

THE FARM: THE EARLY YEARS

The farm has been the subject of much correspondence and many reports which show that the Headmasters knew – with a passion – that the Farm was a major visible sign that the school was special, different and blessed.

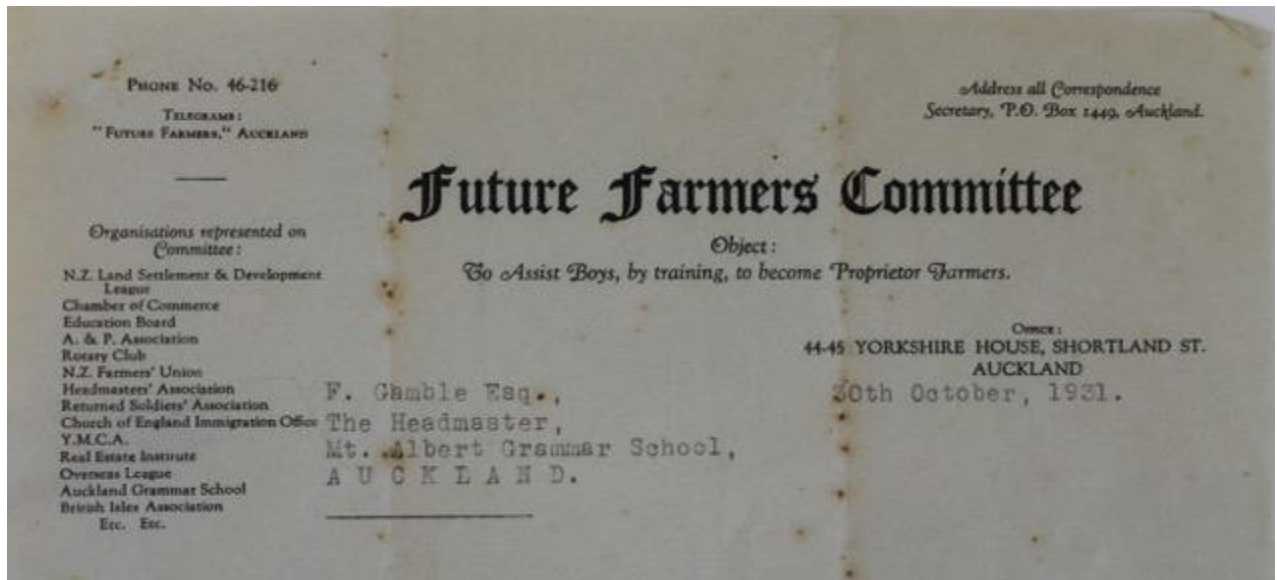
By a conjunction of available space, depressed economy, slim job prospects, a belief in the efficacy of a return to the land, some astute manoeuvring and a bit of dumb luck; twenty acres of the Kerr-Taylor estate became available to the school in 1933.

The correspondence covers many aspects of the life of the Farm:

- Early ideas about agricultural schools and what courses might be like;
- negotiations to acquire the land;
- fending off an early land-grab by Seddon Memorial Technical College;
- the purchase, sale and gifting of pedigree and grade animals;
- the breeding and showing of pedigree stock;
- the testing of animals, produce, pasture, soil and seeds;
- compliance with the demands of government agents and local bodies;
- fencing, gates, drainage, manuring and roading;
- the construction, maintenance, extension, renovation and demolition of farm buildings;
- the conversion of one area into another and grazing rights;
- the purchase, maintenance, repair and replacement of equipment;
- visits by experts, veterinarians and thousands of school children;
- the duties, salaries and holidays of Farm Managers;
- the hiring of horses, men and equipment for extra work;
- sales pitches by suppliers of goods and services, awaiting valued instructions;
- informing and being informed by the Board, the lessor, dignitaries, bureaucrats and neighbours of this and that;
- courses, schemes of work and philosophical and pedagogical statements.

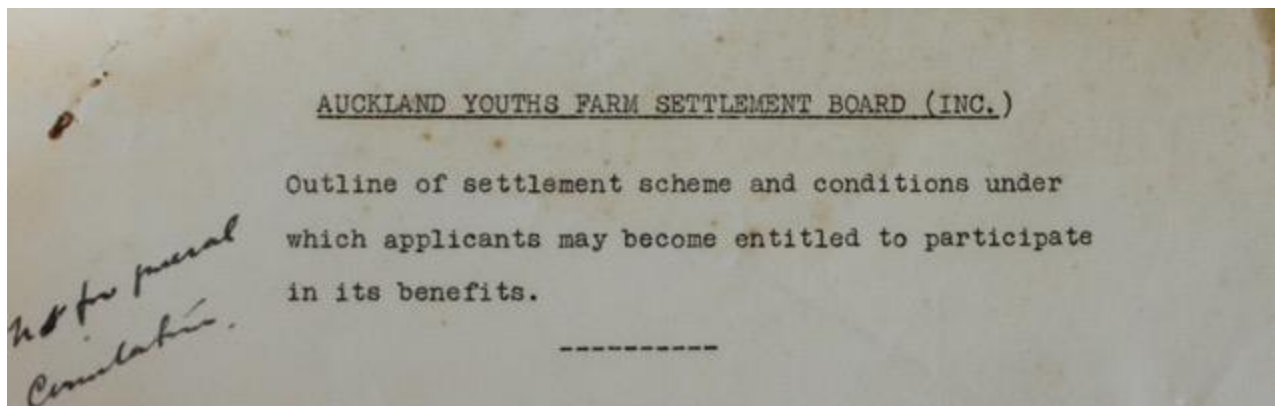
Not all the documents are in the school, a more complete set can be found in the proceedings of the Auckland Grammar Schools Board, which are housed in the Auckland Central Library. The account here is based on documents held in the school and, goes up to the end of F.W. Gamble's time, 1946.

The earliest document is from N.G. Gribble, to Headmaster Gamble, on 30 October 1931. It is on the letterhead of the Future Farmers Committee, of which Mr Gribble was the Chairman.



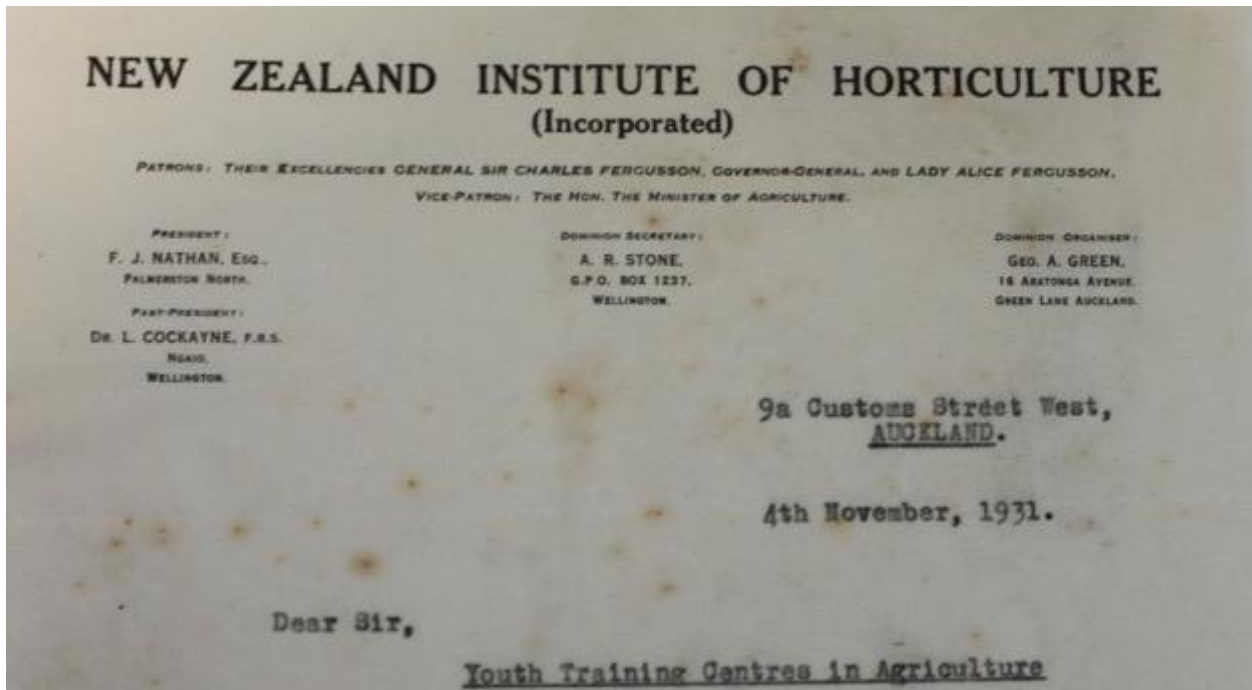
“It appears that the grave need of our lads leaving school is apt to be lost sight of in the present time of industrial dislocation ... there should be a gathering of sympathetic interests ... with the idea of preventing the best of our manhood deteriorating through idleness ...” He went on to give details of a meeting calling for delegates of interested groups to attend.

Also from Mr Gribble was an undated document of three foolscap cyclostyled pages with a different address from the Future Farmers Committee.



“The object is to form from time to time groups of lads desirous of becoming farmers on their own land. ... Each applicant for membership of a group must be of good character and physique and suitably educated.” There is much more and it’s very detailed. The whole thing is not without merit but it has a busy-body, know-best air to it. There is no found evidence that the Auckland Youths Farm Settlement Board (Inc) ever got off the ground.

Enter the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (Inc).



A short letter from N.R.W. Thomas, Hon. Secretary, Auckland Provincial Agricultural Education Committee, 4 November 1931. Not to a particular addressee. It concerned a two-page cyclostyled document headed Youth Training Centres in Agriculture, by Mr Thomas and dated 5 October 1931. It was more doable, in many ways, than Mr Gribble's ideas, though there were many details presented as prescriptions rather than suggestions.

"Camps in tents for from 40 to 60 boys per month established on Military lines ... " and "Superintendent at £400 per annum, Agricultural Instructor as assistant at £200. Two assistant Senior Boys from Trainees each at £1 per week. Farm cook at £3 per week." There were details of other instructors from other sources "free of cost". Another prescription was: "Tuition Monday to Friday, with leave from Camp Saturday and Sunday at mid-period." The course of instruction was excellent, and despite the many details, Mr Thomas was pretty clear-eyed about the possible outcomes.

A carbon copy of MEMORANDUM is next. It's two-and-a-half pages and is not in Gamble's style so it may be from Mr Thomas. "The area proposed for the new Agricultural and Horticultural Section of the Mt Albert Grammar School lies to the South-West of the school ... The area is divided into two sections by a gully ... A plan of the property is annexed hereto." Alas, we do not have a copy of this plan. The Memorandum went on to mention the Citrus Test area "on about 1½ to 2 acres in maize to the North of the old stone cowshed." The Citrus Area did come to pass. There were much more details to follow.

The next document we have is a hand-written letter from G.V. Wild, an Education Department official to the Headmaster, dated 14 June 1932. The penmanship is of a very high standard. The land plan must have been sent to him for he wrote: "Many thanks for the plan for the land adjoining your school. I should like to congratulate your surveyor and draftsman on the work, ... " He went on to say: may I suggest - quite unofficially - that, if you have any strong opinion on this matter of the land, the time appears ripe for your Board to interest itself in the question."

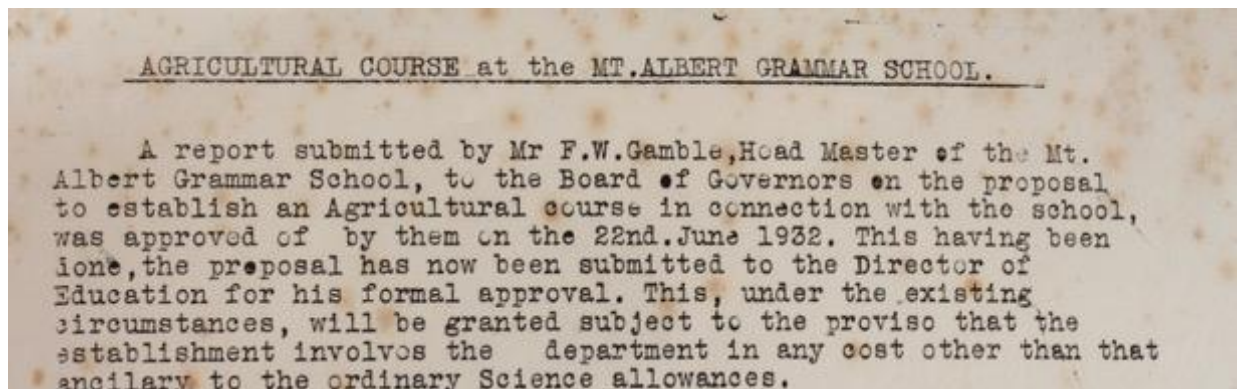
Next was a letter from the Headmaster to the Secretary of the Board on 20 June 1932. The first paragraph was: "For a considerable time efforts have been made to have established in Auckland a High School of a true Agricultural type, and the Education Department eventually approved a site at Glen Eden for this purpose. As that project has been indefinitely postponed, it has been suggested that an Agricultural course may be introduced into the Mount Albert Grammar School to meet immediately the urgent need for wider spread Agricultural training. I am in complete sympathy with that suggestion and should like to have the support of the Board of Governors in making use of the opportunity that now seems to be offered." There were two paragraphs further including the

intelligence that Mr Wild had been instructed to prepare a full report. Gamble also mentioned that staffing and the course itself would be no problem.

A month later on 18 July 1932 the Headmaster wrote to Mr Thomas in which he mentioned that he had been visited by Mr La Trobe, Superintendent of Technical Educator and Mr E Caradus, Secondary School Inspector. He went to say; "It is urgent that the Department should receive definite information as to the term of lease of Kerr-Taylor's property. The length of lease is particularly important, for it is clear that the Department will only be induced to consider the matter if the lease is sufficiently long." He hoped that Mr Thomas could help in that matter. (Mr E Caradus was the brother of Mr W Caradus and Mr N.R.W. Thomas was the son of Professor A.P.W. Thomas, Chairman of the Board.

Two days later Mr Thomas replied on New Zealand Institute of Horticulture letterhead. "In reply to your letter of the 18th inst. all I can say is that the Misses Kerr-Taylor have offered to sell at £135 per acre or to grant a lease commencing at £50 per annum ... The trouble is that Mr Wild apparently wants us to do everything but gives us very little assistance as to what is wanted I enclose herewith several copies of the memorandum we have prepared with a view of obtaining support for the proposal."

The two foolscap memorandum was headed Agricultural Course at the Mt. Albert Grammar School.



It included some History, including " ... the continued efforts of the Auckland District Council of the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture to obtain the establishment of an Agricultural High School adjacent to the City of Auckland where at least 400 boys could be passed through an Agricultural and Horticultural course ... a report being submitted by the Director of Education to his Minister [Robert Masters – the Forbes United Party] in favour of the establishment of such a High School on an education reserve at Glen Eden. Unfortunately the matter of finance proved insuperable ... " Mr Thomas and his Committee had turned its attention to the school for that reason. The rest of his report was very detailed.

The Headmaster wrote to the Secretary of the Board on 21 July 1932. He had enclosed Mr Thomas's report. He finished his letter with: "I beg to recommend that the memorandum enclosed be sent to the Director of Education with the endorsement of the Board of Governors has signified its agreement with the general scheme there is a hope that we shall be able to make more satisfactory progress in the matter of lease and finance".

Five days later, 26 July 1932, Mr Gamble produced a lengthy (5½ foolscap pages) document of his own. He made a strong case for a School Farm. " ... a good proportion of both boarders and day boys come from rural or semi-rural districts, and city boys are more than ever looking to farming as an occupation. Land for a school farm is available on the Kerr-Taylor property immediately adjoining the school, so that the crossing over from classroom to practical work would be very conveniently made. Those masters of the staff who would be directly concerned with an Agricultural section have offered their full cooperation." There was much else, covering Schedules (courses), Staffing, Accommodation, Lease and Finance. Gamble was hoping to get donations: "It is difficult to make much progress in this direction until subscribers are assured of the Department's approval of the general scheme ... will assist us in gaining the support required."

Meanwhile, Mr Thomas wrote two letters to Mr La Trobe, we have neither of these (20 and 29 July 1932 but we do have a copy of Mr La Trobe's reply on 5 August 1932: "Subject to the scheme being carried on without cost to the government beyond that involved in the actual teaching of the pupils, I am prepared to recommend its approval." he had many other comments largely about buildings, dependent on whether buildings were on the leased land or the school land. If on school land, then: "The laboratory would be about 48' x 24' with a storeroom 8' x 24' and a porch and instructor's room occupying space also 8' x 24'. Gas and water and liberal supply would be necessary, as well as proper drainage. The proper location of all the buildings for convenience and efficiency in working is a measure of considerable importance, while the question of suitability and appearance cannot be entirely overlooked."

