An initial study of the rural NZ English lexicon could easily reinforce perceptions of the ‘Kiwi’ as a resourceful DIY improver and inventor who has braved independent and fertile approaches to language and its use, as well as to farming practice. Since 1850 New Zealand farmers have adapted existing terms and coined words in the fields of animal husbandry, shearing science, stock breeding, dog trialling, and every other aspect of farming life. Borrowings from Maori or from the ‘homeland’ have been compounded, converted, and collocated, and with a high level of specificity, multi-lexical units have been a significant feature. Although words have been generated and adapted with what could be described as a liberal and innovative agrarian air, such processes are perhaps merely typical of frontier societies throughout the English-speaking world. More significant, perhaps, is that New Zealand ruralspeak has been generated by a very small population in quite heterogeneous conditions.

Currently, the rural lexicon shows close association with the physical environment: sunny or clean faces, guts, river flats, chutes and shingle-slides, pakhis, wiwis, monkey scrub, gumlands, tomos, razorbacks, and nor’west arches have specific rural application and significantly in the city the double-decker is possibly an ice cream or a bus; in the countryside, it is a stock truck with two decks, or a sheep with two seasons’ growth of wool. In the urban world, police and delivery vans do their beats, whereas out on the hills musterers and shepherds have beats with a different purpose, and camp weeds have a life of their own. A finisher in a rural sense can be a fattener farmer or a crop of lucerne. Making a break and doing off are instructive pasture management activities on farms.

There are several specialist rural contexts, including the mustering lexicon (discussed more fully below), the language of the dog trials, of saleyards, of the woolshed, of stock stud breeding, and of hunting, all of which show considerable variation, synonymy, and local colloquialism. Some of the numerous phrasal verbs, verbal nouns, acronyms, eponyms, and the application of trade names are included in the discussion here. Although specificity is a feature, many lexemes such as the borrowings konaki and pikau have been applied loosely with a range of meanings. Rural New Zealand English is a fascinating field of study, reflecting quite distinct stages and foci in our agricultural and pastoral development.

**CAN A BREAK BE BROKEN?**

Unlit in ruralspeak might be a farm, a farm implement, or a stock transporter. Woollies might be sheep in general or unshorn sheep or, more specifically, those that have missed at least one season’s shearing. Strip refers to the airstrip, the dog dosing strip or what one does before putting the cups on. Land is considered broken when it is steep and contains gullies and guts. It is broken when it has been ‘tamed’ from native covering to pasture. It is also described as unbroken in both senses. Land can be broken up (subdivided) as well as broken in. Bush can be broken with pikahis but also broken in to serve as bush farms. A break should be back-fenced, and stock can easily break in during wet and windy weather. For soil conservation purposes, a break may have to be planted. A break may be punished with a flogger. The boy will have to go and move the break after milking. Wool from poorly woolled sheep must be broken in. For soil conservation purposes, a break may have to be planted. A break may be punished with a flogger. The boy will have to go and move the break after milking. Wool from poorly woolled sheep must be broken in. For soil conservation purposes, a break may have to be planted. A break may be punished with a flogger. The boy will have to go and move the break after milking. Wool from poorly woolled sheep must be broken in. For soil conservation purposes, a break may have to be planted. A break may be punished with a flogger. The boy will have to go and move the break after milking. Wool from poorly woolled sheep must be

An early borrowing from the Maori was matagouri, and this survival term has been applied to both in the North and South Islands. Matagouri is an evergreen shrub, and this survival term has been applied to both in the North and South Islands. Matagouri is an evergreen shrub.

**POSSESSION IS NINE-TENTHS . . .**

On First Looking Into Kiwi Ruralspeak . . .

Dianne Bardsley
corruptions surviving in the rural lexicon. Collocations of Maori botanical lexemes include manukua bland, old man manuka, rimu dropper, and akeake monkey, while whare appears to have the greatest range of meanings and collocations in the rural world (whare kō, whare, back whare, back whare, boss, etc.).

Pakihi is a borrowing that has undergone considerable adaptation. Originally used by rural-dwellers to mean a clearing in the bush; it is now used also for a path, a closed pakihi, and blind pakihi, and corrupted as parkee. Since then it has been used to describe large areas of swampy ground in the West Coast and Golden Bay areas. Pakihi land, a type of pakihi, the pohutukawa fern, pakihi country, pakihi swamp, and pakihi rushes are some collocations. New Zealand cultivars of wheat, prayer grass, lucerne, clover, and ryegrass, such as nui, ruanui, rangotorea, hula, roa, matua, wana, anika, takahi, tama, etc., are widely known and used. A sentence like 'We bought a 1900-litre portable trough for the tama' can be perplexing for a townie reader of the newspaper farming page. Poroporo became widely used in the 1920s when it was grown as a commercial crop.

