



## DAVE'S DAIRY

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**Monday.** August is doing very well so far -frequent showers, and no frosts. The feed is starting to grow and the stock are starting to get stronger. It looks as if I may be able to shear late this month after all. A little while ago it looked as if the sheep would die if they were shorn while it was cold.

This diary isn't as easy to write as you might think. It's bad enough doing the actual writing, without Mary looking over my shoulder all the time to try to censor it, and the kids climbing all over me and wanting to know why I'm not out working. So today I bought sixpence-worth of hundreds and thousands and when the kids started their usual act, I scattered the hundreds and thousands in the wood-heap, and now things are quiet for once.

**Wednesday.** We had some very heavy showers today -enough to make the water run quite a lot. Every time we get enough rain to make a drop of water run, Clarkson rings up in a very mournful manner to tell me how his "flat paddock" is getting washed about. This "flat paddock" of Clarkson's has always been a bone of contention between us. The trouble is that the hill is mine, and since it's rocky, I don't cultivate it, and that means I don't grow much grass on it. Clarkson says I ought to top-dress it, but as I said before, I reckon super was made to grow crops, not grass. Anyhow, the hill is always rather bare and that means that a lot of water runs off it and straight across Clarkson's flat. I must admit it has cut his paddock about a lot, but I don't see that that is my fault, however Clarkson doesn't agree. He has been on to me for years about it, and has gone as far as suggesting that I ask for the advice of the soil conservator laddie, a Mr Herriot. I told him to write to Mr Herriot himself and if he came up I would hear what he had to say. This seemed to suit Clarkson fine, but I guess it won't get him anywhere with me because I reckon I can manage these theoretical laddies from Adelaide.

**Thursday.** I still have one rabbit warren and as it's very rocky, I haven't been able to scoop it to get rid of it properly. But while listening to the wireless this morning, I had one of my infrequent brainwaves. I waited around till nine o'clock, which is the time these laddies in Adelaide start work (!) and then rang up my wool firm and told them to send me up a bottle or a pound of this atomic bomb mixture everyone is talking about. The girl on the switchboard at the office didn't seem to know which department to put me on to and while she was shilly-shallying, the exchange said, "Three minutes. Are you going on?" in that particularly infuriating tone she adopts on these occasions. I took a long breath and decided to have another three minutes and hoped the bank manager didn't get to hear of it! So the girl at the office put me on to a very superior young lady in the merchandise department, who sniggered in a rather patronising way when I told her what I wanted. So I started to get angry, and told the girl I wanted it to blow up a large rabbit burrow which I couldn't scoop because of the rocks, and that the rabbits were eating crops and that if Clarkson had rung up they would have given him some and that anyhow, my rabbits were eating Clarkson's wheat too.

Just then a plaintive voice said: "Six minutes. Are you going on?" but my blood was up and I went on. And then I told the woman in merchandise that the firm in general (and the merchandise department in particular) was losing its drive and then I remembered a phrase

that Grandpa once used, so I told the girl that "I would be forced to seriously consider the advisability of transferring the sale of my wool to another establishment." This didn't rock her as I expected it would. I suppose the beggars know my clip won't be as big as usual: it will take me all my time to get seven bales this year. So the girl said bluntly that they didn't have any and I was just going to tell her to get some over from Melbourne when the girl on the local exchange chipped in. I suppose she'd been listening with some sympathy, because she didn't adopt that impersonal tone she usually uses. She said, "Eh, Dave, you've had nine minutes already; don't you think you'd better give it up?" So I gave it up. Gosh, but I wish I could have got some of the stuff. I reckon it would be great for rabbits; and think of the surprise I would have given Clarkson! But it's always the same nowadays: you can't get anything you want. It's these wretched war-time controls.