

16 Enfield Road  
Wainuiomata

Monday 25 November 1985

Dear Chris (I just use Christabel because I like the sound of it, not for any reasons of formality - its such a pretty name)

Anyway, how nice to receive your card and letter, along with a visit from Mr and Mrs Annabell. Aren't they a nice couple, and isn't he on the ball. Didn't you find it nice dealing with someone who could latch onto your wavelength with little or no trouble? I hear they dropped in at 53 Winara Ave for 5 minutes, and left one and one half hours later, after a most enjoyable time.

Things have settled down a bit here at last though Mum was meant to have her plaster removed last Friday 22 Nov except the Clinic wrote the date down as Friday 25 November - and Mum had made arrangements for me to take her on Wednesday 27th! Thats the trouble with doing things fro memory and not checking the appointment card to be sure. Naturally Mum is pretty upset at having to have the plaster on for another week but you can't re-arrange the Hutt Hospital timetable, despite there being errors on both their parts.

Things are settling down again at Otaki. Of course it all falls on Ken's Mum's shoulders but fortunately we have managed a couple of visits in the last month, and my sister-in-law has been up a few times too. My sister-in-law, Lynnette, has a townhouse in Newlands, a small but very nice place with a lovely garden. You wouldn't believe how much is crammed into, and growing well, in such a small space. However, being young and single, Lynnette is out a lot. Came home 12.45am one Saturday morning to find the back window catch forced and broken (aluminium), her video and cassette radio taken, along with the entire contents of her big double wardrobe - coathangers, shoes, the lot. Plus her jewellery, much of it very very old and of course priceless. And her camera, already the case of a previous burglary from her car and replaced by insurance - only used it for one film since then! Neighbours very nice, but nextdoor was out and nobody heard a thing (of course). Lynnette was left with what she stood up in, and an odd earring which they overlooked. To cap things off they used a blanket on her bed to carry the clothes away in - and it was a blanket Granny had knitted her. So as well as family jewellery and other sentimental mementoes, she lost that too. Her garage is separate from the house, set back about 6 feet from the road so that you can swing off the road and park in front of it without having to open it up first etc. Well the silly girl leaves the roller door up about 6" all the time for her cat and its friend to get in out of the rain. Evidently the thieves put the door right up, parked their car inside, and loaded it up unobtrusively that way. I think a catdoor might have been cheaper don't you? However, no use reciminating now. Her boyfriend is staying at the place at the moment, but she still won't be left alone in the house, even to the point of staying with us while he was away. Lynnette decided not to tell Mum and Dad this latest episode until a week or two after it had happened, when she would be at Otaki herself. Mum was really upset, but admits that it would have been worse to have heard about it any earlier, she is having her own problems with after-reactions to Granny's death.



However, now onto other things. Firstly, re the Christian Scientists and the Sinclair Cemetery. I am enclosing copy of all the relevant paraphernalia, as numbered in red:

(1) My letter to Mr Williams, a representative of the Scientists which was accompanied by -

(2) My sketch of the area so that he would know exactly the area we wanted his group to look at for us.

(3) The part of the sketch numbered (3) and ringed in pencil is the Scientists addition to my sketch - not mine.

(4) & (5) The written response to the Scientists sceance (or whatever). Unfortunately they never even went up into the Sinclair Cemetery, so we are no wiser in that respect, although a whole lot curiouser and curiouser (as Alice said to the cat) about what they feel they did find.

What do you make of it all? The funny thing is that there was a house in the vicinity of the ground below the cemetery in more recent times, built by and for one of James Jackson Wood's daughter & son-in-law. There was a cowshed nearby too. We have also been told that there was a Maori battle in the vicinity many many years ago, and those slain could lie in the area. Unfortunately no confirmation from the local Maori Community. That community is strong now, but are recent imports as we have no tribe actually indigenous to WOM itself in living memory (except perhaps from Aunt Tina's memoirs from the time she used to play with the young Maori children nearby.) Wainui was used as a thoroughfare to the Wairarapa from time immemorial, and Pas did exist at the mouth of the Valley, but not in the Valley itself THAT WE HAVE FOUND TRACE OF - not to say they didn't exist.

