snow lease.

S: What does that mean and how does that differ from a snow lease?

H: The thing is that you get it from year to year and the government can take it away from you at any time, so you can't do any improvements to those leases. Z10 was getting closer to one of the last leases that I had, it is now called Millers' Hut and the Millers settled there with that particular snow lease, around about 1943. They came down from Adelong-way. They had that right up into the sixties. The little hut was a very rough outfit and a bushman's hut and had a roof and rafters. The iron roof was second hand and rescued from one of the old huts that was burned down around Rules' Point. The timber was adzed to make the rafters fit on to the walled plate. It is quite a work of art; there are only a few bushmen who could do that. They are still trying to find out who actually built it. I was able to enlighten them a little bit about in that book of Neil Hulm's. He quoted that his father had a lease at Frog Flat in 1943 and the only builder that I know was there was Mr. MacDonald, who owned the Rules' Point Guest House, the only carpenter. I think from that information that the ruins of Rules' Point area, guest house, it could have been the roof of Miller's Hut today.

Z10 was situated on the Currango road from Rules' Point. The stock came from Gundagai-Tumut area, to Rules' Point and then on to Port Phillip Gap, then on to Currango. That was the route that the stock took. They had to go through Z10 to go over the Currango, at the Murrumbidgee River there is a unique crossing. There was quite a good crossing but when the river was high they were able to use the bridge from one clump of rocks to another. They put two big logs across the foundation of the planks; that was the first one, then they had improved it quite a lot since. All their supplies were taken over

the Currango by 1950 that was the main property owned by the Australian Estates, I think that I explained when I helped branding the horses and cattle. Z10 was on Port Phillip Gap.

The last experience at Z10 was that the ranger showed me that I could fence off some of the rough country. The fences were in very bad order. It was nearly impossible to fence them on the original line. The ranger, Tom Taylor, suggested that I put a fence along the ridge, the back of Pig Back Block.

Tape 2 side 2

The ranger showed me a ridge where I could put a fence about two and a half miles. I was able to follow a bulldozer track more or less that they put in there, to block the big fires that went through there a year or so before. It was quite an experience putting that fence up and I had quite a few helpers. We made quite a nice little block out of it and we had yards, and a horse paddock and a little hut so that we were quite comfortable when we went up there. The last year we got snowed in; it was a very heavy fall of snow. We were up there early, had a few sheep mustered and some others came along mustering their sheep, sitting in the hut waiting for it to stop snowing. We got our sheep out and moved them down to Rules' Point. That was when I tied my dog up because people going through there would leave the gate open at night, and we shut the gate to stop the sheep from going out on the road. As I explained I put the dog under a horse rug and put her on a chain and fed her. When I went back at four o'clock next morning it had snowed all night; she was completely frozen to the ground. I had to get a pair of pliers. I cut the chain and let her collar go. After a little while she was able to get her circulation back and she was in business again. We always had good dogs and they were the main support to us.

In this case I had my two sons with me and I showed them the short cut to Witses' Hut, which cut out nearly fifteen miles of travelling and that meant a couple of days of travelling, by going back into our old Block B and U10 and T10. Going through Tintangara, to Witses' Hut we were able to get out of the heavier snow and make it two days shorter than driving around Kiandra. I had my landrover. The boys had the horses and the dogs and they said that they would meet me at Witses' Hut. I worked it out that they should be there about

two in the afternoon, but instead of them being there at two o'clock, they were very late. I drove right around Kiandra into Tintangara, and right up to Witses' Hut. I waited there for them and the snow was falling heavier and heavier every hour. I had made up my mind that if we got the sheep to Witses' Hut that would be the end of them, we wouldn't get them out. The boys didn't arrive until five o'clock that afternoon. I knew that the sheep and the boys had had enough. I said, "The sheep can be snowed in. Leave your horses here and come with me. We will come back another day." They said, "Dad we have these sheep and we are going to stay with them. We are going to get them out."

