

We had up to 60 cows in the herd...(when you were doing delivery you didn't do any milking)
Oh no, you'd get up in the morning and caught your horse, fed him, and cooked your breakfast, there was no electricity, an old lantern hanging in the cowshed...(did you cook your own breakfast?)...there were three of us living together..my eldest brother Hughie and Bob, he was the youngest..we were strong in the back and weak in the head..

(you made your own breakfasts?)..Oh yes, none of your fancy foods..bacon and egg.. we had plenty of fowls and plenty of bacon.. my brothers did the milking, we used to keep a boy when we were busy too..we had to be up pretty early, started before 5 o'clock.. we had to be on the road early..

(do you remember the names of the cows?)..i named them all, but I wouldn't remember.. Sally and Mary and Biddy an all sorts..I entered them up in the book..dates you mated them with the bull, calving dates...and if we sold a cow we could guarantee the dates she's coming in and everything..but it was a hard job..

(did you have your own bull?)...oh yes, we kept two as a rule..we called them all sorts of names..not very nice names..

(What breed would those cattle be?) all sorts - Friesians, Shorthorns, a few Ayrshires, Jerseys, anything at all..I don't know why we didn't keep to one breed for it was the proper way to do it..get a good breed and keep it, but when we were short of cows we had to buy cows, no matter what the breed was as long as she wasn't a Hereford or anything like that..(what would the bull be?)..oh, we had a Jersey bull, and a Friesian one part of it.

(What did you take the milk to town in?) Twenty gallon churns... (how much did you take with you?)...two twenty gallon ones and then there'd be the smaller ones for delivery and all that sort of thing...Bob and I used to take turn about..month about.

(You just had the one pony?)...What sort of vehicle did you cart the milk in?... A proper milk cart..you don't see them nowadays..you stood at the back..the cans were sat up in front of you..and they had a tap on them..we used to have a lot of trouble with horses and one thing and another..the horses used to wear out you know, and it was a hard job to get one to suit you.

(What time did you set out on your milk run?)..We left at quarter past five..we took so much milk from the night before..then we didn't have to wait for all the cows to be milked in the morning (silly question - did you separate the milk before you sold it?)..No, if you separated it you'd find yourself in the cooler..full milk straight from the cow..anything over we separated and that went to Heretaunga..Heretaunga used to send the cart round every so often.

(the previous night's milk)...we cooled it and set it in troughs..to keep it cold during the night..I forget how many gallons we used to keep night's milk..we put them in concrete troughs..we had plenty of artesian water.

One time Mr Jarvis came to see me..he said..look..I've been milkin' a couple of cows and the neighbours have been all buying the milk off me and he said I'm getting rid of the cow. Oh, I said, yes...but that was later on when we done away with the horses..we had to go right up to the corner of Jarvis Road..all the billies were there. Then turned at Jarvis Road and back into Hastings...Do a few odd ones going in.

(Did you have an order or did you knock on all the doors?)..Oh no, they had their billies there..some of them would sleep in and the billy wasn't out, and you would go crook about them..and come pay day some of them didn't have any money..one time there were a lot of bad debts..quite a lot of bad debts..some of them paid weekly, some paid monthly and some of them didn't pay at all..(how long did you let them go?)..oh, we let them go for a while and then we'd go and knock at the door..we had a bit of bad debts, just a waste of time.

I took the horse and cart the first morning, going in..had eight gallons..had eight gallons and I carted it four miles..Made a lot of money (laugh)..(how far in did you go?)..we went as far as Sylvan Road..down the Havelock Road..and each side of Heretaunga Street..it was a fool of a caper..all over the place..

(The boys you had with you - how did they manage with the billies on the bikes?) They were fairly big billies, they would hang them on the handlebars..(I thought they'd spill it).. they were pretty nippy on it..we had to have three boys..two delivering the cans and one on the cart with you..there'd be four delivering altogether. When Bob took it on for good it was a 60 gallon run..it was a good run..all over the town..a big job.

(Other milk vendors) came from all over the place..North, South East and West there were milkmen coming..(did you have territories?)..there were no territories at all.. you grabbed the customer wherever you could get him..there were no set territories.. not like what it is now..it's all zoned now..it's a good idea.