On 9 August 1932, four days after he had written to the Secretary of the Board. In regard to Mr Gamble's report he said: "I have to say that the proposals put forward have the general approval of the Department." He had some hard-headed things to ask about their proposed instructor but he reserved his forensic analysis for Mr Thomas's more enthusiastic ideas "... who would perform the ordinary routine duties of the 30 acre [sic] farm contemplated by the Horticultural Institute with its dairy, apiary, poultry yard, orchard and small fruit garden, vegetable gardens, glasshouse, etc? It would appear that there is work for one or two men on the farm itself without counting the teaching. How is it proposed to provide this labour and management? "There was more.

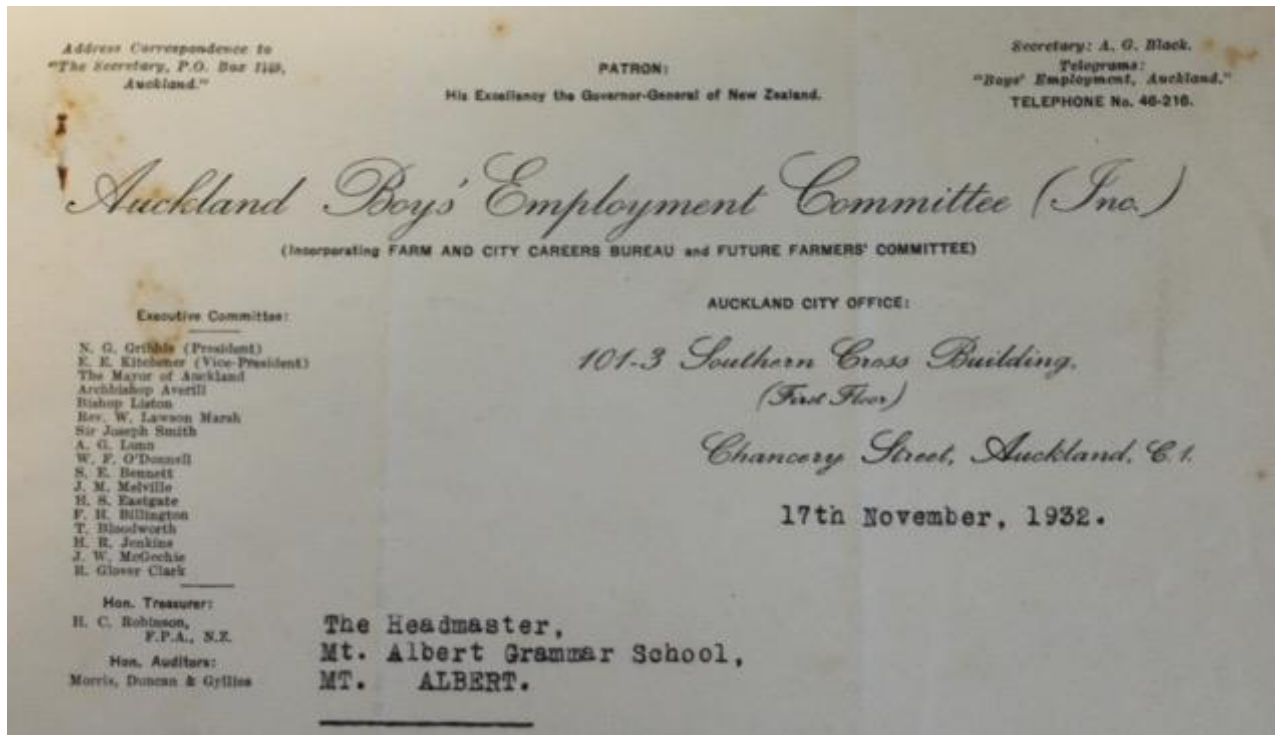
Next up was a letter from Mr Thomas to the Secretary of the DSIR headed Citrus Tree Area and dated 18 August 1932. He began by mentioning that the school negotiations were difficult because of funding. So the owners were offering a lease of two acres – for £5 per annum plus rates. "The area is at present fallow after a crop of maize and could be planted at once with the trees at present waiting at Herd's nursery "

Though not really a farm matter, next was a letter to Mr Gamble from SG Park of the Auckland Boys' Employment Committee to the Headmaster (and to other Heads of other schools) on 26 September 1932. He noted that the Technical College would make its Hall – seating 850 for – it was hoped " ... that each school might conduct an annual entertainment ... " A representative would: " Communicate with you ... when I hope you may see your way to give him a favourable reply."

We do not have a letter to the Headmaster from the Auckland Savings Bank for 4 October 1932 but we do have a copy of a long well-crafted letter of reply by the Headmaster including: The questions of agricultural instruction is today probably the most important one and yet the least catered for in our educational system ... so that very few boys are leaving our Secondary or Technical schools with a real bias towards the land."

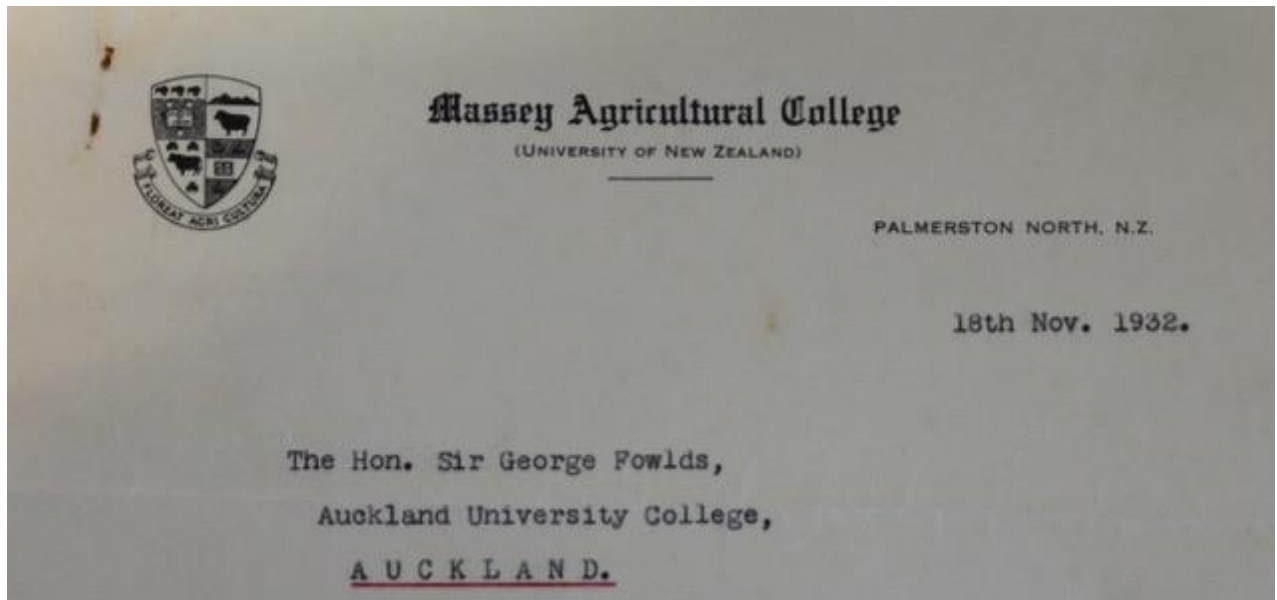
One month later on 11 November 1932 Mr Gamble wrote to "The Hon Sir George Fowlds. It was obvious that it was a reply to a letter we don't have. Fowlds letter was obviously critical and the Headmaster endeavoured to mollify him and finished with: "The science masters and myself are very grateful for your interest in our Agricultural scheme and feel that your help will prove invaluable when practical matters come up for consideration."

A new cursive-script letterhead for the Auckland Boys Employment Inc, now Incorporating the Farm and City Careers and Future Farmers Committee.



A letter to the Headmaster on 17 November 1932 began: "The Executive yesterday discussed the unsatisfactory position in which we find ourselves when at this period of the year we have a number of suitable openings for boys on farms and insufficient lads available to fill these."

There is what looks like an original letter from Massey Agricultural College to Sir George Fowlds dated 18 November 1932.



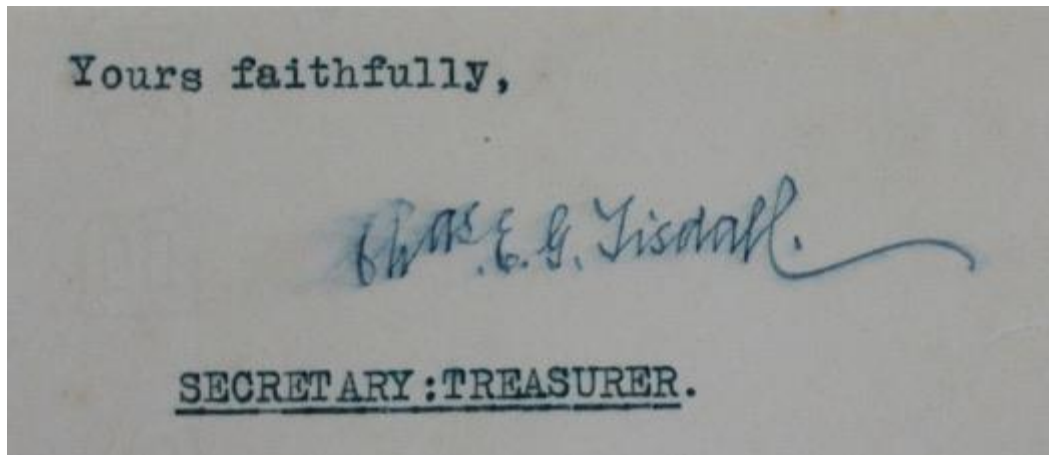
Fowles must have sent Gamble's memorandum to the Principal of Massey. Who replied: "I have carefully read the memorandum on the proposed agricultural instruction at the Mount Albert Grammar School and discussed it with some of the other members of the staff ... On the whole the scheme of instruction appears to us to be very excellent ..."

On 18 November 1932 Mr Gamble wrote to the Secretary of the Board stating that "owing to a strong demand" he was, hoping "under the authority of the Board of Governors to start, in 1933 a course which will enable selected boys to qualify for the University Entrance Examinations on a course of work with the Agricultural bias."

On 1 February 1933, Chas. E.G. Tisdall, Secretary of the Board, forwarded a letter to Mr Gamble.

The letter was from the Director of Education and contained good news. It began: "I have to inform you that the Minister has now definitely approved the establishment of an agricultural course on the lines your Board proposes at the Mt. Albert Grammar School, the distinct understanding being that neither directly nor indirectly is the Government put to any additional expense." He did go on to say that the staff should be rejigged to allow for the services of a specialist instructor who is competent to look after farm operations ... "

The following image is of Mr Tisdall's signature at the end of his letters.



Yours faithfully,

Chas. E. G. Tisdall.

SECRETARY : TREASURER.

It is written with a dip pen and is perfectly legible, as 95% of all signatures were. Names were not typed. One had to rely on the signature and position of the writer.

On 13 February 1933 Mr Gamble wrote to the Mr Tisdall informing the Board of the suitability of Messrs Caradus, Worley and O'Sullivan. "For the practical work on the land my idea was to make use of one or more part time instructors. Failing these I am confident that Mr O'Sullivan would develop into a very useful instructor in practical work, for he has for years spent his spare time on sheep and dairy farms and is a keen amateur gardener."

A final letter from the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture to the Headmaster from G.S. Nicoll, the Dominion Secretary and dated 10 March 1933 and mentioning that, at a recent conference a resolution was passed: "That the Conference place on record and forward its appreciation of the actions of the Headmaster of the Mount Albert Grammar School and of the Auckland Grammar School Board of Governors in endorsing the Headmaster's Report in favour of the adoption of the Agriculture Course as proposed by the Institute."

With this the curtain went down on the NZIH and it was about to go up on Seddon Memorial Technical College. While we do not have all of the correspondence and reports there is enough to follow the trail. The first was from Mr Gamble on 15 March 1933, to Mr Park, the Principal of SMTC. "I have not yet received from the Grammar School Board any details of the proposals made by your Board of Managers to them re responsibility in co-operating in Agriculture."

The next day 16 March 1933 the Headmaster wrote to the Board Secretary, Mr Tisdall, on another matter. "At present there is no need for a part-time instructor in Agriculture."

Again Mr Gamble wrote to Mr Tisdall on 17 March 1933 indicating that the Technical College Board of Managers had only just agreed to a conference and that he – Mr Gamble – would not be able to prepare a report in time for the up-coming Board meeting.

A major letter from Mr Tisdall to Mr Gamble on 23 March 1933 had two parts to it. The first regarded a letter we don't have: "In reply to your letter of the 8th instant asking for £40.10.11 for tools, manure and fencing materials ... at present the land belongs to the Kerr-Taylor's and has not been transferred to the Bank. Until it is it would be unwise to do any work on it or spend any money." Mr Tisdall

turned his attention to a reply to Mr Gamble's 17 March 1933 letter: " ... The Board does NOT wish you state that the Board decided this or that, but simply to be guided by these resolutions in your reply to Mr. Park.

- That in the opinion of this Board, joint control, as outlined in Mr. Park's letter is impracticable;
- That the Board cannot agree to Mr Park's suggestion that the control should be handed over to a third party;
- That in future, when the course is running smoothly the Headmaster might arrange, as a matter of courtesy, to allow facilities for Technical College classes with their master to visit the land for observation purposes."

Mr Tisdall enclosed Mr Park's letter.

Mr Park's letter, with five paragraphs, was also dated 17 March 1933, and was to Mr Gamble. First, SMTC had been collecting funds for the foundation of an Agricultural High School separate form but administered by SMTC; second the Grammar School Board was entering the field of Agriculture which the SMTC Board had been in for twenty years; third the College did not wish to run a school farm but could see no advantage in a separate scheme to the Grammar School; fourth Mr Park thought that a joint body could run the Kerr-Taylor land; and finally the College Board could invest considerable sums if the Grammar School could match it.

On 20 March 1933 Mr Gamble wrote to the Board Secretary with regard to Mr Park's letter. First, all the early negotiations in regard to the establishment of Agriculture at the school were that the scheme would be a substitute for the deferred Glen Eden scheme and that there was "no suggestion that the Glen Eden Agricultural High School was to be a wing of the Technical College" Second: "The proposal for Agriculture at this school cannot seriously be regarded as impeding the objects of the Technical College ... " we should teach boys how to become sound farmers not to be farmers while still at school." Mr Gamble could not comment on the third point. On the fourth point of having a joint Board to run the farm introduced serious problems. The farm would no longer be under the control of the Auckland Grammar School Board of Governors and I can hardly suggest what my position would be under that arrangement. I wish to emphasise my feeling that I can be responsible only to the Board of Governors." The final point was that Mr Park seemed to disregard the fact that the land had been attained by the activity of the Board of Governors.

On 10 April 1933 Mr Gamble wrote to Mr Tisdall "As soon as school farm commences operations a part time instructor in Agriculture will be needed for 11 hours per week."

A testy letter was sent from Mr Tisdall to Mr Gamble on 10 April 1933. "The arrangement for the sale and purchase of Kerr-Taylor's property is being signed immediately, the Savings Bank to enter into possession on the 1st May. My attention was called, by the Solicitor, to the fact that somebody at Mt. Albert had been interfering with stone walls and fences, and the fact that there is a special clause in the act that the Board will fence before six months from the 1st May and that until then the existing fences will not be interfered with."

On 3 May 1933 Mr Tisdall send Mr Gamble a copy of a letter of 1 May 1933 from the Manager of the Auckland Savings Bank. "According to the Agreement for Sale and Purchase the Bank is entitled to possession as from today ... your Board is hereby authorised to take possession and occupy the twenty odd acres ... " So after many a twist and turn the Farm was at last a reality.

On 5 May 1933 Mr Gamble asked Mr Tisdall to advertise for an instructor "on the following lines."

"Instructor in Agriculture
(part time)

The Mount Albert Grammar School requires the services
of an Instructor in Agriculture 11 hours per week ... "

And on 23 May 1933 Mr Gamble wrote to Mr Tisdall: "I beg to recommend the appointment of Mr F. Sydenham". This was the new Instructor of Agriculture.

Two days later, 25 May 1933 Mr Gamble wrote to Mr Sydenham. "From the applications received for

the part time post I selected yours for the recommendation to the Board of Governors' believing that a young man with his university course behind him [he had a MAgSc] will develop into the type of teacher I require. Your lack of teaching experience can be overcome by determination and self-confidence.