I let the boys have their way, I said, "I am not stopping here because of the landrover. We won't get it out until the end of the winter." They rode their horses and I went ahead with the landrover. By that time it would be two feet of snow, across Blanket Plain, across and back onto the main highway where the township is today, Tintangara. I got a big fire going. I waited until the boys came there and that was at eight o'clock that night. I had this fire going; something cooked for the boys. At four o'clock that morning they were off again. They rode back ten miles to where the sheep were, and on their way a stroke of good luck. The good lord was in our favour this time. There were some cattle, belonging to a chap named John Rudd. The cattle were under a big drift of snow, and they were huddled up there. The boys, for which I must give them great credit, fine stockmen, they got these cattle and drove them across Blanket Plain, while it was still snowing in a big blizzard. They drove the cattle back to the sheeppark and opened the gates of the sheeppark, and headed the cattle back and of course the cattle with the wind blowing on their backside, the cattle went straight back over Blanket Plain, and the cattle were able to make enough tracks and it made it easier for the sheep to follow those cattle, over Blanket Plain. There was a big drift which was over thirty feet deep, Robert rode over the drift, and toward the bottom of the drift his horse went completely out of sight, so his brother told me, and when his brother looked over he could see his head sticking out and his horse struggled and went through the drift of snow and came out.

That afternoon late I could hear the dogs barking. I knew that they would make it to the landrover and the fire. I thought I would go down Tintangara road so that I could pinpoint where they would be,

so that I would know what time they would be at Tintangara township. There are no buildings there now; it has all disappeared, no buildings there. They arrived there just on dark and I had put chains on my four-wheel drive. I kept driving up and down the highway where there was heavy snow on the top of Gang Gang, and I refer to that Gang Gang where I was caught with my own and Dulhunty's and Caldwell's sheep many years ago. I knew how bad it was and it was a little hard to take to be caught in that place for the second time. I kept the landrover going. I was able to make a track through Gang Gang. When the boys got to me we got the sheep on to the road; we let them go single file; over a thousand sheep single file all the way to Providence, at eleven o'clock that night down onto the main highway. As we got lower the snow became less and the sheep were able to walk along and we took them through the roughest part that you could possibly go, through scrub and timber. We didn't lose any. About eleven o'clock that night the late Pat Miners and her husband had their cattle snowed in at Coolamine Plain. They had driven through from Coolamine and Currango, Tintangara and Providence that night. They came through the middle of the night. They couldn't believe that people could be on the road with sheep because their cattle were snowed in at Coolamine Plain. The very next day they had an airplane arranged and they had supplies flown in for their cattle at Coolamine Plain.

S: Would you tell me a little more about the dogs and how they do in various situations?

H: The dogs were our main helpers and you would put a dog out in the lead of the sheep. They would hold the lead until you got there or if you wanted them to feed along, the dog would ease them along in front of them and you had different dogs for doing different jobs. You had different dogs who would bark - what they call forcing dogs. You would say to the dogs speak up you had a whip. Most dogs when you cracked the whip would bark. If you wanted to force them across the rivers or the creeks, the dogs would force the sheep into those tight places.

On one occasion, I saw the dogs when they were coming close to Tintangara, and the dog had snow the size of a football frozen onto his tail. It was dragging behind him. All he could do was to sit down and bark. He was asking us to come back and get it off his

tail. That happened quite a few times. As soon as you could see their tails building up in the snow, you could go back and break it off. The same with our horses: the horses, in that snow we used to have to pull the shoes off them, to make them stand up on their tendons because the snow would build up and fall off and then they would trip.

S: How would you train the dogs and how would you train the horses?

H: The dogs were trained as little puppies and then they would work with the other dogs. One dog imitates the other and they soon become used to your whistle. Most dogs will work for his own master and most dogs won't work for anyone else. That is the way that we break them in and we could never do without those dogs; they are terrific with the sheep. They would stay with you all of the time. By the photos that I am going to show you, you will understand how the sheep feed out across the plains, or when we were forcing them into the rivers when they were swimming across.

S: Didn't it hurt the horses to stand up on their tendons?

H: They didn't take any notice of it.

S: You would take the shoes off because the frog in the hoof held the snow. It would build up and build up and fall off. If you took the shoe off it would stop that suction of snow. They would just break off naturally.