B E I N G  M A T E Y

Sheep can be shed-stained, woolblind, early-woolled, gate-drawn wool, long-wooled, tight-skinned, clean-grazing, plain-bodied, open-face, seamed, tough-shearing animals, while dogs can be whip-shy, chain-crazed, bike-happy, trial-weak, trial-happy, or gun-shy. A successful musterer needs to be well dogged … and ‘Few could have handled the horseback that went on with a job on St James’. Cattle are put on paddock-cleaning duties on fern-land, which involves clearing land of fern and other second-growth and weeds. Single-sire pen-managing has certain advantages over paddock-mating. Plenty of boulder-hopping and river work is required up near the creekhead. One should mob-stock with sheep and cattle rather than patch-graze. We read that: ‘a satisfactory dairy farm can be developed on poor gumland scrublands’. Paddocks can be overhayed, and if the picker comes late, a fair proportion of lambs will be overfat, for which there is a scale of overfatness — ‘the back of a hill’. On the Corriedales by several kilos of wool, and back-blockers do not often go downcountry.

A B U I L D I N G  B Y  A N Y  O T H E R  N A M E

Whare boys lived in the whare or single shepherds’ quarters with a whare boss, rehab farmers lived in Semple’s Temples, and homesteads represented as huts at the frontstation. Outstations or backstations might consist of a simple single construction (an out-hut, an out-whare, a back whare, or a musterer’s hut) or be part of a complex of farm buildings. A whare was the master’s house. Outstations have occasionally been known as accommodation houses, but some musterers and hunters set up fly-camps, galleysides, or pigs-nests. Stud stations are also located far from the main homestead complex. The married man’s house, the farm house, the shearer’s whare and shearers’ quarters, bunkhouse, cookshop or cookhouse, the killing shed or killing house, the boiling-down plant, the walk-in meatsafe, and the implement shed are all located on the homestead block. The cowman-gardener works in the dairy by the house when he separates the milk, and the station school might have its own saddle room.

D O I N G  A  D O G  J O B

High country shepherds and musterers do not call themselves shepherds and musterers; they are dog men, hillmen, tussock-jumpers, scree-scramblers, lizards, dog-wallopers, sandy-hookers, or mutton-punchers, and while they might be referred to as dog man, my dog, taking up the burnt chips, or bringing in the wool. They could well be members of a flying gang, a hill gang, a mountain gang, or the benzine boys. A Hillman knows when it is time to go on the job — he sniffs the nor-west (wants to go mustering). Over the years hillmen have worn not boots but Bill Massey’s, O’friens, or Pannells (or Pannels). A self-respecting scree-scrambler might dag his trousers before he embarks on a dog job. Musterers ride on their hobnails, or even get into marrowbone country, and when on horseback they could be riding pigskin or sitting on their Ngatis.

If the all-rounder is looking tired, they might have a bark-up or send down a Nelson huntaway. While they are on the hill, the tussock-jumpers have been known to wear saddle-tresses, lamnies, swannies, or bush nighties, and on the tops, the snowleggings might have come out of the hillbag. If they are hoofing it, they will be accompanied by a hillpole, dogflogger, nibby, mustering stick, or hill-stick. River work might well be involved. Should someone have an accident they will be carried out on a bush-earse. If hillmen encounter noxious animals when they are out on the tops, they will bowl them with a shottie or a smoke-pole.

They could eat hockeysticks or 365s, which town-dwellers know as mutton chops. In the evening, the dog man might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved. Should he encounter a wt, a hill mister, or a half minder, he might well be involved.

When the top man or top beat man meets up with the outside, middle, and low or bottom beat man, all will be thoroughly great and happy at the job. They will look forward to getting off the hill and getting the string on the battens and ready for the board or for the bumbarbers. On the way, the dog wings, the sheep are whipped, and the flaps are on the wing. While sheep can string, dogs can ring. The mob might contain, among others, some dingos, handlebars (horned merinos), rattlers, carryovers, broken-mouts, Hokusius, double-deckers, hermits, greybacks, shearer’s huts, landlers, and gaspers. Tail-enders could be dropped off the mob. It is not unusual for a coarse-britched Auntie or a freezer ewe to be tormented by a meat-mangler or woolclasser (a dog that works the wool) or a pack-conformist such as a Sunday dog, sooner, carpet grass, or powder puff may be walloped with a flogger. On the other hand, a bread and butter dog that keeps running on the blind will get an extra bit of treat.

