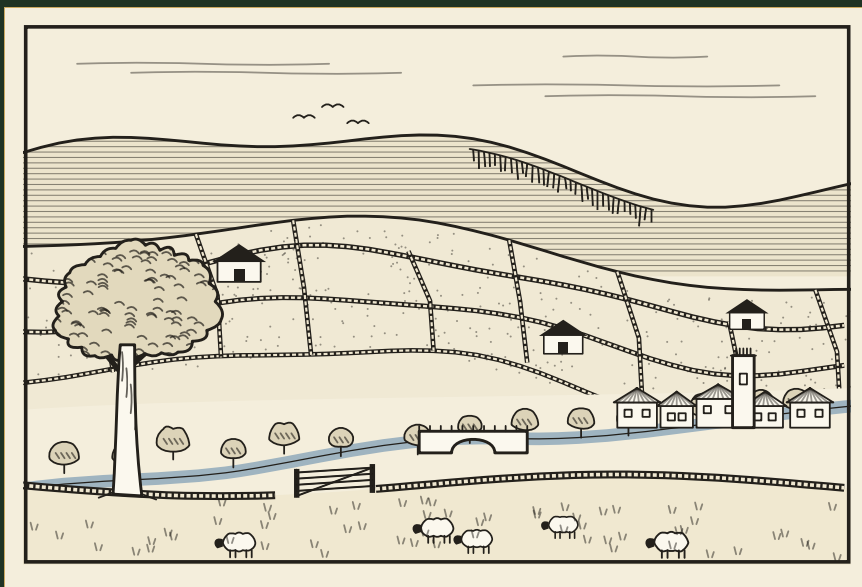


A VETERINARY ADVENTURE

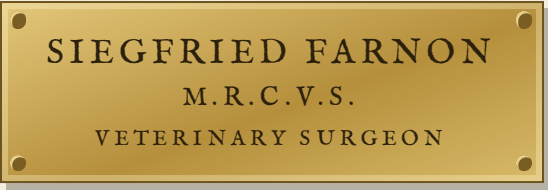
Every Flock *in the Dale*

a week in the Dales, October 1937



*Being an account of certain sheep, a Pekingese,
a heifer, a dealer, and the autumn sale at Darrowby*

A Z3NG TEXT ADVENTURE · 400 POINTS



The plate on the door of Skeldale House, which wants polishing, and which Tristan has been told to polish.

You are the assistant in a country practice in the Yorkshire Dales, three months into a trial nobody has explained to you. On Monday morning the daybook holds two calls: a Pekingese that may have swallowed an earring, and a farmer whose ewes are rubbing. Your employer says it's keds. By Saturday afternoon, when the great autumn sheep sale fills Darrowby mart with every flock in the dale, you had better know what it is. This book tells you how to play, what a vet carried in his bag in 1937, what the law then said about mites in sheep, and where everything is. There are hints at the back, printed upside down so that you cannot read them by accident.



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How to Play

This is a text adventure. You type what you want to do in plain English, and the dale answers. There is nothing to click: only a practice, a week, a great many sheep, and whatever you can make of them.

> X EWES

Kettlewell's ewes. Most of his own flock look well enough, but a bunch of twenty in the corner, with a blue smit mark on the near shoulder that isn't his, are in a poor way...

> ASK KETTLEWELL ABOUT EWES

"Them twenty wi' t'blue smit?" says Kettlewell. "Bought 'em at Darrowby mart, a fortnight back. Draft ewes, cheap. Off a dealer. I didn't ask his name. I should've."