S: The year that the men landed on the moon was the year that you had the Coolamine lease and could you tell me something about that?

H: Yes. All of the snow leases were taken away. There were no permissive occupancies left and the only freehold land that was in the Northern end of the park from Rules' Point to Coolamine. Mr. Norton owned Coolamine Plain, which now they are restoring. It was one of the very first freehold country in the area. Mr Norton come from down near Hay. He had this freehold country up here and of course, he didn't bring his sheep up; he put it up for tender. A syndicate from Cooma put in and we got it that year. It was my job to take these sheep up with my own few, and run them for the summer. My boys and the Fraser boys and Tom Roseby and Lindsay Hain, they were the people who were involved in owning the sheep.

They helped some of the way but my boys and I were the main ones who took them up. It took us roughly twelve days from Cooma. We arrived there about six o'clock one morning. I was on top of the hill going down from Peppercorn into Coolamine Plain, and Lindsay and Mr. Evans came along in their car, and said, "What do you know Herb." In those days they called me Dick. They said, "What do you know Dick." I said, "Not too much." They said that the men have landed on the moon. I said that is a wonderful thing. I said that we had just about arrived at Coolamine with four thousand four hundred and twenty sheep. I think that they are all there.

That was the start of the Coolamine Lease, we had rented from Norton. We had a wonderful summer there. It is most unusual country and the river can be running down through Coolamine Plain, in January and February, and you can go back in a fortnight's time during that period and the river completely disappears. You think that it had dried up and that is it. Then again you follow the river down about three or four miles, and it runs out a full running stream again, what you call the Blue Water Hole, a beautiful spot. I think that now the Parks have that road all blocked off coming in from Currango. I don't think that you can go in there. It is a wonderful spot and a wonderful spot for the bushwalkers. If they followed that dry bed, you come to a lot of caves, and some very interesting scenery, and most unusual rock formations, some quite big slabs of marble, which I believe are a benchmark for some of the original snow leases, that were in that area, but it is wonderful bushwalking country. There is a lot to see in that area.

We mustered the sheep at the end of the year, and luckily we got them out without any trouble. I don't think that we lost more than about ten sheep out of that number. That was a pretty fair season delivering that many sheep back again. My sons helped, the Fraser boys and Tom Roseby, particularly Tom was one of the old lessee holders originally in that area, and they are a wonderful family who live at Dr. Foreman's home in Cooma today. Tom's daughter is tied up with the bushwalkers and the Huts association. Tom Roseby has more knowledge than most people of the mountains. He is a wonderful historian. If you ever wanted any information, I am sure that Tom would be willing to help in any way.

- S: You said that the summer was a very good summer. Did you have favourable conditions?
- H: We had favourable conditions and we didn't have any fire trouble. We only drenched once, and that kept our sheep healthy. There wasn't much expense attached to it; getting the sheep out.
- S: I was going to ask you, Herb, about the military tattoos and how you got into that?
- H: I joined the Light Horse and saw a lot of my mates. I was asked to join the Light Horse after I left school. I was seventeen and I put my age up to eighteen. You had to be eighteen before you could join the Light Horse. I got in early in 1935, at Cooma, in the Cooma Troop. The first year that I joined we were taken away to a camp. The camp was near Yass. This was an experience of meeting a lot of horses and a lot of men and about living in a different world all together. Our training was very strict. We all enjoyed it because we were all horsemen and were keen on horses. We were mostly all country boys. There were a lot of camps held over a number of years, and I remember winning the Seventh Light Horse Swimming Championship at Yass. Another year we went to Goulburn. It was a Calvary Brigade, in Light Horse and marched past in Goulburn in the streets, six hundred horses. We were camped at the Goulburn Showground.