In walking the out back, musterers might come across a shit-brindille (a wild cow) or a grunter hunter and his bush-happy block mate who are chasin’ bacon on a dogging block and will want to talk pork rather than staked. Sheep have been staking the bush for days and will undoubtedly refer to the noxious bush lawyer in the second-growth as snoot-toothed barrister and rangiora as bushman’s friend. Perhaps they will harp on about the dungy tarn on top of a singleton or a buffalo face. If a whare boy (single shepherd) is really lucky, he might gain the bottom wire of the fence (marry the farmer’s daughter). If he’s unlucky, his presence is quite likely to mangle the dagpickers’ ball (a wet-weather job under the woolshed, sorting wool from dogs). After doing a dog job, a tussock-jumper might begin to feel symptoms typical of a matagouri meck (a post-job hangover) and get a job with a mudflat cockie. There, he could care for bowies, bentlegs, milk lambs, and works lambs, round up the pasture lice and maggot magnets in the flying flock, and then go on to the golden Shears or the Silver Plough. Then again, he might go and surprise tracts.

A  B I T  O F  A  T R I A L

A bust has nothing to do with statues and chests — it is a non-completion of a dog trial course. A dog-trial course involves long heads, long pulls, short heads, and zigzags, and dogs can become trial-happy. About dog trials one can read, ‘The main problem was that it was difficult to get a horn on the pull, so when the time came to put a bit more on them on the flat, they were off.’ Heads can be skinny and runouts can be widened, and slippers and liberators are usually great dog men, not mere kennel-followers.

P R I D E  A N D  P R E J U D I C E

The rural world is perceived as a man’s world in much rural writing. A farmworker is often known by his allegiances and enthusiasms — he may be a noted Coopworth man, a keen Romney man, a great oilskin man, a hill-country man, or a real No. 8 man. A dog trialist is often a dog man. He is occasionally a real Swandri man but more likely a Swannie bloke.

Rural folk were not without prejudice. A primitive filiawas known as an Irish combine; tumataku or matagouri was known as a ‘Trishman’; and an Irish merino was a wild pig. Tarakani gate is a name used for an old initiative with the Taranaki gate (first seen in South Auckland), the Taranaki drive, a Taranaki (or Nelson, or Maori) huntaway, and Taranaki silage. A Taranaki farmer is a webfoot in the South Island, and a Chateau Taranaki is a huge bag of dog manure, which the surviving poppiners in this once-ludicrous fad might well be involved. Some of the shirt-kickers from the sheep country types could take a while to warm to or was overgrown. Station and farm cadets were variously known as. If a keen Coopworth man, a keen Romney man, a great oilskin man, a hill-country man, or a real No. 8 man. A dog trialist is often a dog man. He is occasionally a real Swandri man but more likely a Swannie bloke.

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TO  C R U T C H  O R  N O T  T O  C R U T C H

The crutch man is not a crutcher and does not work in the crutching season, but he is involved in sheep work. He uses a crutch, and his work involves the handling of the sheep on a 4-sided pole. He can be a good indicator of one’s status in the sheep world.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3
kept busy crutching (the cutting of wool around the rear of sheep), which is often loosely applied to include bullying, and wiggling or clipping. But crutchers can specifically fly crutch, ring crutch, ring, eye-wig, eye-clip, half-crutch, or buttonhole.

UP, OFF, OUT, DOWN, AND AROUND

Phrasal verbs are very much a part of rural speak. A paddock can be shut up, a horse is saddled up, a mare bags up; lambs can be mothered on or mothered up, the sheep are shedded up and penned up, and a paddock has its stumps bladed out before it is worked up and then sown down. Paddocks and stock are not just grazed; they graze out and they graze off. Dairy cows might have pugged up the breaks, but nevertheless if they have milk fever they should not be milked out too much in the first few days. Sheep are mustered off, drafted off, and boxed up, while scrub and rushes are burnt off. In dirty weather, musterers can be snowed off or foisted in. Shy feeders must be culled out. To doze off in the rural world is not the same as it is in the urban: it is a transitive verb, associated with bulldozer activity. Land can be split up to such an extent that farmers have to walk off during a downturn, with their margins being so lean. Young bulls should be bailed up with the cows and crops bulked down. It is customary to read, ‘broken-mouthed ewes are turned in to eat off the tops, and the roots are then harrowed out in breaks’, and it pays to keep the farm fully stocked up if the schedule’s coming down.