On 1 June 1933 Mr Gamble to Mr Tisdall. "I beg to report that Mr Sydenham has arrived in Auckland and will commence duties on Monday June 5th.

A letter on farm progress was sent by Mr Gamble to Mr Tisdall on 20 June 1933:

1. Experimental plot. This had been sub-divided and boys could begin work "at the proper season."
2. Agriculture Department. Valuable advice was being received from officials of the Agriculture Department.
3. Grazing Rights. Mr Sadgrove previously held grazing rights and was prepared to give service in ploughing and instruction in lieu of grazing fees.
4. Removal from School Farm. 1 large Pinus insignis, 1 rata tree, 30 chairs [600m] of old wire with posts, 2 gates and 4 large posts.
5. Stormwater from Council Roads. This was proving a problem on the farm.
6. Mr Sydenham. Mr Sydenham had made a promising start.

A copy of a circular with four foolscap pages headed:

"Auckland Grammar School Board.
Extract From Notes Taken at A Conference Between A Committee
of The Auckland Grammar School and A Committee Of The Seddon
Memorial Technical College Re Agricultural Course At
Mount Albert
17th July 1933

Present: Auckland Grammar School Board: Professor A.P.W. Thomas (Chairman), Dr E. Robertson (Vice-Chairman), Messrs W. Ward Baker, A. Harris M.P., and A.St.C Brown. Technical College Mr. J.A.C. Allum (Chairman) and Mr. J Patterson. Mr. R. Hoe represented both Boards. The Principals, Mr. G.J. Park and Mr. F.W. Gamble, attended by request."

There was a great deal of back and forth discussion. There was no intimation that the Board wanted to scupper the idea. The final remark was a motion, from Mr Allum. " ... that the matter now be referred to the two Principals for the purpose of evolving a scheme to make the Grammar School land available to the boys of both institutions or any alternative proposals. It was carried unanimously: There was a great deal of additional correspondence; a letter to Mr Gamble from the ever-hopeful Mr Park (20 July 1933); two long letters from Mr Gamble to the Board on successive days (25 and 26 July 1933); two letters from Mr Park, one to Mr Gamble and one to the Board (both on 31 July 1933); a letter from Mr Tisdall on behalf of the Board, to Mr Park (2 August 1933); a letter from Professor Thomas to the Chairman of the SMTC Board (10 April 1933), Professor Thomas was proposing to make two acres available until 1935 by which date the whole of the land would be needed by Mt Albert, but, of course, the land could be available until then and, of course, instruction would be by the Mt Albert staff. There is no further correspondence on this matter. The Board had got its way by diplomacy, delay and seemingly disingenuous new conditions.

There is a hand written note probably by Mr Sydenham, concerning the "Seed Dept" and while there were more debits than profits, the stock in hand represented a profit of 15/9½, fifteen shillings, ninepence ha'penny is about \$1.60 (84 years on that would equal to over \$100 – a tidy sum). Mr Sydenham was very modern in his outlook, he wrote, "At the beginning of next term I intend to hand over complete control to Mathews and Steventon of 4 Agriculture.

There is an unsigned undated (date July 1933 probably), 2½ foolscap pages – possibly written by Mr Sydenham for Mr Gamble. The then state was, that "of the 20 acres 2½ acres was reserved for the Citrus Test Area, 2 acres have been cut off for Experimental Plots, and at least ½ an acre will be in

roads. Roading proceeding with the help of relief labour ... "There was much more about plans for the future – most came to fruition.

Next was a letter from W. Morrison, Conservator of Forests, 31 July 1933. He was replying to a letter we don't have, but it was obviously about a free shipment of as many as 200 trees and 2 ounces of seeds of each species. It seems that this generous offer was available for any school that asked for it and had the space for such planting.

Report Of Visit of Advisory Committee of Mt. Albert
Agriculture Area
9th August 1933

Present: Messrs McLennan and Smallfried Of The Advisory Committee. Mr. Rice was detained in a Course case.

Also Present: The Chairman of the Board, the Headmaster, Mr. Caradus, Mr. O'Sullivan, and the Field Instructor, Mr. Sydenham.

While the Advisory Committee endorsed the Headmaster's views, it had many sensible suggestions to make, only Number 8 was a little off the mark: "8. Pigs, Poultry, bees, might be built as part of the area, but it was doubtful whether sheep could be usually farmed on the area." Pigs, poultry and bees were certainly kept, as were sheep. In Ces Honeybun's time there a Border Leicester Stud that always did well in shows and had a national reputation. Since then there have been non-registered breeds.

There was a long letter from the Minister of Education, R. Masters [Robert Masters was in the Forbes Government]. The letter was to Professor Thomas, the Chairman of the Board, dated 24 April 1934 and concerning marks for Agriculture vis-à-vis other subjects. There was considerable detail so it was probably written by an official and signed by the Minister.

A letter from the Headmaster to the Secretary of the Board, 7 May 1934, in reply to a letter we don't have and concerning the sale of milk: "As the School House will be unable to take milk from the School Farm until next year it is very probable that the milk will have to be separated and the cream sold to the New Zealand Dairy Company at 6d per pound of Butterfat ..."

Mr Gamble's next letter on Farm matters dated 16 March 1934 was to the Chairman of the Board revisiting the marks for Agriculture in two examinations. In the University Scholarship Examinations Mr Gamble thought that the marks could be raised to 400, the same as for French. And in the Intermediate Examination for Senior Free Place: "In their Examination I believe that mark in Agriculture could certainly be raised to 300 which is the amount given to Arithmetic and History ... " Mr Gamble was not to know that the following year would see the election of the First Labour Government and the abolition of the Free Place System.

It was not until 30 July 1934 that we have another letter from Mr Gamble, this time to the Town Clerk of the Mount Albert Borough Council. He gives a preamble about the Farm including the imminent introduction of sheep and bees – and then: "It is felt however that the scheme is incomplete unless the proper care and rearing of pigs ... " He went on to say that: "The pig-house will be absolutely modern and hygienic and excreta will be subjected to a filtering process similar in action to that of a septic tank ..." There was an expeditious response on 1 August 1934: "I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 30th ult., and would advise that the same was placed before the Council at a meeting last evening and then referred to the Town Planning Committee with power to act when it was decided that your application was granted."

Address all correspondence
to
THE TOWN CLERK

TELEPHONES: 20-725 (2 lines)

Borough of Mount Albert

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Office Hours: 8.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Closed at 11.30 a.m. Saturdays

539 New North Road,

Auckland, SW1, 1st August

1934.

Mr. F.W. Gamble,
Headmaster,
Mount Albert Grammar School,
MOUNT ALBERT, SW2.

On 3 August 1934 Mr Gamble wrote to the Board informing them that Mr Forbes Eadie [a Mount Albert identity] had given to the Farm " ... 3 swarms of first class bees, the value of which would be about £7-10-0 [\$898 in 2017 dollars]. Also Mr Forbes Eadie was prepared to give instruction and Mr Gamble asked the Board for authority to buy hive material costing about £3.

There is a copy of a five-paragraph personal letter from the Cyclone Fence and Gate Co Ltd to: "A.J. Gibson, Esq., School House." Dated 8 August 1934. Bert Gibson was both Housemaster and Agriculture Teacher. While there is no copy of any letter from the Board or Headmaster, it seems that Mr Gibson had the authority to order fencing. Here is a full paragraph from the letter to give a flavour for the kind of old-world courtesy that firms of the day employed. "Pig Keeping. In connection with this we are very pleased indeed to note that you are constructing a piggery on the modern system as recommended by the Waikato Pig Recording Club, and as the Club has recognised through experience that Cyclone Tightlock Netting is the best fencing for this purpose we are very pleased to note your remarks and wishing to assist you in the direction you indicate, we have pleasure in advising that we have requested our Auckland Branch to deliver to you 1½ coils of Cyclone Tightlock Hog Fence 30in high for the construction of the small model piggery you have in mind."

Just as we do not have the letter giving Mr Gibson authority to buy the Hog Fence, so we do not have the letter from Mr W.E. von Schramm offering seeds. There is a letter from Mr Gamble, 18 September 1934, thanking him for seeds of the 'Murray Pine' [*Callitris columellaris*].

A letter to the Board from Mr Gamble, 24 September 1934 concerning six sheep, recently purchased, and have not fattened: "I should recommend killing for the School House ... In addition the farm classes would have useful instruction in killing and dressing." He asked if it was the Board's wish that mutton be provided for the School House, then he would recommend the purchase of six more store sheep. In the same letter he mentioned the piggery and the success of the vegetable garden.

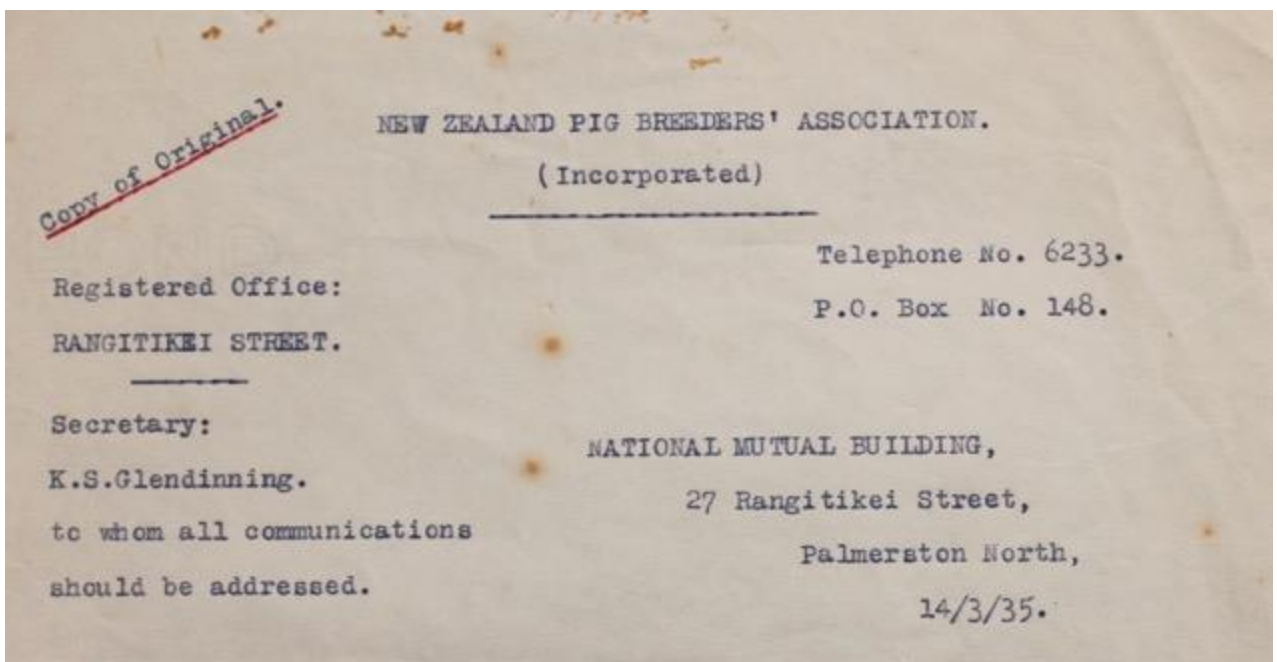
Another letter known only by response was from George V. Westbrook, 10 October 1934, Apiary Instructor for the Department of Agriculture: "I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, re your bee classes and will be very pleased to assist you in any way possible ... " The letterhead had the Royal Coat of Arms and not the New Zealand Coat of Arms (1911).



On 17 October 1934, Mr Gamble wrote a further letter to the Secretary of the Board, concerning the mutton for the School House: "A certain number of butcher's tools will be required in the killing and preparation of the mutton to be supplied to the School House ... " The tools were; knife, steel, saw, chopping and a basket to carry the meat.

Another letter from Mr Gamble to the Board, 14 November 1934, concerned bees – again: Mr Forbes Eadie undertook the furnishing of all supplied in connection with the bees. However the bees began to swarm, he was not available and we were compelled to purchase materials so that Mr Fleming (Farm Manager) could save the bees ... "

The first item of 1933 is a 14 March 1933 letter from K.S. Glendinning, Secretary of the New Zealand Pig Breeders' Association, informing the School that: "I have to advise you that the Tamworth sow, Kiteroa Cherry 1. Registered No. 6214 has been duly transferred from Mr. S.W. Crookes, of Auckland to yourself." It was added that she had been served by the boar, Balnagore Goldust Prince 1st, No. 4195.



On 20 March 1935 Mr Gamble wrote to the Board seeking advice on the future direction of the School farm and asking for their consideration regarding several items.

- (a) Manuring: Marked improvements could only be maintained by the purchase of 1 ton of Superphosphate, ½ ton of Basic Slag, ½ cwt of Sodium Nitrate, ½ cwt of Ammonium Sulphate, all up cost £7-15-0.
- (b) Additional Sub-dividing Fencing: As only a portion of the sub-division had occurred Mr Gamble was asking for further work. £12-0-0 would make a substantial difference.
- (c) Door for end of Implement Shed: The door would be 8ft wide and 7ft high. Materials would cost £3-10-0 and the construction would be a part of the boys' woodwork instruction.
- (d) Farm Gates: "At present most of the farm gates are of a type called 'Taranaki' ..." He suggested that three gates could be made by the boys with materials costing £3-3-0.
- (e) Purchase of Plough: A plough had been borrowed, and was often not available or unsuitable. "A Wiard one-horse steel beam plough would cost about £4-10-0.
- (f) Harness for Horse: Mr Sadgrove was still lending his horse but a new harness was necessary, that is a Collar and Harness at a combined price of £2-7-0.

As a sort of post-script Mr Gamble mentioned that he and the Secretary were making inquiries about the suitability of a motor-cycle for the transport of farm produce to the School House as Mr Fleming had to carry 70lb (32 kg) twice daily measuring two thirds of a mile. [£1 in 1935 would be worth \$117 in 2017].

Next was the gift of another pedigree animals. There is no date. A pedigree Ayrshire Cow, Royal Lilly, Registration Number 14616, Born 25/6/32 was a gift of Mrs A.E. Taylor, Owairaka Avenue. Her Sire was Glencaine Sir Williams, 4287 and her Dam was Linten Myrtle 5385. A condition of this gift was the cow could not be shown against Mrs Taylor's entries at a particular show. Mr Gamble notified the Board on 20 March 1935 that Mrs Taylor had presented to the School Farm "A pedigree Ayrshire cow of considerable value ... "

On 13 May Mr Gamble wrote to the Board, " ... I believe that the suggestion made that we should use a horse and cart ... suitable for farm work and for transport purposes has much in its favour ... " The prices would be; Horse with Harness (Collar, Hames and Winkers) £25-0-0, Spring Cart £12-0-0, Saddle, Traces and Reins £4-0-0.

Another gift of a pedigree animal was noted by Mr Gamble in a letter "S. Irwin Crookes, Esq.," "No doubt the Board of Governors have on their own account thanked you for your very valuable gift of the pedigree bull. If true to stock it should prove a very wonderful addition to our School Farm and I am taking this opportunity of giving you my personal thanks for your great favour." The bull was Kiteroa Gamboge Laddie, born 14/9/34 Tatoo M.37, bred at Mr Crookes Stud at Maungatopere. Mr Crookes noted: "this Bull is particularly well bred. His near ancestry includes some of the most famous cattle in Jersey History." His 4-time ancestor 'Old Sybil' who was sold for over £15,000 in 1919. In 2017 dollars that would be \$1,528,678.

In a 14 August 1935 letter to the Board Mr Gamble reported on an aspect of the farm: "During the year ending 10th June 1935, eight cows were milked on the farm. The total amount of milk produced being 41,962 lbs., and the total amount of butterfat was 2244 lbs" [19034 kg and 1018kg].

Mr Gamble wrote to the Board on 14 August 1935 with a schedule of livestock on the farm. All the animals were valued. There were eight milking cows, they were; Glen, Briar, Mona, Bluebell, Charm, Gipsy, Lady and Kinsey, plus a pedigree Holstein. There was a chestnut gelding valued at £30-0-0. The pigs were a pedigree Tamworth sow, two pedigree weaners and four store weaners. The only sheep were a weather and four ewes. The donations were listed separately; a one year old pedigree Ayrshire cow, Lily; a yearling heifer, Lass; a two year old grade Jersey bull and a one year old pedigree Jersey bull. The total value of all the animals was £110-0-0 [\$12,738 in 2017 dollars]. He also forwarded a copy of farm receipts for year ending 30 June 1935 ... shows a net profit of £87-13-0 but this includes donation of Cattle £23 and bees about £5 but does not include £10 for Citrus Test Area. Mr Gamble then asked: "Would it be at all possible for us to have copies of the official balance sheets since the inception of the farm scheme." And "To meet small charges during each term, such as Mr. Fleming's fares to Westfield, cartage etc., I beg to ask for permission to have a small Imprest Fund ... " And finally, "I beg to ask for authority to spend up to £2 for the purchase of seed for vegetables, pasture and crops."