Does the name Walter or Walters on Page 5 mean anything to you? Would welcome any comments you have on the enclosed.

Incidentally, while you are visualising my Mum in her gig, visualise a little more and picture her at the Carterton Show in the harness class 4 days after coming out of the Hospital, and being placed in the Turnout Class. Her Specialist would have a fit if he knew I am sure - I wouldn't let Brett be her Tiger under the circumstances but she was undaunted and Dad wouldn't clamp down on her hobby. Think you can carry it a bit far though...

Incidentally, I don't know whether I told you but Mum and Dad put their place on the market back in September, mainly because Dad needs more ground if he is to expand his deer farm - and the hinds are all pregnant. Found a buyer who is all signed up and prepared to raise bridging finance if he can't sell one of his houses. Anyway, for a while there Mum and Dad were left without a place to go to. However, through a chain of curious events they heard of a broken marriage, a two year old home masterbuilder built, absolutely secluded, yet off a residential street in the middle of WOM (the street turns off the main WOM Road right where Hugh Sinclair was found lying on the morning of 11 November). Best of all, there are 35 acres involved, mostly flat but with some slight hills: Fantastic view towards Sinclair Valley and the Village area and old school and Church, but the house is so cunningly placed behind some lovely old Beech trees, (though not overshadowed by



them) that it can't be seen from anywhere in the Valley and we have tried looking from all sorts of angles. Dad has agreed to a colossal price for the lot, but plans to walk in freehold if he can sell all his vintage motorbikes, vehicles, accessories in his workshop etc. Also recently sold his carrying business, so that made a hole in the price asked for the new block. Unfortunately the new house is two-storied, but with bathrooms on both floors if Mum finds she can't cope with the upper floor they will turn the ground-floor rumpus room into their bedroom. The house has evidently been finished beautifully inside, which is lovely for Mum as their Moores Valley home has never been completely finished off - even after 25 years - as Dad always had too many other things on his plate. The land concerned was, in the 1840's designated Education Reserve, which means that whoever rented or leased paid their rental to the Education Board who used the money for education purposes, though not necessarily in the Valley. The access street, now known as Stanley Street, appears on one map as School Road. However, the property has been included in land farmed by various people in the Valley, including the Dicks and perhaps the Wakehams - he who married the eldest Prouse girl Elizabeth before coming to NZ. In late 1940's land was sold to a private farm - the people who bought it actually live on the old Wakeham farm - before it was subdivided in the 1960's. Hows that for a lengthy account of irrelevant goings on at our end? Possession takes place on 28 February, and Mum can't wait though Dad has a lot of deer fencing to erect before then, AND a change of zoning from Residential Conditional to Rural. Deer don't come under residential conditional unfortunately.

Re Hugh Sinclair working for James Coutts Crawford. Could he possibly have met James while they were both in Australia as Crawford was a squatter there for a time, while Hugh must have been there for a couple of years to lose those two children. I wish someone would look into that angle more. I must get onto Mrs Joyce Peek, whose husband is a descendant of John Sinclair and Louise. Joyce is a very keen researcher so perhaps she just needs prompting.

I'm pleased to hear that John is better, even if he does get tired. Mum was saying this morning how terrible old age is - after first hand experience in hospital surrounded by oldies with broken hips. Such a common occurrence and once done you are so handicapped for the rest of your life.

Did the new fire get installed? That is the only thing Mum and Dad regret about the new home - absolutely no fire and Mum has always had a chipheater like yours, and has come to love her new woodburner. If their present home hadn't been sold with the new fire in it they would have whipped it out and put the older Visor back in, and kept the Regency for the new home. Unfortunately however the new owners saw it with the new fire so that is that. And Dad says he will be absolutely too broke to think about putting a fire in at the new place for some time. Deer fencing alone will keep him going.