<u>N</u> <u>S</u> <u>E</u> <u>W</u> <u>NE</u> ... <u>UP</u> <u>IN</u>	Go that way. <u>GO TO THE MART</u> for places you know.
<u>LOOK</u> · <u>EXAMINE</u> (<u>X</u>)	Examine every animal. Symptoms are clues.
<u>TAKE</u> · <u>READ</u> · <u>OPEN</u> · <u>I</u>	Read the daybook each morning. It fills up.
<u>TALK TO</u> · <u>ASK X ABOUT Y</u>	Dalesmen say little, and less to strangers.
<u>SHOW X TO Y</u> · <u>TELL X ABOUT Y</u>	Put what you know in front of the right person.
<u>SCRATCH</u> · <u>SCRAPE</u> · <u>TREAT</u> · <u>LANCE</u>	Veterinary verbs. Your bag goes everywhere.
<u>WAIT</u> · <u>WAIT UNTIL EVENING</u> · <u>SLEEP</u>	Morning, afternoon, evening, night. Sleep in your own room.
<u>SAVE</u> · <u>RESTORE</u> · <u>UNDO</u> · <u>HINT</u> · <u>SCORE</u>	<u>UNDO</u> is your friend. <u>HINT</u> , if you must.

The sidebar draws the map as you go and keeps a notepad, and the clock shows the day and the time. There are **400 points**, for diagnoses made, animals put right, the law kept, and people treated as they deserve.

SHORT FORMS, FOR THE BUSY PRACTITIONER

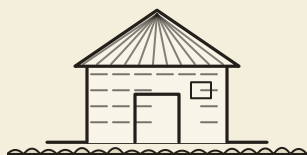
X examine L look
Z wait G again

I what you are carrying
UNDO take back a move

The parser understands a good deal of plain English, and forgives a great deal more. If it doesn't understand you, say it another way, more simply.

Advice to a Young Assistant

- i.* READ THE DAYBOOK. Mrs Hall writes the calls down every morning. What is in it on Wednesday was not there on Monday.
- ii.* LOOK BEFORE YOU LISTEN. A farmer will tell you what he thinks is wrong. The animal will tell you what is. Examine it.
- iii.* BE CERTAIN. A diagnosis you cannot prove is an opinion, and Dales farmers have plenty of those already.
- iv.* KNOW THE LAW. Some diseases are the vet's business; some are the Ministry's as well. If it is the Ministry's, the Ministry must be told.
- v.* FOLLOW THE SHEEP. Sheep come from somewhere and go somewhere. Markets, dealers, fell walls with gaps in them.
- vi.* EARN TRUST. A proud man will not tell you anything until you have done something for him. Do it.
- vii.* MIND THE CLOCK. People keep hours, trains keep timetables, and the sale is at two on Saturday.
- viii.* SEE EVERY PATIENT. A Pekingese in a drawing room is a patient. So is a heifer in a byre at night.



A field barn, or laithe, above the dale. There are hundreds of them, one to every few fields, and each holds hay, and sometimes other things.

The Daybook

The daybook lies by the telephone in the hall at Skeldale House. READ DAYBOOK each morning: new calls come in as the week goes on, and some of them will matter a great deal. Most people keep to their own hours: the auctioneer is at the mart by day, the constable at his station, farmers on their farms, and everybody who can manage it at the Drovers' of an evening.

Skeldale House. October, 1937.

MONDAY

Kettlewell, High Laithes: ewes rubbing, off their food.

(Mr F. says keds. Mr F. says YOU go.)

Mrs Pumphrey: Tricki Woo has swallowed an earring.

URGENT (Mrs P. says).

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

Mr Herriot: telephone at the Drovers' if you're wanted after six. — Mrs H.

The Week

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
morning	morning	morning	morning	morning	morning
afternoon	afternoon	afternoon	afternoon	afternoon	afternoon
evening	evening	evening	evening	evening	evening
night	night	night	night	night	night

Each part of the day lasts a while, then the clock moves on. WAIT UNTIL a part of the day to hurry it; SLEEP in your own room to go on to the next morning. The autumn sale is at two o'clock on Saturday afternoon.