The letter above which is very comprehensive is, oddly, the last correspondence we have for 1935. Also there is just one item for 1936, and that is a memo to the Headmaster and a report on what Mr Fleming regarded as useful for farm boys to know. After which the story picks up again in 1937.

Mr Fleming had asked boys what would be a suitable quantity and mixture of grasses for sowing pasture: "I had a suggestion of from 5 to 70 pounds of seed per acre and equally absurd guess for a mixture." He went to outline a sensible account of what a farmer would expect a boy to know, under the headings, Livestock and Farm Management, Annual Husbandry, Farm Mechanics, Book keeping, Farm Mathematics. The last concerned ordinary arithmetic including "much practice in practical measurement and calculations of materials for fencing, concreting, farm buildings and water supply, simple and compound interest – discounts – sinking funds – stocks and shares."

The first letter of the new year and was from Mr Gamble and concerned Mr Fleming. It was to the Board on 17 March 1937. "I have to forward to you with regret, the resignation of Mr Fleming from the position of Farm Manager. His appointment as an Agricultural Officer in Tasmania means a great deal to him financially ... His value to the Agricultural section of the School can hardly be estimated and I think it will be very difficult to replace him ... "

On the same day Mr Gamble wrote another letter to the Board begging for permission: "to expend the sum of Fourteen pounds nineteen shilling (£14-9-0) on 3 gates and manure for the top-dressing of the Farm ... "

The next letter, also to the Board, was on 22 March 1937, concerning the advertising for a new farm manager: "To make the conditions as definite as possible I attach a list of points for your guidance ... "

Schedule of duties of Working Farm Manager-Instructor for Mount Albert Grammar School Farm.

1. Milk by hand herd of cows (approx. 12) night and morning 7 days per week.
2. Deliver milk to School Hostel, per horse and cart, by 6.30 each morning the 40 weeks of the school year – distance about 2/3 mile. In school holidays separate milk.
3. Collect food scraps from Hostel for pigs on Farm.
4. Attend to pigs, sheep and bees on farm. At present there is one breeding cow and 2 store pigs, 1 ram, about 25 ewes and 6 hives of bees.
5. Shear sheep, and at intervals kill sheep and dress mutton for School Hostel.
6. Give instruction in, and supervise for a total weekly period of about 10 hours, the farm training of boys in the agricultural classes (a total of 35 in 3 classes).
7. In working hours when not involved in milking or instructing, to carry out usual farm operations and duties, including care of vegetable garden and orchard of 1 acre area.

Note: Applicant should note:-

- (i) No farm residence is provided.
- (ii) Annual Holidays – 4 weeks per year.
- (iii) Termination of engagement – 1 months' notice required.
- (iv) It is desirable that the applicant should be able to keep a full set of Farm Books and produce a Balance Sheet each year.

This Schedule is produced in full as it is so different to the present day one in many ways.

On 4 April 1937 Mr Gamble reminded the Board that Mr Fleming was entitled to: "7 days' pay for holidays accumulated for 12 weeks service ... "

Ten days later, 14 August 1937, Mr Gamble was able to inform the Board that he recommended the appointment of Mr S.A. Verrall: "He is the only applicant that completely satisfied requirements."

Two matters occupied a letter of Mr Gamble to the Board on 21 April 1937. There were some purchases that would cost £3-10-0. They were; 8 gate catches, 2 spades, fencing pliers, 1 door lock, teat salve, axel grease. The other matter concerned the appointment of Mr R.C. Corin until Mr Verrall arrived. (Mr Corin was later described as a young man, he worked for 32 days).

A Certificate of Registration of An Apiary was dated 1 April 1937.



Mr Gamble's letter to the Board on 17 May 1937 announced that Mr Verrall had started work that day.

Also on 17 May 1937 Mr Gamble asked the Board for a ton of hay for £5 plus cartage. Little hay had been stacked in the previous year.

Another letter to the Board on 27 May 1937 reported that two cows, which were poor milkers, could be sold for £6. A good cow in milk could be had for £10, and then a proper supply could be sent to the School House.

Reporting on a cream teat on 3 June 1937 Mr Gamble informed the Board that Mr Verrall thought that the result was probably due to the low rotation of the separator by the young man who "attended to the Farm operations before his arrival ..."

Another request for hay (£4-10-0) per ton was the subject of Mr Gambles letter to the Board on 9 July 1937.

Mr Gamble informed the Board on 15 June 1937 that storm water from Alberton Avenue into a part of the Farm, near the Citrus Test Area had caused: "extensive scouring up to 2ft 6in in depth and it is undermining the fence of a neighbouring resident." He would recommend that the Mt Albert Borough Council should continue their 9in pipe for another 125ft to connect with the open drain running through the Farm.

A second letter on the same day mentioned that as the sub-division of paddocks was just about complete, it was time to consider the development of water facilities. He listed the items necessary for working troughs with a global price of £22-3-2. There were additional items, three cow covers, shelter trees and a huge amount of bagged lime, 6 ton of Te Kuiti lime and 6 ton of Kopu lime, all railed to the Mt Albert Station. All-up price for all these items - £6-18-6.

Mr Gamble's next letter to the Board regarding the farm was on 20 July 1937 and noted that there was no traffic crossing to the Farm and the School crossing was still used, "I beg to recommend that the Mount Albert Borough Council be instructed to put in the required crossing which the Town Clerk estimates at not over £6.

A letter from Mr Gamble to the Board, 21 July 1937, was to do with an accident to Mr Verrall. Mr Gamble made five points:

1. The bee stings occurred in the course of his Farm duties.
2. The swelling became so bad that Mr Verrall consulted Dr. Paterson whose account for £1 is attached.
3. Under the Doctor's advice, Mr Verrall had 3 applications of infra-red rays from Nurse Yorke whose account has not been received.
4. Mr Verrall was unable to do his regular work on Saturday, July 10th, Sunday July 11th, and up until milking time on Monday, July 12th.
5. Mr Verrall tried to get in touch with me but I happened to be away at the Education Conferences. The letter was then sent directly to you because Dr Paterson stressed the necessity for an immediate report for insurance purposes."

The use of the horse on the farm was the subject of Mr Gamble's letter to the Board on 11 August 1937. Supervised boys did the ploughing and harrowing, though lime was distributed by a hired machine. There was a reinstatement of the use of the horse and cart as a conveyance.

Among the wide variety of Mr Gamble's letters to the Board was the 20 August 1937 letter concerning 500 barberry plants for a hedge - £3-15-0. A second letter on the same day asked for another ton of hay, this time for a charge of just £2-5-0.

A Certificate of Service from the New Zealand Pig Breeder's Association was dated 12 September 1937.

New Zealand Pig Breeders' Association.

OFFICE :
NATIONAL MUTUAL BUILDING,
RANGITIKEI STREET,
PALMERSTON NORTH.

P.O. BOX 148,
PALMERSTON NORTH.

Certificate of Service

I hereby Certify that the (Breed) *Tammorch* Sow
Named *Kiteiroa G. Perry 1st* Herd Book No. *6214*
The property of *Mr. Albert Gamble School of Mt. Albert, Auckland*
Was Served by my Boar *Mountain Rydalmure Lad 3rd*
Herd Book No. *8826* on the *12th* day of *Sept* 1937

Waione Peggis
(Signature of Owner of Boar).

Date *7/10/37*
J. F. Verner. Mgr

In order to bring the poorer parts of the farm into full production Mr Gamble asked the Board, on 20 October 1937 to beg for a long-furrow plough for £11-9-6.

Hay was being cut and another cow was needed in a request to the Board by Mr Gamble on 6 December 1937.

On 10 December 1937 Mr Gamble informed the Board that the only person found to stand-in for Mr Verrall, over his holidays, was a young man, a Mr Peters, who would not work for less than £3 per week. Mr Gamble was forced to ask the Board for approval.

Just five days later Mr Verrall's holidays were announced as from 10 January to 30 January inclusive.

Mr Gamble's last letter of the year was dated 23 December 1937 and informed the Board of the financial state of the Farm. The 'dead stock', Equipment, materials and tools were all together valued at £58-7-6 which with the livestock were valued at £125-5-0. Both these groups were individually enumerated.

Mr Verrall made a comprehensive report to Mr Gamble in the style of Mr Fleming before him (It was undated).

Mr Verrall featured in Mr Gamble's first farm letter of 1938 (on 15 February) it said that his work was up to the standard of Mr Fleming and he asked that Mr Verrall's salary be raised to that given to Mr Fleming.

On the same date, Mr Gamble's other letter to the Board asked for a replacement Southdown ram. A two tooth would cost 4 or 5 guineas but a ram hogget would be half that price.

On 29 March 1938 there was a new Certificate of Registration of An Apaira.

In a covering letter on 14 June 1938 Mr Gamble begged the Board to consider, "two matters in connection with the School Farm." One was to do with doubling the size of the concrete pad at the cowshed, and related matters. The cost of materials was given as £24-15-0. Work would be done by the farm manager and boys. The second matter concerned the extension of shelter hedges. The first amounted to £18-0-0, and again, the farm manager and boys would do the work.

On 19 July 1938 Mr Gamble informed the Board about the difficulty in supplying milk to the School House as one cow had mastitis, and had been sold. Mr Gamble was seeking, "a good cow at a cost not exceeding sixteen pounds".

The next letter, on 14 September 1938 asked for £3-5-0 for a half ton of manure for "the immediate topdressing of 4 acres of pasture to be shut up and later cut for hay."

On 13 October 1938 the Headmaster asked for authority to spend £20-0-0 on one-horse so that "hay may be cut in season". Also two new cream cans were asked for as some of the milk would need to be separated "shortly".

Mr Gamble's letter to the Board on 13 November 1938 concerned Mr Verrall's holiday and that Mr KW Peters would, again, be available for relief at £3-10-0 per week. As a farm labourer's wage was two shillings per hour Mr Gamble thought that weekly wage was "quite moderate".

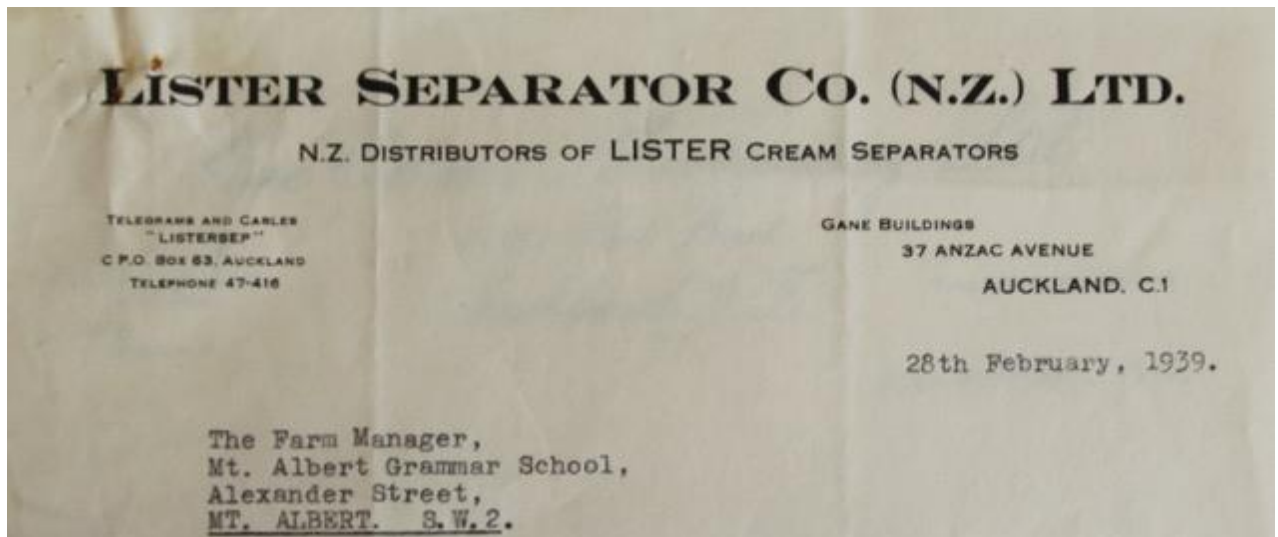
Mr Verrall's comprehensive report was next and although it was dated "Dec 6 1938" it was up to the end of June of that year. It was comprehensive and well written. There were details of all "departments", though sheep profits were down due to mortality by facial eczema, lambing difficulties and old age. There was much else, about dairy cows, pigs, garden produce and bees. This was followed by Mr Gamble's Annual report to the Board on the farms holdings listed under Live Stock, valued at £120-0-0 and Dead Stock valued at £62-10-0. It included under Sundry Tools "8 hoes, 2 shovels, 6 spades, 8 hay forks, 6

rakes, 2 garden forks, 3 grubbers, 3 slashers, 1 scythe. The global price was estimated at £5-0-0. According to the Reserve Bank Inflation Calculator this would be \$102 in 2017 dollars". Still, a bargain.

The first correspondence of 1939 was another request by Mr Gamble for equipment directed to the Board Secretary and dated 15 February 1939. There were three items on the list.

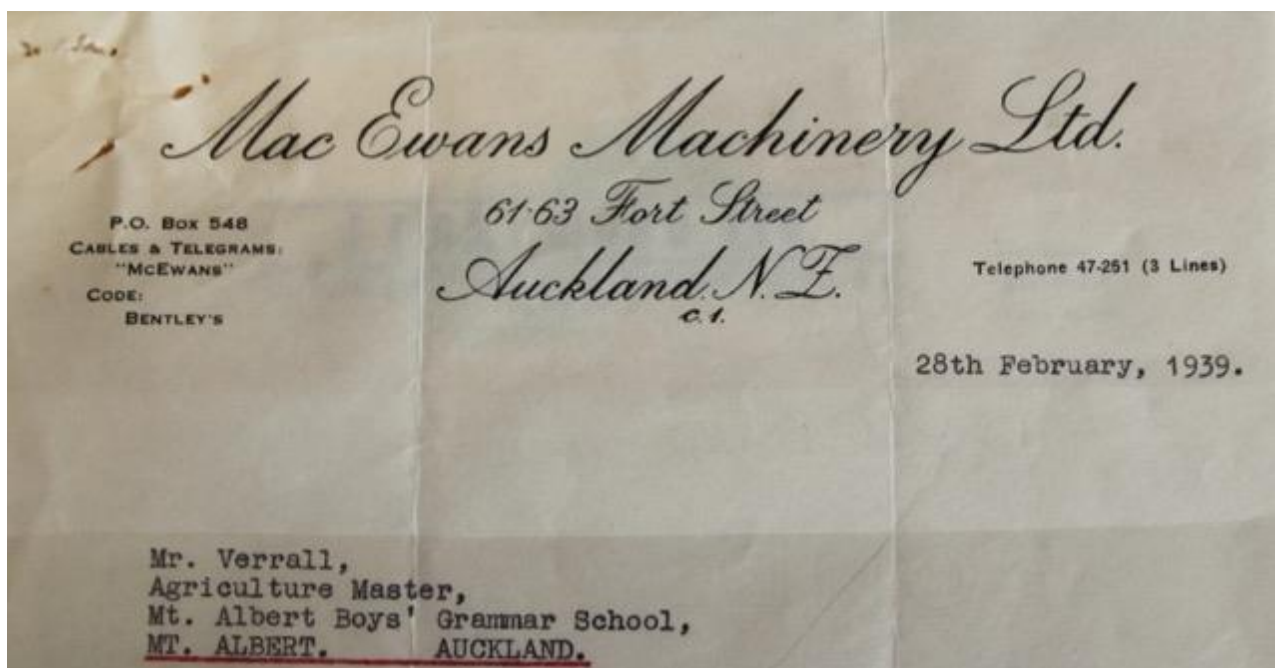
- a grindstone "for the sharpening of the farm mower and other implements" cost £2-15-0.
- a haystacks cover, "12ft x 10ft of green waxed canvas" cost £3-14-6.
- three tons of super-slag mixture for manuring cost £16-13-0

Mr Verrall had asked for some quotes from various firms for a milk separator. On 28 February 1939 there was a letter from Listers



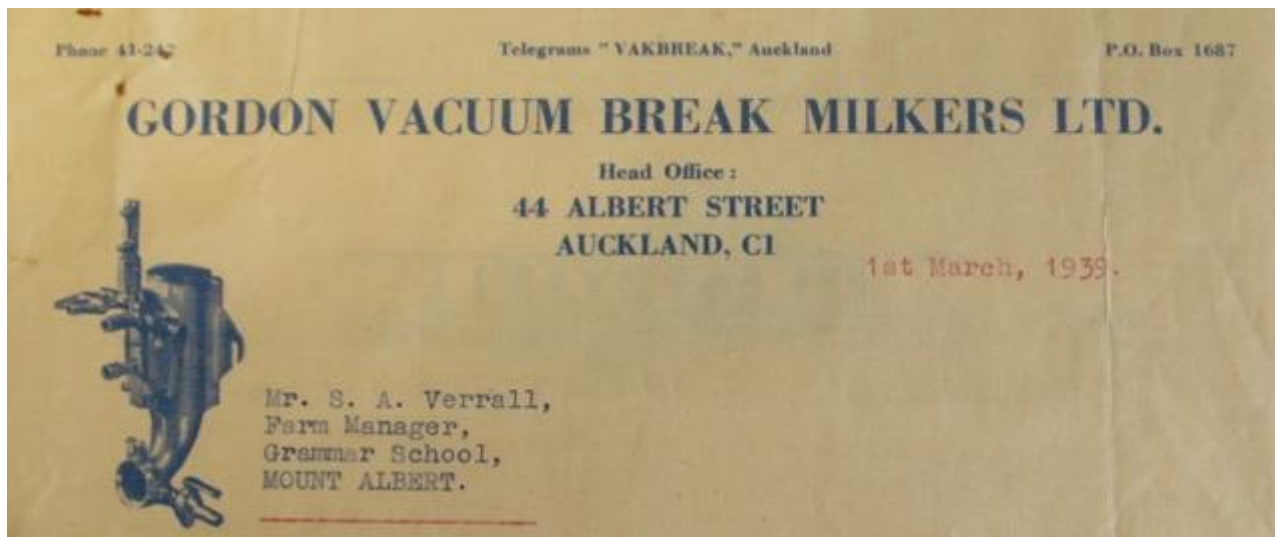
The price was £23-11-8 Nett. The company did not fail to end with: "We would also mention that we hold the Contract for the supply of Separators to all Departments of the New Zealand Government. Trusting to have the pleasure of executing your valued order, and awaiting your instructions."