Hope you enjoy reading through all the Sinclair Paraphenalia etc when next you have the chance, and that you are able to sit and completely unwind during your next 2-week break. Your early christmas card hasn't put me out of kilter at all. I'm going to go out and buy my cards now, before all the cheaper ones get snapped



up and I'm left with the more expensive model as per last year. Incidentally, what are you doing during the period 28 December to 2 January inclusive? The four wheel drive Clubs in the southern area of the North Island are hosting a Jamboree for all interested 4-wheelers in NZ up in the Mangaone Valley up past the Reikiorangi Pottery off the Akatarawa Valley Road. I might have the spelling wrong there but the important thing is that we will be staying a few miles up the road from you (which might as well be from your place to Wgtn if I have to walk it!) Anyway, no doubt our days there will be full - fairly well planned for several outings each day and all facilities like freezers, showers, toilets and washing facilities etc laid on (or more correctly, to be laid on by our husbands on numerous forthcoming weekend working bees. I'm going to be a grass-widow again I can see.) I'm hoping that I will be able to pop out perhaps once to see you during that time, after leaving Brett to go 4-wheeling with his Dad on the Trike. The site is a farm paddock to which access has yet to be made across the river so I'm having second thoughts about taking the Daimler there. Yes, the car is back from the painter and nearly back together. 1001 little bits and pieces to be put back on it or to be done, but the majority of the work is completed and we can see daylight at the end of the tunnel, after more than 3 years. Its going to be Ken's car absolutely, he has put so much time and work into it, but if I am very good and rub his back everytime he asks, I might get to ride in it occasionally ...

I see my name is mentioned as a driver on the insurance policy, so things won't be quite that bad!

Thank you for your comments re the Sinclair Article. A shame they couldn't include any of the photos but most of them were in the Booklet so you aren't missing much. I am still researching each week, dreading when Kindy stops for the Christmas holidays though Brett is very obliging while I am trying to write. He is actually playing in the room with me now, though writing a letter doesn't demand the same concentration as writing up my research in story format does. We'll worry about that when we get to it - I'll certainly miss him once he is at school. Ken doesn't expect me to go back to work though my brothers and friends seem to - can't stand seeing a happily married housefrau who isn't bored or spending all her time in front of the TV set I guess. Yet my Mum's generation didn't work after they were married. Attitudes change don't they?

Well, I guess this is enough for today's installment. Looking forward to hearing from you once you have recovered from this lot, and once YOU are feeling more on top of things. Plenty of time till Christmas and I might ask Ken if I can drop him at the Jamboree site during one of the working bees, and come back to your place for a little while for a cup of tea and a yak - if thats okay with you.

Lots of Love and take care both of you.

Vicky

PS: Even Mrs Madge Burdan thinks that the children of Annie (Prouse) and William Burdan had some dark blood in them and after



looking at a picture of George and Bertie, from the first marriage to Jane (Prouse) they look it too though their eyes are funny, almost inbred ... However, if Mrs Burdan says it too unprompted, what about the dark blood coming:

a) from the Spanish wrecked on the Coasts of Devon and marrying the locals, ie into the Prouses, or

b) perhaps coming from the Burdan side of things. He is a dark horse - even Keen Burdan researchers can't trace any further back than William's parents - not their arrival in NZ nor their forebears.

A curious thing I came across while checking through the Intentions to Marry is William's Mother intending to marry Robert Neill - she states that she is a widow, but gives her name as Elizabeth Groves, not Burdan. Had it not been confirmed by a Neill descendant then it would have taken me a bit of time to make the connection between Elizabeth (Groves) Neill and (her son) William Burdan though the connection would tend to be confirmed by William and Jane naming their first-born George Groves Burdan. William Burdan's father was George Burdan, although unfortunately he died before comprehensive death certs were brought in. However, his Cert does state that he died at a man's house, the man was a baker by trade, and no mention is made of either his wife or child(ren).

That's not bad for a Post Script for thought, is it.

✓  
Vicki  
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