Patients of the Week

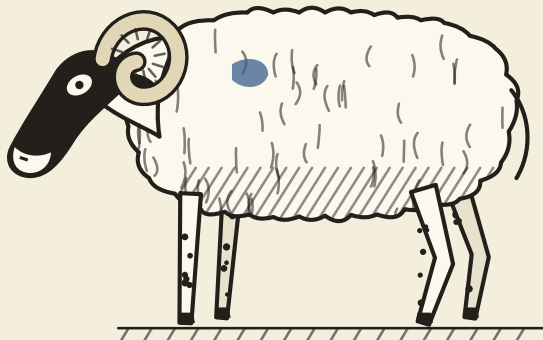
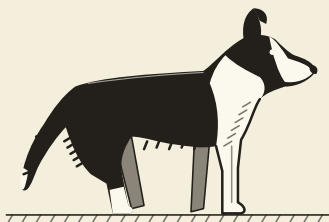


FIG. 1. A SWALEDAL EWE, WITH A DEALER'S SMIT ON THE SHOULDER

THE SWALEDAL EWE. The hill sheep of the northern Pennines: black face, white nose and eyes, curled horns, and a coarse fleece that sheds the rain. Hefted to her own patch of fell, she knows her ground better than the farmer does. A *draft ewe* is an old one sold off the hill to a lowland farm for a last few seasons, and a *smit* is the owner's paint mark on her fleece. Learn to read a smit.



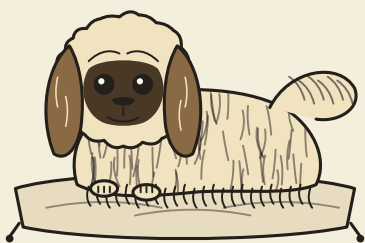
THE WORKING COLLIE

Without a dog a hill farmer cannot gather his fell, and without his dog he is not himself. A lame collie is not a small matter. Look at the feet: bracken and thorns get into the pads, and a wound that heals over its dirt will fester.

A ewe that is rubbing is scratching herself on walls, gateposts and anything else she can find. Wool comes away in tufts, and she frets and loses flesh. Many things make a ewe rub. Not all of them are serious. One of them is very serious indeed.



*a crook, for
catching a ewe by
the neck*



THE PEKINGESE

An ancient breed of the Chinese court, and the pampered companion of many an English drawing room. Prone to overfeeding, to disdain, and to swallowing things. A small dog that has swallowed a small object can often be made to return it without surgery, if you know the old country remedy, and it is in your bag.

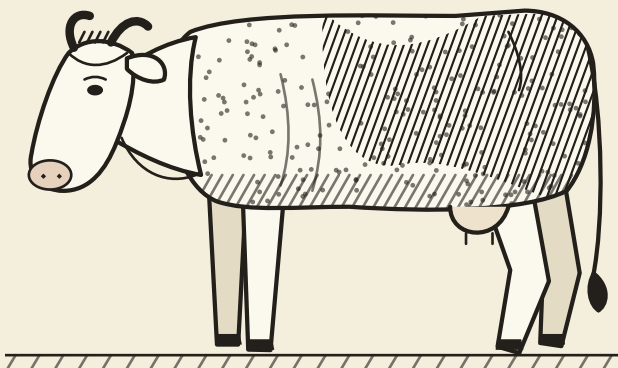


FIG. 2. A ROAN SHORTHORN HEIFER, NEAR HER TIME

THE SHORTHORN HEIFER. The Dales dairy cow, red, white or roan. A heifer is a young cow with her first calf, and first calvings go wrong more often than any others. A calf should come front feet first with its nose lying on them. If you find a nose and only one foot, the other leg is back, and pulling will do nothing but harm. It must be put right inside the cow first, and there is an order to it.