MacEwans were next also on 28 February 1939 but they were quoting for a one cow milking plant and that their quote of £50-0-0 erected still stood. "Should any further information be required, we would be pleased to attend upon your request."



Thanking you in anticipation of your order.”

On 1 March 1939 Gordons also quoted for a one cow milking plant, erected for £62-0-0.

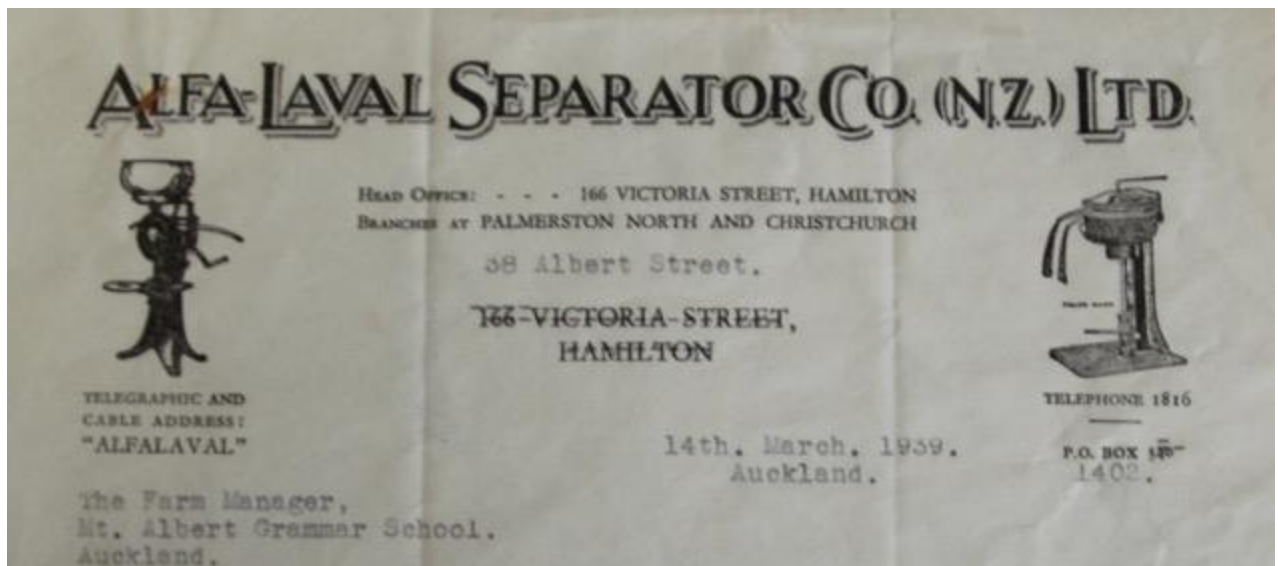


“Trusting that we will receive your esteemed order, and assuring you of our best endeavours at all times.”

On 7 March 1939 Alton and Norton offered to install one power point and meter panel with fuses for £2-0-0 Nett. “Installing two power points complete as above, at a cost of £3-0-0 Nett.”

On 14 March 1939 Mr Gamble suggested to the Board that sheep be disposed of “There were six ewes, six ewe lambs and one ram with a sale value of £10. A compelling business case was made as it was for two major items, the one bale milking machine, and the separator plus wiring for both would amount to £85 which would be recouped in under three years.

On the same day Alfa-Laval quote for a separator.



They slightly undercut Listers and assured Mr Verrall that “We look forward to being favoured with your valued instructions at an early date.”

A circular letter from the Government’s Stores Control board concerning the price of oxygen and acetylene gas, the body of the letter read: “Please note the price of oxygen and dissolved acetylene gas supplied by Messrs. The Illuminating and Welding Co. Ltd., as from 1st April, 1939 under further notice will be as under: The oxygen was to be 3/8d per hundred cubic feet, and dissolved acetylene gas was 13/9d per hundred cubic feet. Both would be in regulated cylinders etc.

An updated copy of a letter from the Stores Control Board noting that the Board had purchased superphosphate and Chemical Manures, “ ... but when the next arrangement is entered into negotiations will be made for the supply at Government rates to your board.”

Mr Gamble wrote to the Board on 19 April 1939 begging for authority to purchase 110lbs of Certified Hawkes Bay Perennial Rye [Grass] at 1/1¼ per pound amounting to £6-1-5½ ... “

Mr Gamble, on 19 July 1939 asked the Board to raise Mr Verrall’s salary, as his qualifications had been recognised by the Education Department and as a “D” Master his grade was up to £305 p.a. but Mr Verrall was on £260.

Mr Gamble informed the Board on 21 July 1939 that the farm’s only sow had farrowed and that most of the litter had been born dead. Mr Gamble recommended that six store pigs be purchased, “so that use may be made of skim milk and of food refuse from the School House.”

Another request from Mr Gamble to the Board bore the date 16 August 1939 for four items totalling about £16-10-0.

- timber for construction of a loading race at the piggery, £3-4-0.
- 25 yards of scoria at 8/6 a yard to repair the farm road and extend pig pens and loading race at piggery, £10-12-6.
- Fifty *Eucalyptus botryoides* trees to replace losses through damage by insects and cattle, 9/3d
- three rolls (150 yds) of wire netting, 3ft wide 2ins mesh at 14/- roll, to protect young trees from cattle.

On 10 October 1939 MacEwans again wrote to Mr Verrall about the one cow milking plant. It has been shown to Mr Verrall and the price was £50-0-0 delivered and erected on the farm.

Mr Gamble again wrote to the Board, on 18 October, regarding Mr Verrall’s salary, yet on 24 October 1939 he again wrote to say: “I enclose herewith the resignation of Mr Verrall who has obtained another position. He added that advertisements be placed in daily papers.

A new Farm Manager was recommended by Mr Gamble on 9 November 1939: “On the applications for the post of Farm Manager I have placed that of Mr O. Beck first, and recommend that he be informed immediately ... I have seen Mr Beck and he is the type who will fit in well with the rather peculiar position of managing the farm and also appearing as a member of the regular staff at assemblies, etc.

The next day, 10 November 1939 Mr Gamble wrote directly to the Chairman, pointing out a condensed form of the subjects and duties of the Agricultural boys: “Subjects taken in common with the rest of the School; English, History, Arithmetic, Drawing, Chemistry, other subjects; Bookkeeping (with special application to farms); Woodwork, Dairy Science.” None of this would be practical work on the farm. That was four periods per week. Boys had to help with evening milking once in two weeks. There was a list of eight practical topics.

- “1. Management of pasture.
2. Care and control of the dairy.
3. Milk testing and keeping records.
4. Growing of root crops.
5. Hay and ensilage making.
6. Orchard practice, pruning, spraying, etc.
7. Pig rearing illustrated by one breeding sow.
8. Handling of bees, in which case lectures are given by experts.”

On 13 November 1939 Mr Gamble reported on a meeting a Mr Crosher who missed out on the Farm Manager’s position and may have been miffed. “I am of the opinion that his application improves in value.” But he still went with Mr Beck.

Mr Verrall was not done with yet. On 14 November 1939 Mr Gamble wrote noting that Mr Verrall was still owed £93-12-0. Mr Verrall must have written to the Board because the Headmaster stated “ while the whole tone of his letter is unwise and hot-headed, I still recommend the adjustment to his salary ... “

Mr Gamble’s 14 November 1939 letter noted that the Citrus Test Area was of not of practical value to the School, and he hoped, that about three rows of trees had commercial and instructional value and that the rest of the land be used for general farm purposes.

The year was seen out by Mr Verrall again. On 24 November 1937 he wrote to the Board and concluded with: “I have checked this matter up with the Labour Department and see no way out other than to pay him the amount due.” It is obvious that Mr Gamble had stopped referring to Mr Verrall as a ‘master’ and had ended up referring to him as an ‘Agricultural worker’.

The correspondence for 1940 is missing, apart from the List of Stock as at 1 December 1940 which will be given in full as an example of all such reports:

“Livestock

9 Jersey Cows at £6-0-0	£54-0-0
1 Jersey Bull	£10-0-0
3 Jersey Springing Heifers @ £6-0-0	£18-0-0
1 Jersey Heifer Calf	£2-6-0
1 Light Farm Horse	£20-0-0
1 Tamworth Sow	£5-0-0
4 Store Pigs @ £2	£8-0-0
4 Hives of Crossbred Bees @ £1-0-0.	<u>£4-0-0</u>
	£121-0-0

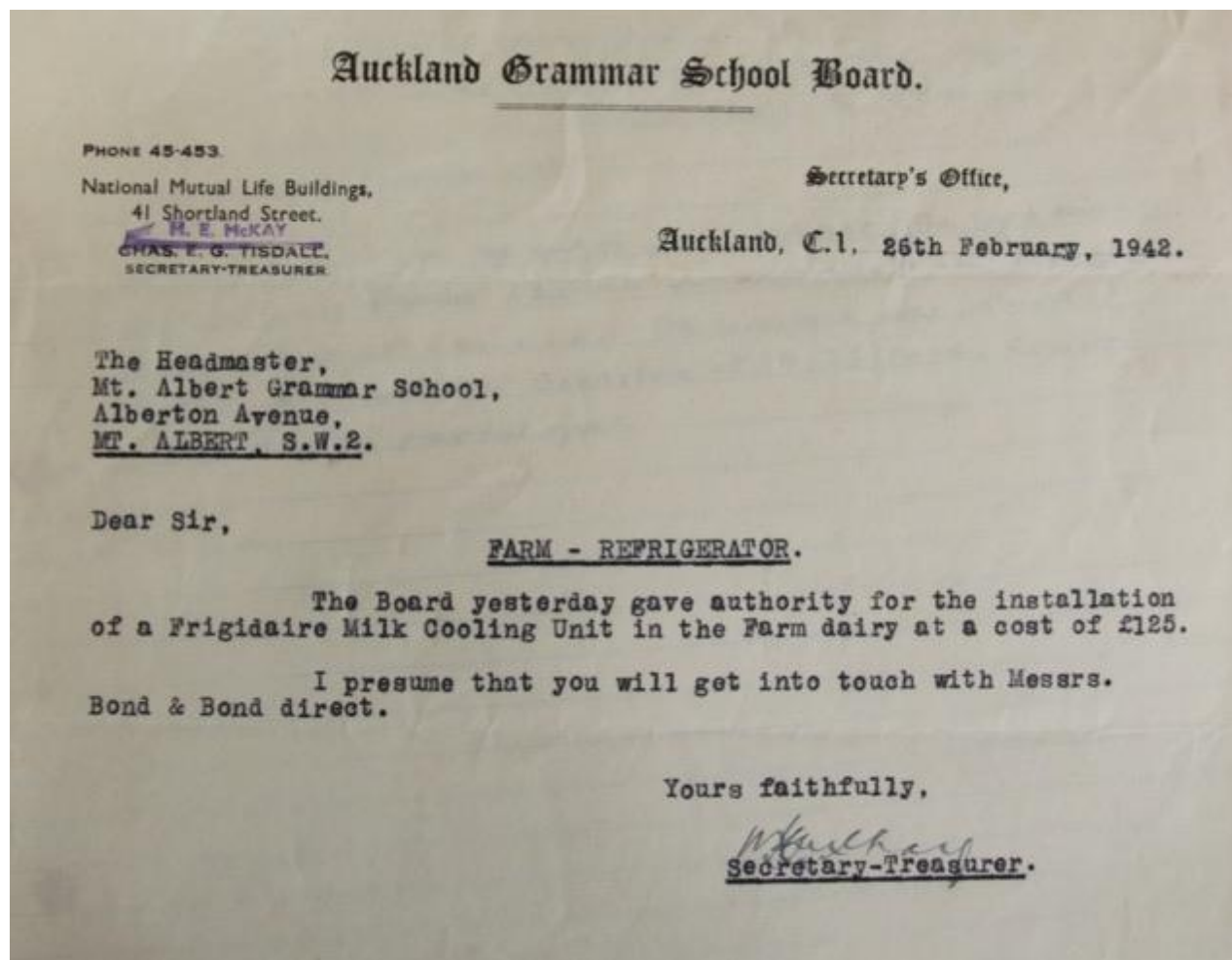
Dead Stock:

7 Cow Covers @ 5/-	£1-15-0
1 Haversack Manure Distributer	£0-10-10
1 Two Wheel Plough	£9-0-0
3 Strainer Posts	£2-5-0
1 Cart and Harness	£5-0-0
1 Planet Junior	£2-0-0
1 Horse Cultivator	£1-10-0
1 Set of Harrows	£2-10-0
1 Orchard Plough	£1-10-0
1 Mowing Machine	£20-0-0
1 Hay Rake	£16-13-0
1 Set Tine Harrows	£8-15-0
1 Wire Strainer, Fencing Pliers	£0-10-0
Various Garden Tools:	
12 Spades, 8 Hay Forks, 10 Hoes	
2 Shovels, 1 Fork, 3 Rakes, 3 Grubbers,	
3 Slashers, 1 Scythe	£7-0-0
1 Separator and Meter	£23-11-8
1 Milking Machine and Meter	£46-10-0
Dairy Utensils:	
4 Buckets, 5 Cream Cans, 1 Milk Vat	
1 Milk Cooler, 1 Strainer	<u>£5-0-0</u>
	£153-19-8

The correspondence for 1941 is likewise missing save from two reports from Mr Beck. The first was dated 13 August 1941 and it was the result of tuberculosis on the herd. The names of the cows were: Kitty, Molly, Lady, Beauty, Darky, Mary, Gipsy, Sweet Marie, Daisy, Madcap, Jersey. So, eleven cows up from nine the previous year.

The second report was the end of year stocktake. The light horse was still worth £20-0-0 but there was also a new draught horse valued at £42-0-0. The livestock was valued at £172-10-0 and the Deadstock at £173-14-0. Greater value than the previous year.

The first item for 1942 was a letter, 26 February 1942, from the Board Secretary-Treasurer to Mr Gamble. It is reproduced below as an example of such letters.



Mr Gamble's first farm letter of the year was to the Board on 17 March 1942 in which he: "should be glad for authority to spend the amount of £9-2-6 for purchase of paint etc, for the renovation of the Milking Shed and Spring Cart."

The need for a new cow to supply the School House was subject of Mr Gamble's letter to the Board on 2 April 1942.

On 18 June 1942 Mr Gamble informed the Board that: "I have been informed by Mr O. Beck, our Farm Manager that he had volunteered and been accepted for some special branch of war service controlled by the Navy. It appears that he was afraid of being drafted into an Alien Labour Corps on the lines adopted in Australia recently."