In 1937, we went to Sydney to the Anzac Tattoo, and that led to quite a lot of horse talk, and rivalry between the New England team and the Monaro team. Fortunately for us, we came out on top because New England recognised that we had the best horses in Australia. Our head man was Lieutenant Litchfield. He was the man in our department in the remount section. Competitions were held after our training six or eight days after our camp. We all looked forward to that. In 1937, in Sydney, we won the event and it consisted of jumping and we had ribbons tied around our bodies in sections of four, and we had to do tent pegging, with the lance. I remember our section in the jumping. We were the only ones who completed it without breaking the ribbon. That would help us win the event, plus picking up all of the pegs with our lances. We did something that was unusual; we picked the pegs out of the hands of our comrades, which stood out in the middle of the Sydney Showground on our

horses took out the nine inch peg, four inches wide by nine inches long, out of their hand with a sword; that was done on horseback in the Sydney Showground.

Another camp that we were in was down at Brighton-Le-Sands. Some of Cooma horsemen appeared in film "Forty thousand Horsemen" at Brighton-Le-Sands. I remember that the man that directed it was Chaval. His daughter, Mrs. Tom Mitchell, that is a famous woman over on the upper Murray, she is the lady who has written all of those books about the mountains and the Silver Brumby is one of the famous ones, a children's book. Mrs. Tom Mitchell, is the daughter of Chaval who directed the filming of the "Forty Thousand Horsemen" at Brighton-Le-Sands. We were camped down below Ingles sale yards, that is where they were in the afternoon. They had a march down through Sydney. That was a wonderful thrill for us country boys.

Another occasion at Goulburn in 1939, there were over a thousand horses again. The Cooma troop was going to the front again. The Governor-General, after the sports day, congratulated the troop and he spoke that they were the finest section that he had ever seen in his tours. He inspected in Egypt and in Australia. He commented that this was the best section that he had ever seen. It is my honour to be here today. I am the only one left. Lieutenant Litchfield, a chap from Bombala, J. Murdock, Lance Corporal Ian Hain were the ones. I have a cup here and the original is in the Hall of Fame at Longreach. They asked me if I would send the information up to them. I am in the process of doing so.

We had other camps during the period that I was in the Light Horse. At Berry, that was another wonderful camp because it was on the outbreak of war, we were taught what to expect from the Japanese, invading Australia. They showed us how on the beachfronts how, with the machine guns, we could crossfire with the rifles and could move about from one beach to another. Most of the beaches in those days had barbed wire around them, in case the Japanese were going to land. We had to defend the country.

We all had our injections for overseas duty. For some unknown reason they took our horses from us and mechanised the unit. They went overseas as a unit.

It is interesting to know from the cuttings that I have, they were sent to be by Mrs. J. Murdock, the cups that we competed for. One of them, a cup that was presented by the late King George V. He was visiting Australia. (Thirty-five years ago, as it is open to competition that is the Lloyd Lindsay Cup that is here today.) I have a little replica of the cup. King George V was out here roughly about 1904. Those were very happy days in the Light Horse.

S: King George V was out here in 1904?

H: Yes.

S: The Lloyd Lindsay Cup was 1939?

(George V donated cup called Prince of Wales Cup - Lloyd Lindsay Cup during visit of 1904. 35 years later, in 1939, Herb Hain won the cup - he has replica of original which is in Stockman's Hall of Fame.)

H: Yes. You may realise or you might not realise that we were just ordinary people working around the district. We kept together our training and our hall in Cooma. We practised at our Cooma Showground. We performed the attractions to make the show interesting; tent pegging and water jumping, show horses musical chairs; different things to help make the Cooma show a success. To travel from Cooma to Goulburn, we would truck our horses by train. They would be stationed at the Goulburn Showground, for the time that we were in camp, seven or eight days, whatever time that it might have been.

I personally volunteered to go overseas. When my time for the call-up came I was told that I was directed to join the VDC; that I couldn't understand, but I found out afterwards that I had to stay home, run the property, grow potatoes, and food for the army. Part of that was that I join the VDC, the Home Defence Corp. They sent us away to Sydney to do a course in demolitions, explosives, that was to blow up bridges and roads.

S: Would you donate this tape to the Kosciusko Huts Association?

H: Yes, it gives me very great pleasure to do that. I wish the Huts Association great success and I can see what they are trying to achieve. I know that they are going to have a lot of arguments and

discussions, because the Park is free to everyone to use and how are you ever going to sort out the motorbikes, the four wheel drives and the Japanese horses, the bushwalkers I don't know.

S: Thank you.