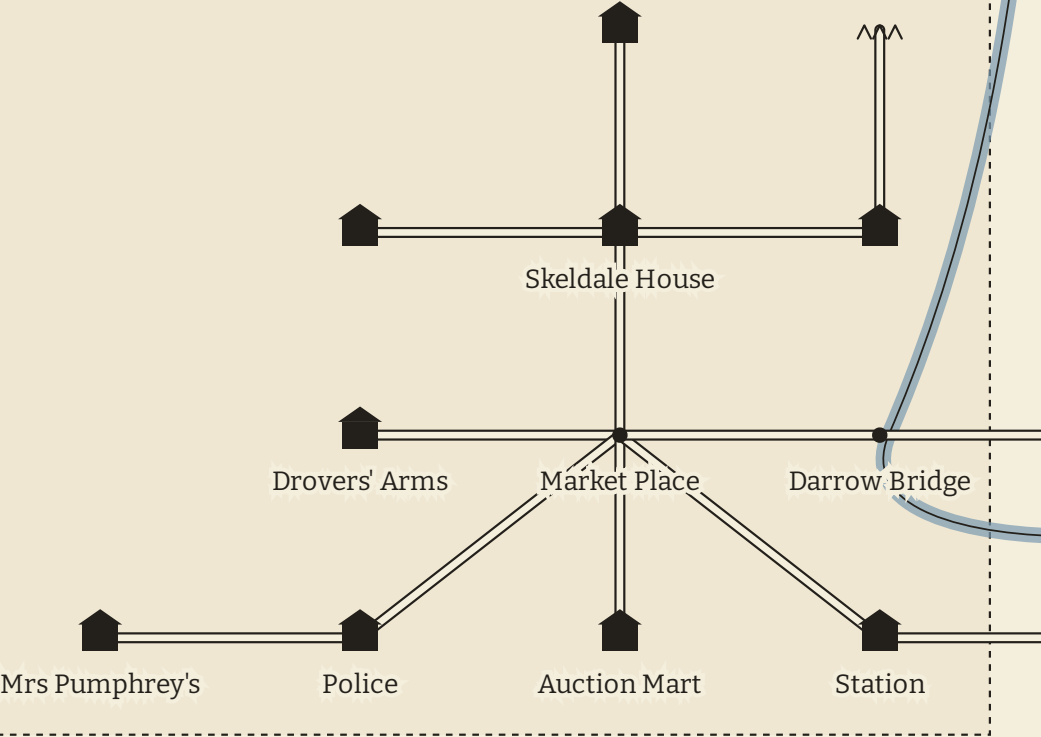


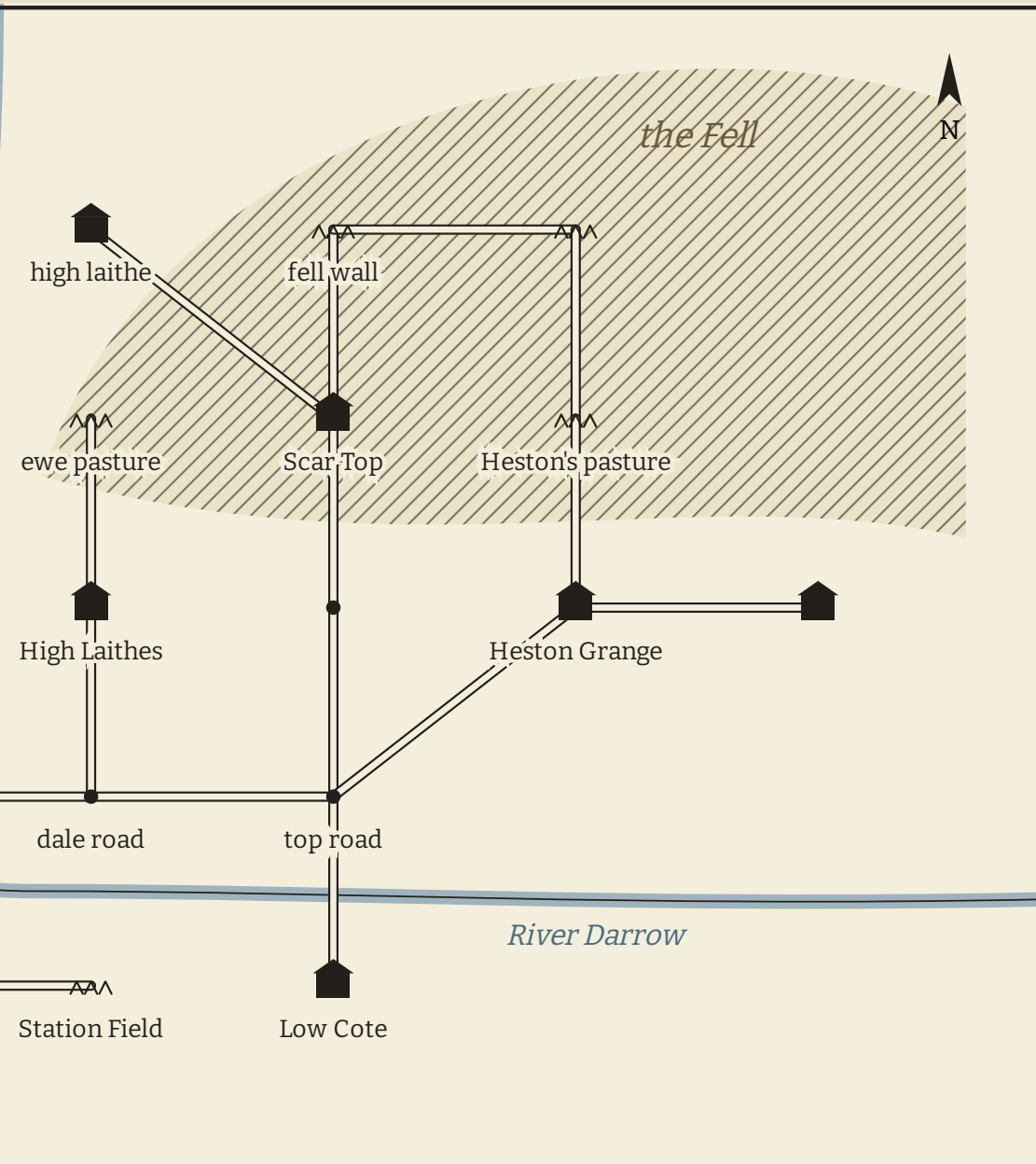
A PEARL EARRING. Not a patient. Of interest to a patient, however, and to his owner.

THE DALE ABOVE DARROWBY

roads, farms and the fell · not to scale

DARROWBY





People of Darrowby and the Dale

AT SKELDALE HOUSE

SIEGFRIED FARNON, M.R.C.V.S.. Your employer. Brilliant, generous, and inconsistent. Says it's keds.

TRISTAN FARNON. His younger brother, a student in no hurry to stop being one. Usually at the Drovers'.

MRS HALL. Housekeeper. Keeps the daybook, the house, and her opinions.

IN THE TOWN

PC BLENKIRON. The police station. Diseases of Animals Acts are his concern, whether he likes it or not.

MR CLAPHAM. Auctioneer at the mart. Keeps the sale book, and keeps it private.

ALBERT. Porter, and most of the rest of Darrowby station.

HARRY TWEDDLE. A sheep dealer, of the loud sort.

MRS PUMPHREY. A wealthy widow, west of the police station, and devoted to Tricki Woo.

MR RENNIE. The Ministry of Agriculture's veterinary inspector. Not here yet.

UP THE DALE

WALTER KETTLEWELL. High Laithes. Careful, slow, and worried about his ewes.

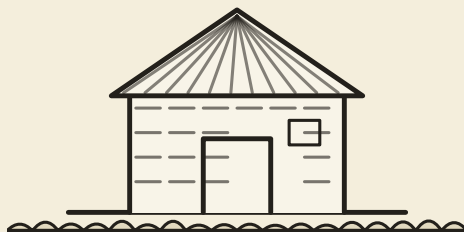
JOHN METCALFE. Scar Top, at the head of the dale. Seventy, poor, and prouder than both.