(Did you have your name on the side of the milk cart?)..Tweedie Brothers..Raupare Dairy..Wakes were neighbours of ours..they were down close to the river ^{then as} Archie and Norman..they were hard working boys..they had a milk cart as well..and then there was another bloke came from up Fernhill way, he delivered milk..Wakes were just down below us on the corner of Raupare Road..they got flooded out in 1924..the place was covered in silt..Archie kept the milk on, but Norman, I don't know what Norman did then..but they dropped it altogether..dropped out of it..Archie told me ..the best day's work I ever done, he said.

(How much did the billies hold?)..some of them quarts, most of them.. a billy held half a gallon was it?..and it had steps on it you see, ^{you measured} up the side..there was marks on the side..you turned the tap on, had a look..there was a lot of chaps on long before we were on the job..

(When Bob took over the run permanently - what did you do then?)..oh on the farm.. Hughie and I were partners and Bob got a small place and it was a beggar to flood.. well of course we all lived together and we all worked as Tweedie Brothers..when Bob took on the milk cart he took on a bit of land - it wasn't worth much then - it's worth a million now.

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Bob went and lived in town - that was his job.

(Back to the horses) It was a long way to drive a horse, you know, four mile, and then deliver milk. we were the first ones to deliver with a van (see earlier). (What time did you get home when you were using the horses?) Oh well we'd get home at half past ten..that was hard work..you stood on your feet all the time..and you were running in and out delivering the milk..it was hard work..by the time you'd washed the cans and that it was getting on for dinner time.

(Other milkmen weren't too keen on motorized vans for a start)..too expensive they said..but oh you went to town in a quarter of an hour instead of taking an hour or over half an hour to get in. (did you have to take a driving test?)..when I went to get the van it looked really posh..and I said now just before you go any further.. what way do you drive this thing..and he said I've got nothing to do with that.. he said it's yours now, we sold it to you..oh I said I've never driven a motor car in my life..he didn't believe it..he took me down Maraekakaho Road..told me what to do..I still laughed..if there'd been anyone coming I'd have gone clean through them.

(You had to go and get a licence somewhere - you just went and paid for it) didn't you, there was no test or anything.) No, no..tests..they wouldn't have given me one for a month..I didn't trouble about a licence..I'd been driving the milk cart for over a month...

(What was inside of the truck?)..there were shelves, about that height..two cans on each side..big cans..you could walk through..go up the middle..and sit down on each side..there was a seat on each side..when i stopped with milk..I would stop the cart AND I would just turn round and put milk into the billies and away THEY went..

(Did you often have punctures?)..never had very many punctures on the road.. but I had quite a few when..we had to put a bridge in on the road, over the drain and that, and we were ^{always} getting pu nctures..I'd put the van away, have a look in the afternoon, and one of the tyres were down..and it was we got a whole lot of rubble.. ^(a horse burst down) we got a whole lot of concrete rubble and stuff and there were a lot of nails in it.. what's happened..I went and had a look at it..hundreds of nails I picked up..having punctures every time I went out with it.

(What problems did you have?)..It was cutthroat all the time..problems from the day you started till the day you finished.(how did you compete with them?)..you pinched one off somebody else if you were lucky..if you could afford to cut the price, you cut the price..there really was a ring there but I never belonged to it..I cut the price and kept the customers..When a new bloke came in and he was just starting..you could guarantee you'd lose a customer or two..because the women would take pity on him.

Early in the morning, we hAd no lights on the horses..they could hear you coming.. shingle road and iron shod tyres.

One poor old lady she didn't have much money, and there was the tw o of them and he was never idle..I got a bit tired of this..she'd pay me on Saturday..Saturday

come and I couldn't get the door open..One day I said look..it's time I got some of that money..there were two of them..and they were taking cream every Sunday.. I said I've got to have it..I'm not the proprietor, I'm ^{only} working for Tweedle Brothers. I'm responsible for the money..anyhow, you're not getting any more cream..oh she said the doctor said I had to have cream..well I said you tell the doctor to pay for it. You'll get no cream from me.

And there was one lady, I was sorry for her..I was sorry for her, she had a fair lump of a family..times were bad then..and I said well I can't keep on going for ever. Oh she said look I can't pay you but I've got a gramophone there and a dozen records, belongs to the children..oh I said I'm not taking it, oh no..so I let her away with it.