Then on 3 July 1942, there were two letters regarding Mr Beck, the first announced that: "Mr Beck received instructions to report for military duties on Monday 6 July" and "Mr O. Beck was informed this morning of the instructions received from the ManPower Committee. The result was that he asserted that he had finished work as Farm Manager. "Mr Gamble also informed the Board that he proposed to carry on with the services of two boys to a maximum daily payment of 5/-, [5 shillings].

As a respite from Farm Manager arrangements a letter written on 16 July 1942, as pastures have been grazed bare additional hay was urgent, so that two tons of hay at £13 was requested.

Then, on 6 August 1942 it was back to the vexed question of a new farm manager. Mr Gamble reported to the Board that: "Of the original applicants for the position of the Farm Manager, two applications were quite useless and one withdrew." Later applicants were either unsatisfactory or would not consider the position at the salary quoted. In the end Mr Tilley, the first married man, accepted the £286 salary as long as the cottage was free.

Mr Beck was not done with yet, for 14 August 1942 Mr Gamble had to report to the Board that: "... matters are not altogether satisfactory on the Farm." Mr Gamble added that he had asked Mr O'Sullivan to take over direct supervision.

A week later, on 21 August 1942, Mr Gamble reported that Mr O'Sullivan had an account of items owing to Mr T. Myers. The last paragraph was: "On account of the difficulties of Mr Myers I suggest that any cheque in payment be sent to the school with a prepared receipt form and then taken by the manager personally to Mr Myers."

Mr Gamble, on 21 August 1942 (again) reported on a discussion with the Chief Inspector of Secondary Schools who suggested that the Department would not agree to the increase of the Farm Manager's hours but they might agree to an increase in the hourly rate.

According to Mr Gamble on 27 October 1942 he began his letter to the board with: "since the departure of Mr Beck I have found matters on the Farm in a very unsatisfactory condition. He claimed that Mr Beck had been "misleading in information" and "neglectful of the interests of the Farm". Mr Gamble had decided to supervise Mr Tilley himself and that he would be obliged if it were possible for the Board's Farm Committee could visit, "in fairness to the new manager".

Also on 27 October 1942 Mr Gamble wrote to the Board with an enclosed stock report from Mr Tilley, we do not have that report.

The last entry for 1942 was a Declaration of Transfer of Bull from the New Zealand Jersey Cattle Breeders' Association. The Bull was Ascot Star Raider, transferred from EA Alexander and LJ Alexander to Mt Albert Grammar School Alexander St. Mt Albert Auckland S.W.2. (Alexander St was later renamed Alexis Avenue, S.W.2, South West 2, was a postcode). While the transfer was made on "14.12.42" it was not finally registered until 8 March 1943. The document has an old-fashioned air about it, as in: "The particulars shewn hereon ... "

DUPLICATE

New Zealand Jersey Cattle Breeders' Association

(Incorporated)

P.O. Box 259, Palmerston North.

Declarations on Transfer of Bull

N.B.—The Vendor is responsible for compulsory registration and payment of fees on transfer of any animal. Members 2/6, non-members 5/-. Declarations of transfer not received by the Secretary within 60 days of such transfer will have to be specially considered and if found necessary a fine for delay will be levied.

Stamps cannot be accepted in payment of Fees

This Official Form must be used.

To the Secretary,
(By Vendor)

(Date)

I Hereby Declare that on 17th December 1942.

I sold to Mr MR ALBERT GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

(Address)

of ALEXANDER ST. MT. ALBERT. AUCKLAND. S.W. 2.

(Name)

the Bull Ascot Star Raider

(TATTOO or FIREBRAND, Compulsory)

H.B. No 118068

Brand DT9 - T1

and I hereby authorise and request you to record this Transfer of Ownership in the books of the Association, and I enclose the required fee as above.

Signature of Vendor

Address

Date

I Hereby Certify that the Transfer of Ownership of the above-named Bull is recorded in the Books of the Association.

Date

- 8 MAR 1943

G. D. Smith
Secretary N.Z.J.C.B. Association

The particulars shown hereon are believed to be correct, but are in no way warranted by the Association.

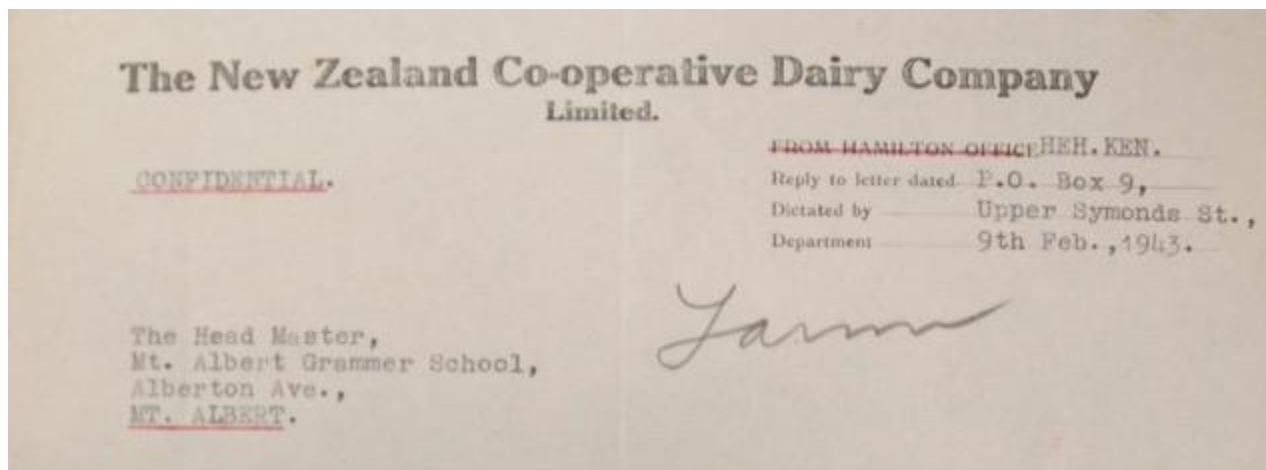
K. & M.

[P.T. over

1943 began with a Mr Gamble letter of 4 February 1943 stating that two water troughs have rusted through and it hoped to replace them with concrete ones.

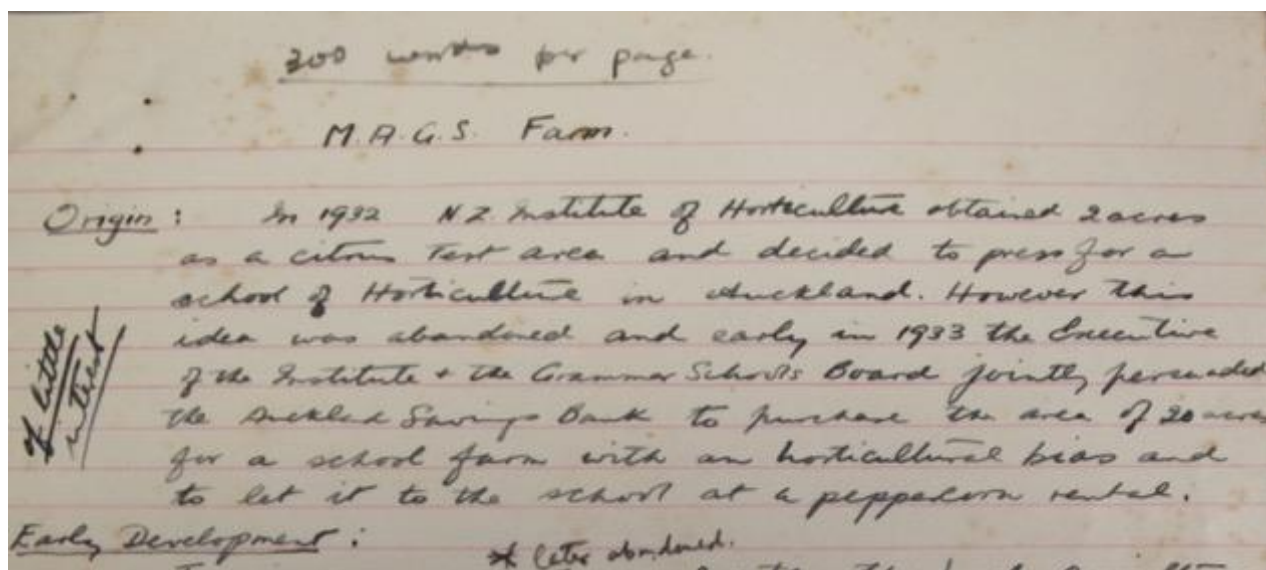
On 9 February 1943, two pigs were sold to R and W Hellaby Ltd for £6-12-5.

Also on 9 February 1943 was a confidential letter to Mr Gamble from a dairy co-op reporting that a can of cream had gone mouldy and had to be thrown out.



The Headmaster on 24 February 1943 informed the Board Secretary that: "An agent of N. Cole Ltd called on me yesterday on route to the Farm where ostensibly, he was to quote for extensions to the cottage, I did not allow him to proceed further ..." It appears that Mr Tilley had been operating on his own. Mr Gamble gain: "I have to say that he had no authority from me to take any personal action."

Also on 24 February 1943 the Headmaster received a note from the Education Department's Editor for School Publications asking him if he would write a piece on the Farm, 600-700 words. There is a draft response in Mr Gamble's own hand. It's on the famous "pink paper" (quarto paper with four pink lines to the inch. Here is the introduction, which did not make the final cut.

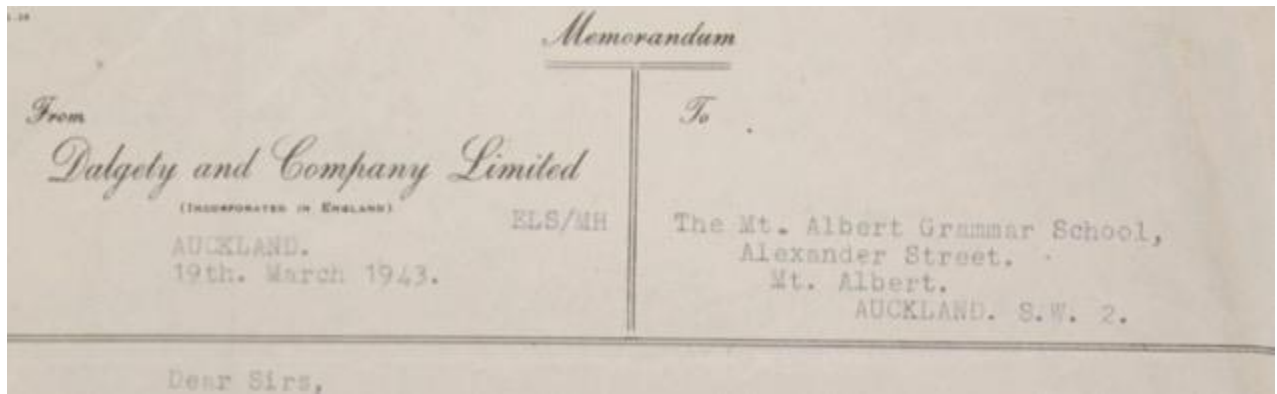


The 1 March letter from Mr Gamble was back to the question of the cottage. "I have to report now that Mr Tilley has declared that he will not sleep in a whare. Consequently it is better not to proceed in the matter of the hutment being held by N. Cole Ltd.

On 4 March 1943 the Board Secretary wrote to say the amount of £2-16-6 had been authorised for another concrete trough.

The Headmaster, on 8 March 1943 was back to the matter of N. Cole Ltd. As a result of the Chairman's interest. However Mr Gamble adroitly wrote that he thought it better for further enquiries to be made by the Board's 'proper' officer.

Next was a letter from Dalgety's for the transfer of the bull.



On 22 March 1943 the Headmaster informed the Board that it would be necessary to purchase three new cows to be made available before the winter and asked for £43-0-0 to be put aside to purchase these cows as may be necessary in order to keep the School House provided with milk.

On 23 March 1943 the Headmaster wrote to two different neighbours, one concerned "depositing of garden rubbish on the School Farm property" with a veiled threat of the Board of Governors. The second was more terse, it involved "the running of your fowls on the School Farm property ... I do not wish to complain to the Board of Governors, who would, of course, be compelled to take drastic action."

On 7 May 1943 Mr Gamble reported that Mr Tilley has accepted a revised plan for the extension to the farm cottage. Mr Gamble also recommended; a concrete path to the front and side, hinges for the 'wash house' windows, and shelves for the wash house.

The 17 June 1943 report to the Board was a Stock Report adding up to £244-5-0. A draught horse and eight tons of hay both were valued at £40-0-0.

R and W Hellaby Ltd wrote to Mr Gamble on 23 June 1943 enclosing a cheque for £1-5-10 in payment for "2 Bobby Calves".

Mr Gamble forwarded a cheque for £2-11-3 to the Board on 22 July 1943 being payment for one cow, sold to NZ Loan and Mercantile Agency Co. Ltd. [Known as Loan and Merc].

On 2 August 1943 Mr Gamble forwarded to the Board two letters from Mr Tilley (we don't have copies). They referred to accommodation at the cottage.

In response to a letter we don't have the Board, on 27 August 1943 approved the purchase of grass seed at an estimated cost of £6-2-0.

Next Mr Gamble asked the Board, on 4 October 1943 for permission for 6 spades, 3 forks, 3 rakes and 3 hoes for an all up price of £15-0-0.

Mr Gamble noted on 18 October 1943 that Mr Tilley said that he would rather not take holidays at the usual time as he had too much work to catch up on. "I recommend that he forego his holidays and be paid four weeks wages in lieu thereof." The Board replied on 4 November accepting Mr Gamble's recommendation.

On 8 December there was the usual comprehensive Livestock/Dead Stock report. Live Stock/Dead Stock report. Live Stock still included two working horses. The total value was £201-12-0. Among the Dead Stock there was still a spring cart and a refrigerator. The past and the future. The total value was £270-2-0.

There were two last-of-the-year letters from Mr Gamble to the Board both dated 10 December 1943. One was a request to buy 4 hundredweight of plain wire at 42 shillings per cwt and 2 hundredweight of barbed wire at 47 shillings per cwt. The second letter enclosed a cheque for £3-0-0 from the Agriculture Department for the destruction of a cow with TB.

On 17 December 1943 the Board wrote giving permission for the wire.

1944 began with a retyped letter from Mr Park, still the Principal of Seddon Memorial Technical College was sent to Mr Gamble probably on 7 February 1944. SMTC was getting rid of its poultry farm and had: Sheds for £771-0-0, Plant valued at £276-14-6 and Stock at £161-15-0. He was giving the School first refusal.

On 17 February 1944 the Headmaster informed the Secretary that a Mr Faithful was prepared to do the work at 1/6d per foot and Mr Gamble estimated the distance at 500 feet [that would cost £37-10-0], would be \$3,217 in 2018].

On the same day Mr Gamble wrote to the Secretary begging for four things.

1. 240 lbs (pounds) of grass seed and 10cwt (hundredweight - 112lbs) for four acres of land for about £20-0-0.
2. A draining spade and draw knife for about £3-0-0.
3. A sledge, timer will cost about 12 shillings.
4. Batteries for making a shed weatherproof as it was to store the boys farm boots and clothing. Cost about £4-0-0.

On 22 February 1944 the Secretary of the Board wrote to Mr Gamble acceding to all his requests.

Also on the 22 February 1944 Mr Gamble reported that only a few items of the SMTC Poultry Farm would be useful, including a multipurpose 24 feet x 15 feet building plus some tools, and a grindstone and a carpenter's bench.

A third letter on the same day was to a Mr R Faithfull of the Henderson Boarding House for tile drainage at 1/6d per foot for about 500 feet.

The Secretary wrote to Mr Gamble on 2 March 1944 that in the matter of the SMTC Poultry Farm equipment, the Chairman would be dealing with it.

Letters to Mr Faithful on 9 March 1944 pointing out that: "the matter is some urgent ..." and on 16 March 1944 saying that: "... as we could not wait any longer the arrangements with you in regard to tile draining have been cancelled."

On the same day Mr Gamble informed the Secretary that: "In regard to tile draining previously authorised I have to report that Mr Faithful was so long in coming that the Farm Manager completed the work, largely with the use of boy labour."

On 21 March 1944 Mr Gamble wrote to the Accountant at the Farmers' Trading Co. asking that accounts with the Farm be sent directly to him to obviate "... delays in the settlement of accounts."

A letter from Mr Tilley was enclosed when the Headmaster wrote to the Board on 28 March 1944. It explained why "Mr Tilley in his opinion" should have an increase in salary. His teaching hours had gone up from eight to sixteen has reduced his work time. Mr Gamble mentioned the difficulty in getting extra labour for two days per week. "As this is probably impossible it would seem that Mr Tilley has some claim on the consideration of the Board."