MR ALDERSON. Heston Grange. A good farmer with a good flock and everything to lose.

HELEN ALDERSON. His daughter. Knows the fell, and every sheep on it.

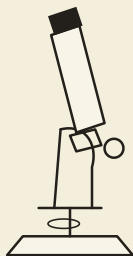
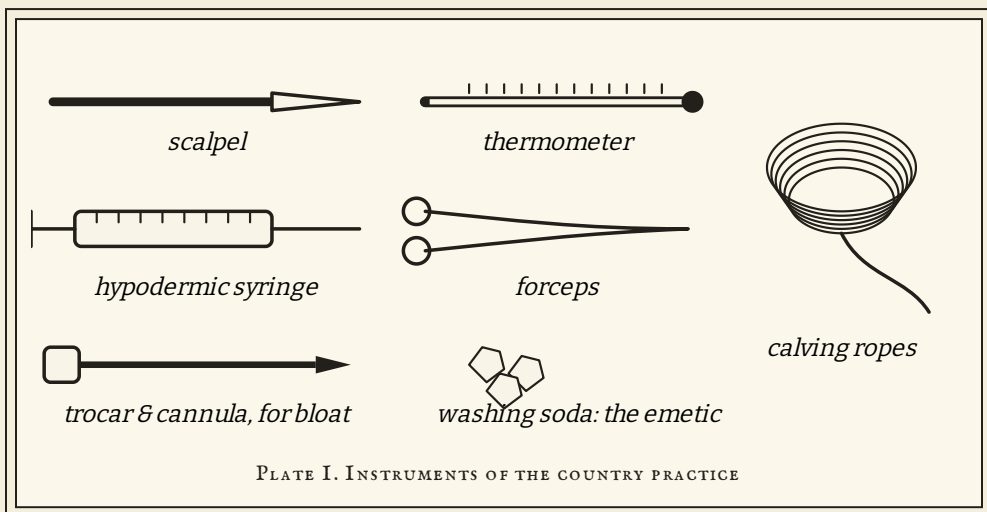
BERT SOWERBY. Low Cote. Young, anxious, and has one good heifer.

Most people are to be found where they work by day, and at home or the Drovers' by night. Market day changes everything.



The Contents of the Bag

In 1937 there were no antibiotics. A country vet worked with his hands, his eyes, a few drugs whose uses were a century old, and a bag of instruments that went with him everywhere, in the back of a car that often did not.



THE MICROSCOPE

Kept in the dispensary at Skeldale, among the bottles. A good brass instrument will show you an insect too small to see with the naked eye, if you can find it, and if it will move. Some things only move when they are warm. The textbook on the dispensary shelf is older than you are, and knows more.

Also in the bag

TINCTURE OF IODINE, for cuts, navels and anything else.

CARBOLIC SOAP, and a towel that has seen better days.

LANCET, for an abscess, which will not heal until it is opened.

COTTON WOOL AND BANDAGES, in a tin.

CHLORAL HYDRATE, for a horse in pain, and a bottle of something for the farmer.

GLASS SLIDES, in a box, and a blunt scalpel for scrapings.

WASHING SODA, a crystal or two. Any farmer's wife has some. Any vet should.

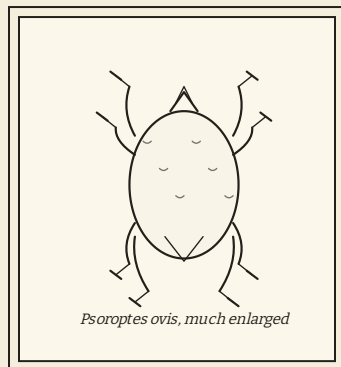
A TORCH, for byres after dark.

Psoroptic Mange of Sheep

The sheep mite, *Psoroptes*, is just visible to the naked eye as a moving speck. It lives on the skin and feeds there, and the skin weeps and forms a yellow crust. The crust spreads outward; the mites move with it, living at the moist, active edge, while the dry centre is left to the dead.