On 4 April 1944 Mr Gamble wrote to the Board Secretary concerning property owners with back fences on the Farm. "It would be helpful if we were sure of our legal position in the matter."

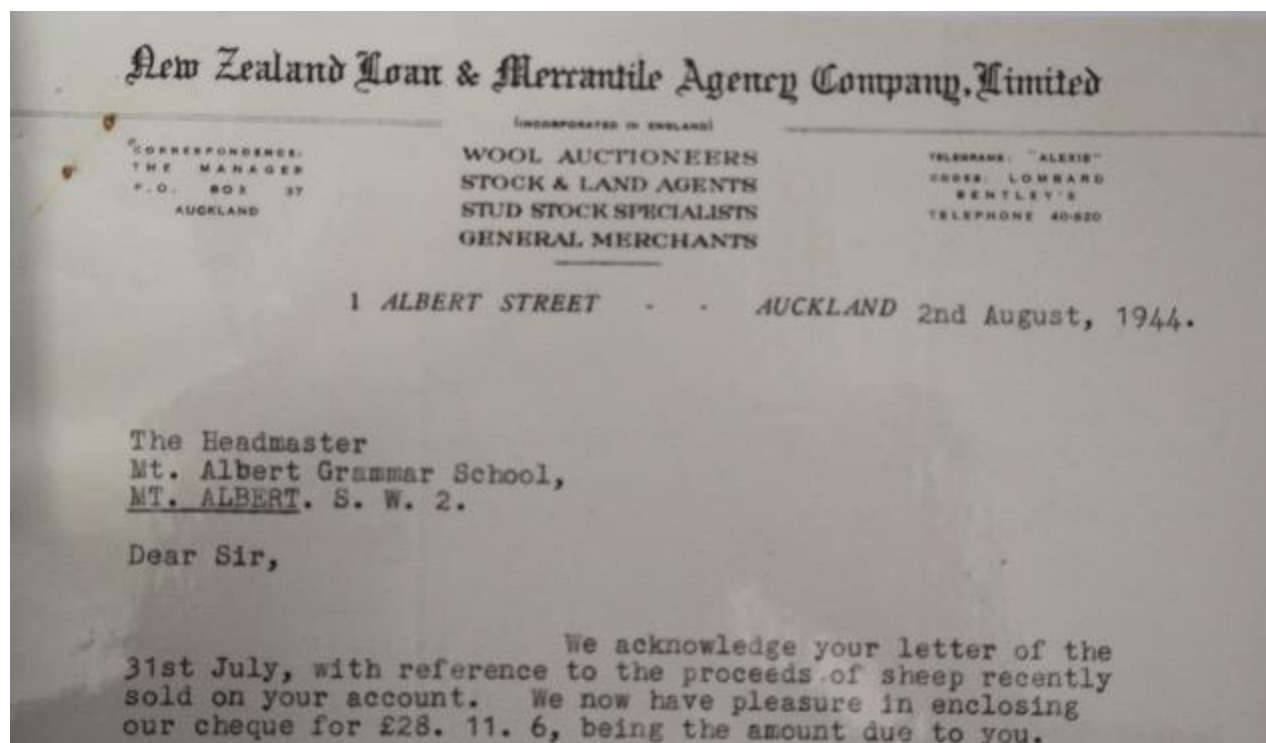
A letter from Mr Gamble to the Board Secretary on 20 April 1944 read: "The two paddocks recently sown are now showing good of grass. It is considered to consolidate such ground by means of sheep and the Farm Manager suggests purchasing 20 sheep at approximately 30 shillings each. These sheep could eventually be sold or killed for the School House. I shall be glad to have authority to purchase the sheep required."

Eight days later, Mr Gamble, on 28 April 1944 returned to the matter of "Farm – Expenses re Drain Laying" and gave the names of J.D. Bullock and A.J. Young as the boys helping the Farm Manager with the work as the dilatory Mr R Faithfull had failed to live up to his name. As was his custom Mr Gamble talked up the boys, extolling their virtues and suggesting a bonus of £2-0-0 each and also pointing out, that "during the hot weather the Manager gave refreshments to the workers to the extent of the account enclosed." We do not have this enclosure.

The Secretary replied on 4 May 1944 noting that the Board had agreed to the £2-0-0 payment to the boys and the Farm Manager's account for incidentals.

On 7 July 1944 Mr Gamble forwarded a cheque to the Board Secretary for £28-11-6d the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co. Ltd. For the sale of 23 sheep.

An explanatory letter from the farm was dated 2 August 1944. It began as follows:



It was a long letter and went on to explain that there had been a misunderstanding on their part as to the proper names of both the School and the Board. It ended with:

"Please accept our apology for any inconvenience we have occasioned you" suggests purchasing 20 sheep. These sheep could eventually be sold or killed for the School House. I shall be glad to have authority to purchase the sheep required."

On the 27 July 1944 the Headmaster had a litany of Farm requests which he begged to ask for authority for:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. Fifteen yards of scoria costing approx.. | £9-18-9 |
| 2. One sack of grass seed for top-dressing and bringing in a new area | £10-0-0 |
| 3. Fifteen posts about | £5-0-0 |
| 4. Six Strainers | £4-10-0 |
| 5. Eight Stays | £1-12-0 |
| 6. 200 Battens | 3-0-0 |

Seasonal Requirement:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Sixteen tons of Lime @ about 70% | £13-12-0 |
| 30 cwt manure at about £8 a ton | £12-0-0 |

On 3 August 1944 the Board had agreed to all the requirements.

Mr Gamble sought authority to purchase two pigs for the farm for about £2-0-0 each.

The pig purchase was approved by letter of 28 August 1944.

The next Gamble letter, 28 September 1944 concerning a cheque from R. & W. Hellaby Ltd for £3-15-9d. The Farm Manager, Mr Tilley advised that £1-9-1d should have been paid to him as the cow and calf were his personal property.

On 2 October 1944 the Headmaster sent a long letter to the Board pointing out general trends in Agricultural instruction in New Zealand and that the whole thing was being discussed in an upcoming conference in Christchurch. This long discourse ended with an incidentally matter of the Farm Manager's desire to turn the Farm into a supplier of milk to the School House and Gamble's discouragement until the Board of Governors define their policy.

On the same day Mr Gamble wrote another letter on a different topic, concerning the breaking in of the old Citrus area and this would be a very serious one for the farm horses and another horse could be hired for 15 shillings a week for eight weeks. The Farm Manager could only allow two or three hours per day for such work.

The next day, 3 October 1944 Mr Gamble was asking for authority to buy two cows at an approximate cost of £20.

Two days later, 5 October 1944 a letter from the Board Secretary, who was now also the Treasurer, approved the purchase.

On 24 October 1944 Mr Gamble reported that one of the cows purchased proved not to Mr Tilley's satisfaction and that he had sold it to the Auckland Methodist Orphanage for £12-0-0, a profit of £2-0-0. Mr Gamble sent a cheque to the Board.

On 30 October a letter to the Board concerned two matters. First a forwarded cheque for £18-0-0 from Alfred Buckland and Sons Ltd, in payment of one Jersey Bull sold to them by our Farm Manager. And second a bill for £1-0-0 from a Mr and Mrs Bradbury, farm neighbours, for erecting a back fence.

On 9 November 1944 the Headmaster begged to ask for authority to obtain a Hay Stack Cover for the Farm 14 feet x 28 feet for £7-10-0.

On 5 December 1944 the annual stock list was sent to the Board. Live Stock £191-0-0. Dead Stock £270-2-0. The cheapest dead stock item was 2 shillings for a Manure Distributor and the most expensive, a Refrigerator for £105-0-0.

The last letter of 1944 reported to the Board that Mr Tilley did not want to take his four weeks annual leave but wanted to work through and be paid for it. Also three boys whose names, ages and home addresses were given were required for haymaking as earlier wet weather had made it impossible without the boys until 16 December.

1945 began with revisiting the work on the Citrus Area and pointing out that a suitable horse, on hire for 10 shillings per week could be purchased outright for £25-0-0. Gamble also recommended the purchase of two cows was recommended at an expenditure of £25-0-0 to continue an adequate supply of milk for the School House.

In a 15 February 1945 Gamble letter sent to the Secretary he enclosed a cheque for "three pounds, seventeen shillings and ninepence (£3-17-9d) from Messrs R. & W. Hellaby Ltd., for 2 pigs purchased from our Farm."

A week later on 22 February 1945 the Secretary informed Mr Gamble that authority had been given to purchase a horse and two cows for a total of £50-0-0. As with all letters written at this time, if the signature was not fully legible you could not be sure who the writer was. From a Calendar list it can be seen that the Secretary-Treasurer was Miss M.E. McKay.

The next item we have was dated 10 April 1945 in which Mr Gamble wrote to the Secretary of the Board:

“Dear Madam,

Enclosed herewith a cheque for seven pounds ten shillings and threepence from Messrs Alfred Buckland & Sons Ltd for sale of 1 cow £5-17-6

1 calf £1-0-0

1 calf £-18-0

7-16-6

Commission 6-3 £7-10-3

A receipt has been forwarded from this office

Yours faithfully”

In a 12 April 1945 letter to the District Superintendent of the Live Stock Division, Department of Agriculture, Auckland, Gamble wrote:

“Dear Sir

It is some time since the Dairy Herd of eight cows at Mt. Albert Grammar School Farm has been given the tuberculin test and I should be glad if arrangements could be made by you for this test to be made again.”

On May Day 1945 a cheque from the Methodist Orphanage Board from £9-0-0 for a cow purchased from the Farm was sent to the Secretary of the Auckland Grammar Schools Board. “Receipt has been forwarded from this office.”

The following day Gamble made a more grandiose request of the Board. “The Farm Manager has for a long time worked under great disadvantage in regard to:-

- (A) Instructional work for Boys
- (B) Accommodation for tools
- (C) Room for Farm Repairs

I beg to suggest that as soon as possible a shed of sufficient size be built to cover the above purposes ... the old tool shed is dilapidated and useless, as it was in fact, an old neglected shed found on the property years ago ...”

Also on 2 May 1945, the Headmaster wrote

“As the result of a recent test for T.B. the bull on the Farm has been condemned and I shall be glad to have authority to purchase another at a cost of approximately £10 (10 pounds).

Now that part of the old orchard has been sown down into pasture, sheep are required to keep down the grass and consolidate the surface. Permission to purchase 30 sheep at approximately 30/- (thirty shillings) each, making a total outlay of £45 (forty-five pounds) is requested.”

The following day, 3 May 1945, Mr Gamble wrote again to the Secretary concerning an “Increase in the Dairy Herd to meet in full the milk requirements of School House.”

In the letter he had an unusual request. He asked that the Farm Manager be granted some liberty in purchasing up to 6 cows over a 12 month period, the average value of the cows not to exceed £15-0-0.

“I beg to recommend that the Farm Manager, after application to myself, be allowed to make the necessary purchases and sales.”

A letter from the Secretary-Treasurer, dated 21 May 1945 stating that authority had been granted for the purchase of the bull, the sheep and annual delegated authority of £90 for 6 cows per annum. Gamble was obviously well regarded by the Board.

On 31 May 1945 Mr Gamble wrote to the Board Secretary. It is copied below.

MT. ALBERT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

31st, May, 1945

Secretary,
Board of Governors,
AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dear Madam,

Herewith cheque for five pounds, eighteen shillings and one penny (£5.18.1) from R. & W. Hellaby Ltd., for sale of 1 Bull (condemned). Receipt has been forwarded to them from this office.

Yours faithfully,

HEADMASTER.

On 7 June 1945 the Secretary wrote to Mr Gamble, thus:

Auckland Grammar School Board
41 Shortland Street,
Auckland, C. I.
7th June 1945.

The Headmaster,
Mt. Albert Grammar School,
Alberton Avenue,
MT. ALBERT, S.W.2.

Dear Sir,

FARM.

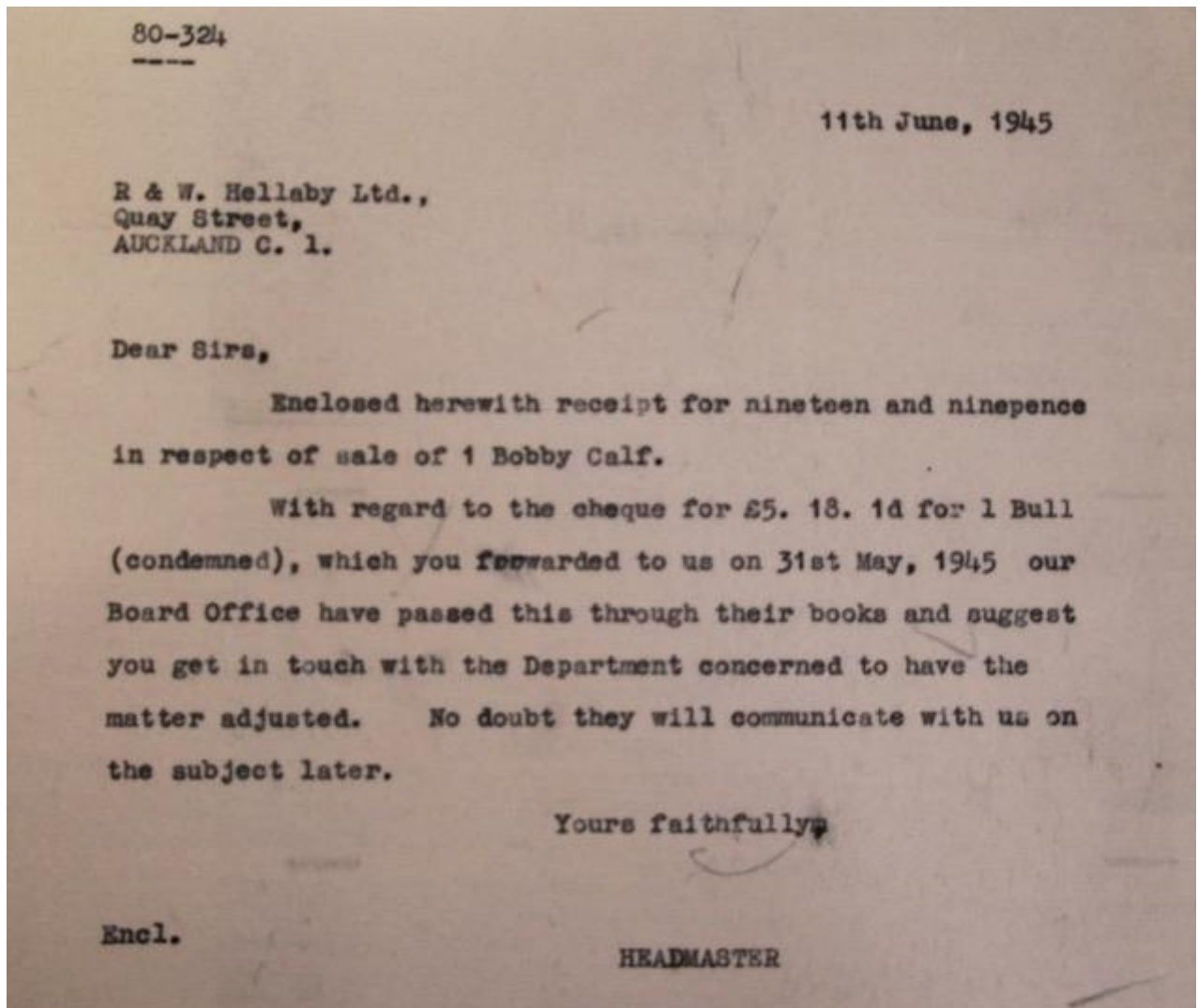
Yours of 2nd May requesting that a shed approximately 25' x 15' be built on the farm was duly considered by the Board.

In reply I have to inform you that application will be made for a military building.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
Secretary-Treasurer.

This is an original letter yet it is on flimsy, war-economy paper. The carbon copies we have from Gamble are on pink flimsy paper, often stained somewhat with the carbon paper, but faithful copies none the less. Originals sent to the Board would be in the Board Records which still exist, stored in the Auckland Central Library. A few other photographic copies follow.



MT ALBERT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

11th June, 1945

Secretary,
Board of Governors,
AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dear Madam,

Herewith cheque for 19/9d from
R. A W. Mellaby Ltd., being proceeds of sale
of one Bobby Calf. Receipt has been forwarded
from this office.

Yours faithfully,

Encl

HEADMASTER.

The two letters above, with the same date refer to the same topic.

The start and finish of an original letter was next.

The New Zealand Express Company (Auckland) Ltd.