The sheep itch intolerably. They rub, bite at their fleeces, and lose wool, flesh and condition, and in bad cases die. When the affected part is scratched, the sheep will often stretch out its neck and nibble with its lips, an action which the shepherd knows well.

The disease spreads by contact between sheep, and by their wool left on walls, posts and in pens, and it is carried from farm to farm by the movement of infested sheep, most of all through markets and dealers.



Diagnosis

Scrape the skin at the margin of an active lesion with a blunt scalpel until the serum oozes, and examine the scrapings under a low power. The mites are sluggish when cold, and may be overlooked; gentle warming of the slide will set them moving. Material from the centre of an old crust will usually show nothing.



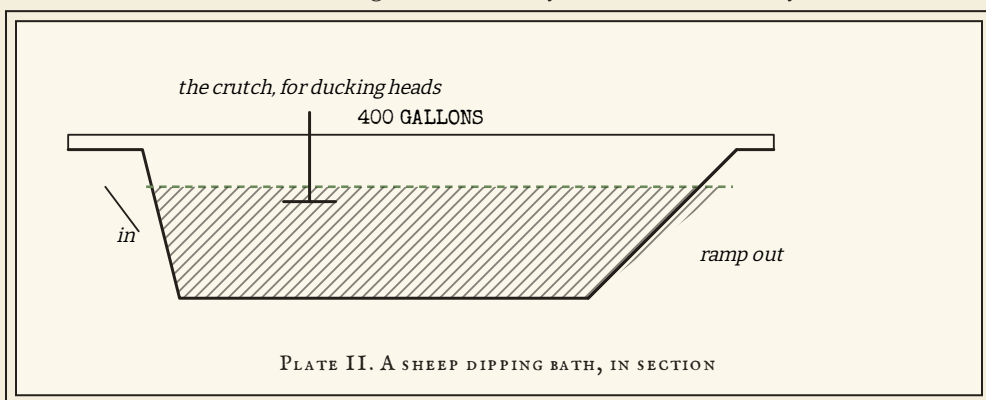
sheep ked

NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH the sheep ked, *Melophagus*, a wingless fly the size of a small tick, easily seen in the fleece, which causes some rubbing but no crusts. Keds are common, and unimportant. The mite is neither.

The Mite, the Law, and the Dipping Bath

The sheep mite, known to the law by an uglier name, has been **notifiable** in Great Britain since 1869. In the 1930s the law was the **Sheep Scab Order of 1928**, made under the Diseases of Animals Acts. Anyone who suspected it in sheep had to report it, without delay, to the police, who told the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry sent its own veterinary inspector. Where the disease was found, the place was declared infected, the sheep were detained, and none could be moved to market or anywhere else without a licence until they had been dipped, twice, under supervision, in an approved dip.

Approved dips then were mostly **lime and sulphur** or arsenical preparations, mixed to strength in a stone or concrete bath sunk into the ground. The sheep were pushed in one at a time, held under for a full minute, their heads ducked with a crutch, and let out up a ramp to drain. A second dipping, ten days to a fortnight later, killed the mites hatched in between. It was hard, wet, stinking work, and every farmer in the country knew it.



The system worked. The last case in Great Britain was found in February 1952, on a farm in Herefordshire, and the country was declared free of it. It came back in 1973, and it is still with us.

What is invented: Darrowby and its dale, every farm and every flock, and this outbreak. Where the practice and its people are borrowed, they are borrowed with affection.

WETHERBY & SONS, LEEDS

Lime & Sulphur Sheep Dip

Approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for the Sheep Scab Order

ONE GALLON TO TWENTY-FIVE OF WATER. STIR WELL. POISON.

Consulting the Senior Partner

Type HINT in the game, or find your question here and **turn the book upside down**. Each answer goes from a nudge ① to a shove ③. Siegfried, consulted, will tell you he said so all along, whatever he said.

- A. *I don't know where to start.*

B. *The microscope shows me nothing.*

C. *I know what it is. Now what?*

D. *Where did the ewes come from?*

E. *The old man at Scar Top won't talk.*

F. *Something's loose on the fell.*

G. *How do I dip?*

H. *And Tricki Woo?*

ANSWERS (ONE STEP AT A TIME)

A.
① Read the daybook in the hall.
② Kertlewell is at High Lathes: east over the bridge, then north.
③ EXAMINE the EWES in his pasture, then SCRATCH one.

B.
① Where on the crust did you scrape?
② The textbook in the dispensary knows. The edge, not the middle.
③ If the mites won't move, WARM the SLIDE and look again.

C.
① It isn't only Siegfried's business.
② Show him the sample. Then the law must be told.
③ REPORT it to PC Blenkirton, and wait for the Ministry.

D.
① Ask the man who bought them.
② Every sheep through the ring is written down.
③ Read the SALE BOOK at the mart, with Mr Clapham there.

E.
① Something of his needs a vet.
② His dog is lame.
③ EXAMINE MEG, and LANCE the PAW. Then ask him.

F.
① Helen knows every sheep up there.
② You'll need something to catch her with.
③ Take the CROOK from the hall, and CATCH the STRAY on the fell.

G.
① The Ministry decides.
② The dip comes by train, with a note for the porter.
③ Read the label. 400 gallons, 1 in 25.

H.
① Look at him first.
② There is an old country emetic in your bag.
③ TREAT TRICKI.

Fees, Points and Endings

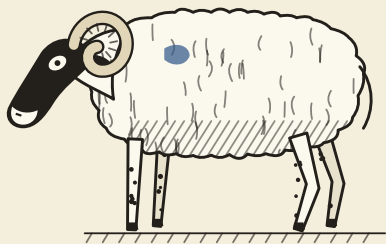
There are **400 points**: for reading the signs, making the diagnosis, and proving it; for keeping the law; for finding where the disease came from and where it went; for every patient seen to; and for one or two kindnesses. The best ending is worth forty on its own.

Under 100	Seeing practice, as a student
Under 200	Assistant, on trial
Under 300	Assistant, on a better trial
Under 400	A good vet
400	Partner, very nearly

Endings

Everything comes to a head at the autumn sale, at two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, and it will not wait for you. There are four ways for the week to end. In the worst, the disease goes out of Darrowby mart in a hundred lorries and is never caught up with. In the best, somebody who has never said so before may tell you that you'll do.

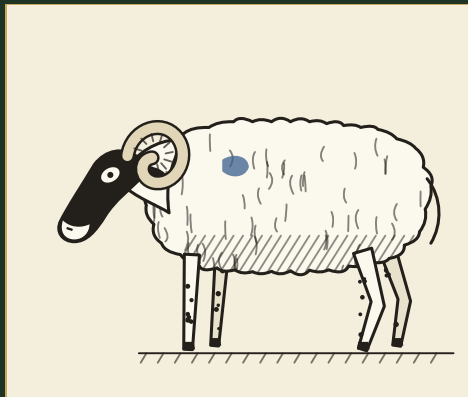
What happens depends on what you found, whom you told, and when; on a stray on the fell, and an old man's pride. You can play again. Many people do.



Siegfried says it's keds.

The Yorkshire Dales, October 1937. You are the new assistant in a country practice, still on trial, still learning that a Dalesman's silence can mean anything at all. On Monday a farmer's ewes begin to rub. By Wednesday there are more. By Saturday every flock from here to the head of the dale will be at the autumn sale at Darrowby mart, together, in the same pens.

A text adventure in the classic style, with a microscope, a Pekingese, a calving by lamplight, a sheep dealer in a check suit, the law as it stood in 1937, and a great deal of rain.



"You're not going to say mites."

A FARMER

"There's no mite here."

ANOTHER, TOO QUICKLY

"Everybody dips here."

A FARMER'S DAUGHTER