• FORT STREET •
AUCKLAND, C. I. N. Z.
P. O. Box 15

TELEPHONE
43-850
SIX LINES

CABLE ADDRESS
"EXPRESS"
AUCKLAND

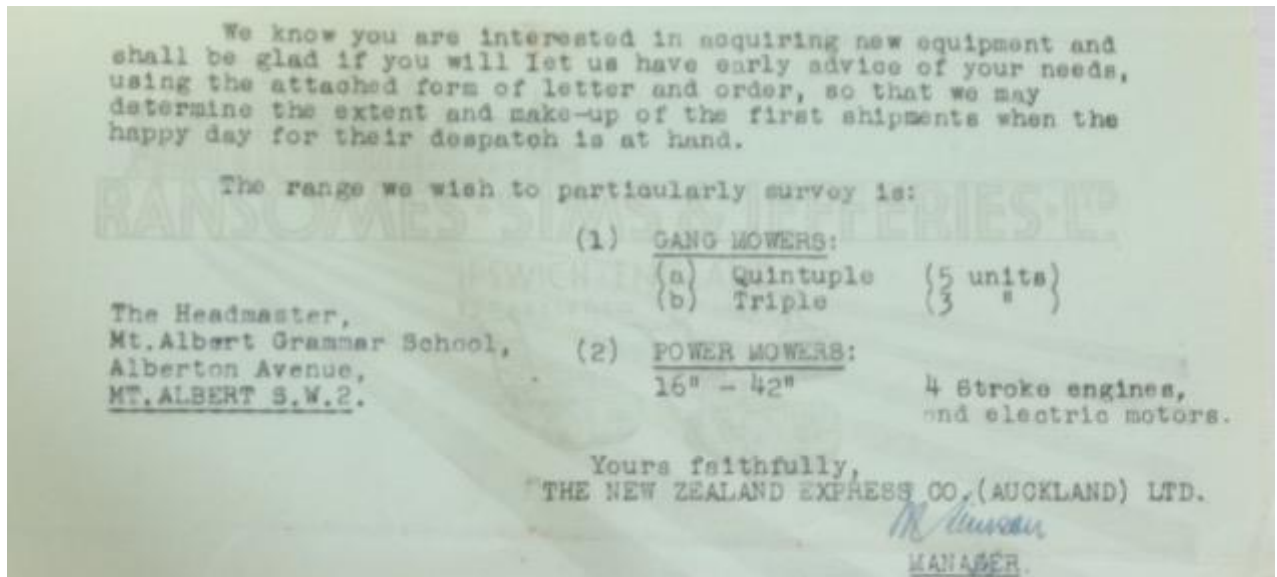
13. JUL. 1945

Dear Sir,

GRASS MOWING EQUIPMENT

It is anticipated by our English Principals, Messrs. Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies Ltd. of Ipswich, that at an early date they will be permitted to recommence manufacture for export.

It is even possible that exports may be resumed prior to supplying the Home Market, as from so many authoritative sources the Empire is advised of the paramount necessity to English commerce for re-building her export markets; whilst we in New Zealand well appreciate England's position as the outlet for our primary produce and her consequent outstanding place in our National economy.



Probably the biggest hurdle was the New Zealand Import Regulations.

On 20 July 1945 Mr Gamble asked the Board for 12 yards of scoria to resurface the farm roadway.

On 10 August 1945 Mr Gamble noted in a letter to the Secretary concerning winter, "once again revealing the old weakness in the construction of the Farm Cottage and proper protection from the wind is absolutely necessary at the front and side doors." He went on to recommend two porches and covers over the tops of windows. "I beg to recommend that Mr Rhodes inspect the cottage with a view to the improvements."

The letter was answered on 6 September 1945, Victory over Japan had been achieved, the war was over, the Board was using good quality paper again but as can be seen not good news for Mr Tilley.

AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL BOARD

TELEPHONE 42-422

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL
CORRESPONDENCE TO
THE SECRETARY

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE BUILDINGS,
41 SHORTLAND STREET,
AUCKLAND, C 1

6th September 1945.

The Headmaster,
Mt. Albert Grammar School,
Alberton Avenue,
MT. ALBERT, S.W.2.

Dear Sir,

FARM MANAGER'S COTTAGE.

On the instructions of the Chairman, your letter of August 10th was referred to Mr. Rhodes for a report.

The only suggestion that Mr. Rhodes could make was that a sun porch be added to the front of the house, but, on account of the high cost of such an addition, the matter was deferred.

Yours faithfully,


Secretary-Treasurer.

Anyway, it was springtime.

Next up was a 17 September 1945 letter from Mr Gamble to the Secretary with a cheque from Alfred Bucklands for £11-0-9 for the sale of two cows by the canny Farm Manager, who lived in the dilapidated cottage.

We have a mysterious correspondence by Mr Gamble on 17 September 1945 to Messrs Mason's Nurseries, Alexander Street, Te Awamutu. It obviously involves plants and an invoice.

On 24 September 1945 Gamble had another go at the Board, in his usual impeccable good mannered way, over the porch over the door of the cottage. As can be seen the 4 October 1945 reply was better news this time.

AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL BOARD

TELEPHONE 45-453

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL
CORRESPONDENCE TO
THE SECRETARY

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE BUILDINGS,
41 SHORTLAND STREET,
AUCKLAND, C 1

4th October 1945.

The Headmaster,
Mt. Albert Grammar School,
Alberton Avenue,
MT. ALBERT, S.W.2.

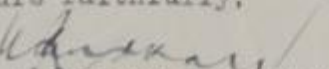
Dear Sir,

FARM COTTAGE.

Your letter of the 24th ultimo was duly placed before the Board.

On the recommendation of Mr. Rhodes it was decided that an entrance porch be erected. Mr. Rhodes has the matter in hand.

Yours faithfully,


Secretary-Treasurer.

On 5 December 1945 Mr Gamble, from Mr Tilley submitted the annual Farm Stock Report; live stock valued at £188-0-0 and dead stock valued at £271-12-0. The manure spreader was still two shillings and the refrigerator was still valued at £105-0-0.

Mr Gamble's letter to the Secretary on 6 November was an important one. Not only did it ask for a new spring cart and pointing out the state of the old one. But asked that consideration be given to the purchase of a Farm Truck. He makes a compelling case. The difficulty of catching a horse in winter and the adaptability and multifunctionality of a truck.

*Card and
Truck deferred
17/11/45*

6th November, 1945

Secretary,
Board of Governors,
AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

Dear Madam,

FARM

Spring Cart. This is in a bad condition. Repair work has been done at intervals, but the springs and hubs are now showing signs of collapse and replacement is an urgent matter. I beg to ask for approval for the spending of a sum up to £25. (twenty-five pounds) for the purchase of a new cart.

I would point out that the present cart has been in use from the first year of the farm, and when purchased then was a second hand article. It has been used constantly for general farm work as well as for the milk delivery to School House.

Farm Truck. I feel that consideration should now be given to the purchase of a light farm truck. This would enable the Farm Manager to attend personally to transport that is normally a part of farm routine, for example, transport of calves, pigs, sheep etc., to and from market and of general farm materials. In addition, delivery of milk to School House would be more reliable. This milk must reach School House before 7.a.m. and the Farm Manager states that it is not an easy matter catching his horse in the dark on winter mornings, and late delivery which sometimes occurs, may be attributed to this difficulty.

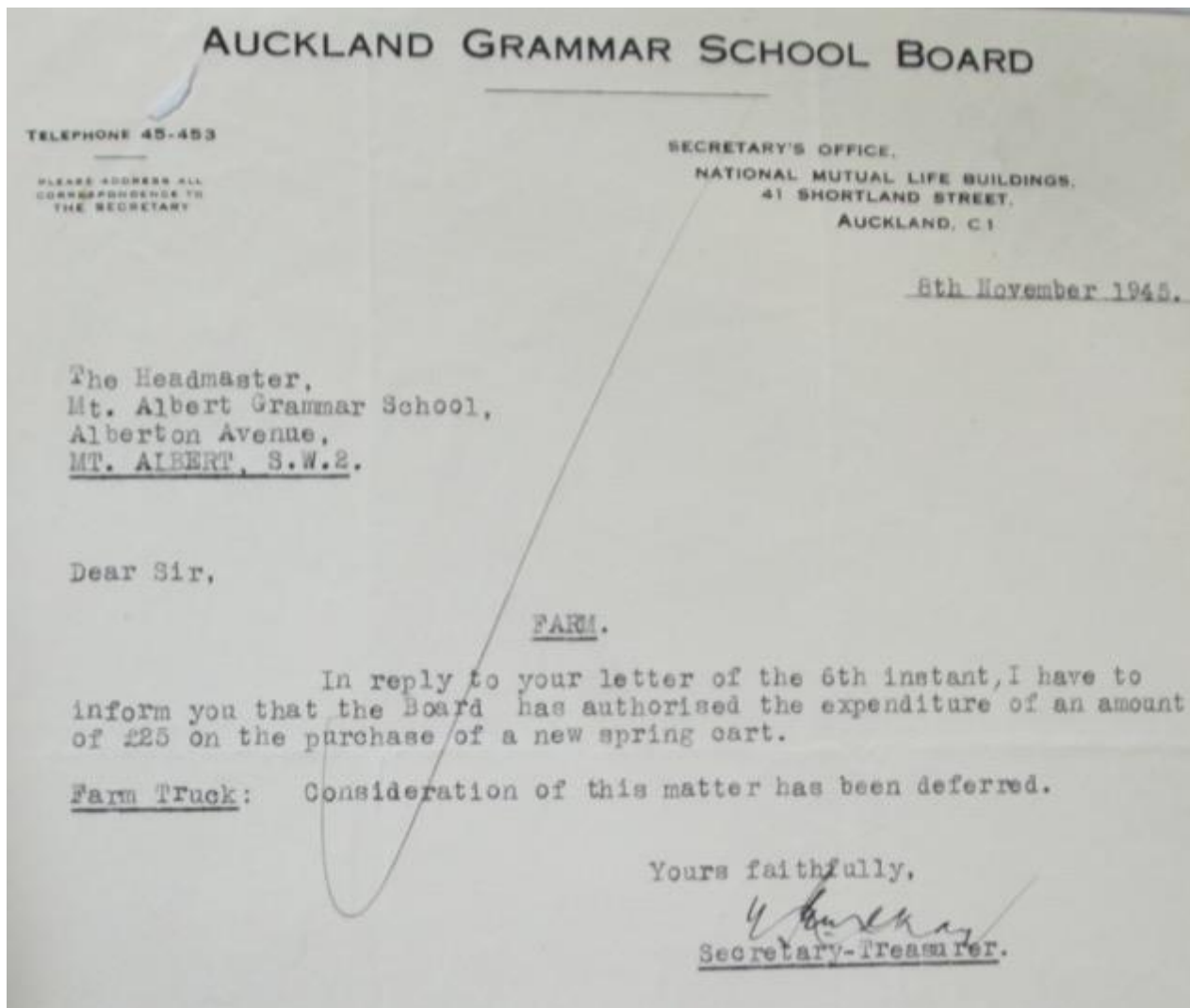
I would suggest that at this date it would be better to explore the possibility of obtaining a good second hand truck at a reasonable figure otherwise the matter may have to be delayed until times are more normal.

N.B. In the event of the truck being obtained the spring cart could be sold at a very small loss.

Yours faithfully,

HEADMASTER.

The reply of 8 November 1945 was unsurprising.



Two letters from Gamble both dated 13 December 1945, one asking for a replacement bull for ten pounds and the other concerning Mr Tilley's desire not to take holidays but would like salary instead, and also giving the names of two boys used as cleaners. The last reply of the year, 19 December 1945, agreed to the purchase of a new bull and to Mr Tilley to be paid over the holidays.

On 26 February 1946 the year began with Mr Gamble reporting that he had gone over the Farm, in the holiday, with the Manager with particular interest in the old Citrus orchard. It was estimated that 864 drainage pipes (ceramic laid end to end) would be necessary and it would need a man for a month.

The same day he wrote another letter asking for £20-0-0 for sowing five acres of the old Citrus block.

A letter from the Secretary on 7 March 1946 authorised both the tile work and the grass seed and if Mr Gamble wanted Mr Rhodes, the Board's Works Manager, then Mr Gamble should arrange it with him, to pay award wages.

On 28 March 1946 Mr Gamble asked, not for the first time, for permission to purchase 30 sheep at around 30 shillings to firm the ground. They could later be sold. Also he wanted £2-0-0 worth of grass seed for the pig paddock and two bushels of oats for sowing down green feed, in early spring, cost about £1-0-0.

Permission was granted for all the above on 4 April 1946.

On 8 May 1946 Mr Gamble asked for coat hooks for the new shed. (We have no record of permission for the shed, perhaps Mr Rhodes did something from 'the military.') The hooks (100) were needed so that each boy could hang his working clothes on an individual hook. A cover was asked for over the open side of the implement shed. And, third, roof gutters were needed for the new shed.

Next, on 30 May 1946 Mr Gamble sent a cheque for £5-17-3d for the sale of a heifer to Alfred Bucklands. He asked that a receipt be forwarded as "the Farm Books are at present held in your office." That was a change.

Then there was a Dear Sir or Madam note from the Director of the Horticulture Division advising "the registration of your apiary has been cancelled ...". So the formal end of the bees.

Another request from Mr Gamble on 11 June 1946 was for six new cow covers to replace the beyond repair old ones, £1-0-0 each plus a horse cover at about £1-10-1.

Also on 11 June 1946 Mr Gamble sent a cheque for £1-12-6d from McKendrick Bros, "being payment for sacks sold to them by the Farm Manager. Gamble wrote a receipt for that amount.

On 15 June 1946, permission was sought for Lawsoniana trees and six fruit trees. A pencil note on the carbon copy said "granted by phone". That's a first, as far as is recorded. Two days later, 17 June 1946 a rough sketch of land that could be taken for the Farm. Approximately 7 and 5/6 acres "and I think an opening bid of £80-0-0 an acre should be advised."

On 4 July 1946 the matter of Mr Beck's leaving was revisited. Mr Gamble sent a summary to the Board.

1. The Board sent forward an appeal against his appointment to the Navy.
2. The Manpower Committee asked me to instruct Mr Beck to stay at his post until his case could be considered.
3. Mr Beck disregarded those instructions and placed his resignation on my desk and disappeared.
4. The Chairman of the Board, after a talk with me, decided that the Appeal should be withdrawn.

There had been a long running dispute with a Mrs Goddard, a neighbour, over a boundary fence 'almost down' by farm cattle and sheep had come in and "ate all the young vegetables". There was other correspondence in the same vein. A settlement was agreed also on July 4 1946.

On 15 July 1946 Mr Gamble noted that the farm road was in bad repair and 20 yards of scoria would be needed "to put this in order". Also owing to a late summer drought feed was short for the winter and two tons of hay would be required for approximately £20-0-0. A reply on 18 July approved both purchases.

Another request from Mr Gamble noted that the Farm Manager required three tons of Manure to top-dress the whole farm, cost would be about £4-10-0 per ton, £15-10-0 in all.

A letter of permission came on 26 July 1946 and two days later written permission came for the cow covers, plus "one pair Gum Boots £1-15-0.

There was a gap until 8 October 1946 and that was a cheque from Alfred Buckland and Sons for £3-16-9d for the sale of a cow.

Then to 25 November 1946 there was reference to an account incurred by Mr Tilley without any authority. First there was an odd door that Mr Tilley was to fix himself, "The back porch has never been referred to me at any time. However, it must be admitted that the work done is of great benefit and I recommend that the account be passed. "Mr Tilley seems to have discovered that forgiveness is easier than permission.

On the same day Mr Gamble wrote another letter concerning the hire of a heavy draft horse for use in cutting the hay, approximately five pounds (£5). "I also ask for permission to purchase a new stack cover to replace the present one which is beyond repair, the cost would be about eight pounds (£5). On 2 December there was the annual stock take, live stock worth £164-0-0, and dead stock £285-8-0.

On 16 December 1946 Mr Gamble wrote his last two Farm letters to the Secretary. By that day Mr Gamble would have given his final Annual Report, presided over his last Prizegiving, said farewell to the pupils and the “staff of masters” and there would have been just him and his secretary, Mrs Spain to type his last letters. They were quotidian. One about the Farm Manager not having had enough time to cut the hay before School closed and would need extra labour and the second letter read “The present bull is unsatisfactory and will have to be sold. The Farm Manager had to procure another bull for the coming season immediately.”

With that Frank William Gamble, the man whose energy, drive and vision, cajoled the Auckland Grammar School Board to establish the Farm in the first place, closed up his office and walked down the front steps for the last time as Headmaster.

The baton passed to William Caradus. That is a story for another time.

Brian Murphy