And the land? One takes on land (although originally one took it up), takes over land, is on the land, walks off, and even walks on the land, as in: ‘Mid Dome’s owners walked off without a brass razoo in the 1930s and three tough brothers from Awaka walked on.’

WHICH Paddock, IN WHAT COUNTRY?

Rural periodicals are rich sources of collocations for such lexemes as ‘country’ and ‘paddock’. Country is commonly late, young, rabbit, tall, shady, huntaway, sand, tussock, nursery, hungry, scruffy, bush-bound, sour, sick, kindly, rough, light, heavy, mean, dirty, sunny, high, reverted, rugged, papa, pakihi, foothill, headwater, bush, fern, scrub, snowgrass, ragged, cow, tough, rehab, clean, lambing, topping, bush-sick, cow-sick, sheep-sick, healthy, wether, hogget, ewe, low, tractors, etc. If it is easy, it will be pigskin country (able to be mustered on horseback), and if not, it’s foot, walking, or marrowbone country. Some land can be top pig country; it might be summer run country or fat-lamb country.

A limper might be found in a hospital paddock, an isolation paddock, a safe paddock, a bush paddock, a maternity paddock, a sacrifice paddock, a house paddock, or a handy paddock, by a paddock shepherd. Paddock sheep are not usually found out on the run and are only rarely used to give the hills the hoof and tooth treatment.

MODERN TIMES

The economic, mercantile, and stud breeding aspects of New Zealand farming have coined most rural acronyms in recent years. At the Fieldays, we are likely to see exhibits of AFFCO (an early usage), MOPANZ, CAPONZ, MIRINZ, WRONZ, and REAP. In the dairying world it is no longer possible to run Artesian Friesians (watering down milk before collection from the farm) or the best cow (the cold water tap). Dairying has gone high-tech on conversions all over New Zealand as well as on traditional cow country. Milk solids (MS/kg) are now used to grade cows and milk, rather than butterfat. A doower might need a visit from the vet, especially if the farmer is conscious of the genetic gain or BW (breeding worth) of the cow to his herd. A dairy farmer no longer gets a milk cheque or a cream cheque after taking his milk down to the cheese-punchers at the cheese factory or to the creamery or skimming-station.

Monitor farms and peak rights are often in the news, and two-wheeled hacks and the bull in the bowler hat are frequently seen near herringbones these days. Sharemilking from its initial usage around 1909 was developed into specifically lower order, 29%, 39%, variable order, and 50/50 arrangements. Farm owners now seek herd managers, equity managers, farm technicians, and contract milkers in the Situations Vacant columns. The more politically aware describe their properties as finishing farms or pre-conditioning farms, although fattening farms and fat lamb farms and fats are still advertised for sale.

These examples, gleaned from rural periodicals, farm and local histories, newspapers, technical texts, and websites like www.fencenest.com have provided only some of the interesting features of distinctive rural New Zealand English.

Dianne Bardsley is a PhD research fellow at the New Zealand Dictionary Centre at Victoria University of Wellington.
Since its establishment in 1997, the New Zealand Dictionary Centre has received support from many sources. In the first instance Dr Harry Orsman made it possible for the Centre to get off the ground by giving to Victoria University the intellectual property rights in his Dictionary of New Zealand English. His work thus forms the core of the Centre’s database of distinctive New Zealandisms, those words, phrases, and usages that have evolved first or solely in New Zealand and help to make New Zealand English different from other varieties of English.

The DNZE has shown that up north and down south could be destinations, perhaps involving a bit of bush-bashing, and that New Zealand was a place where children went to kindy, ate their play lunch, and wore jandals. New Zealanders could be jake, could boil the zip, or be told not to get their tins in a tangle. Peggy squares, gib board, GST, ranch sliders, eases, and solo mums were among the words that the DNZE showed made an early appearance here. New Zealand farms carried stock and had super applied for fertiliser. New Zealanders ate lemon fish, fly-cemeteries, lemon honey, hokey-pokey, jaffas, and, of course, our vegies. We said ‘good-oh’ and ‘that’ll be the day’. We might have joined a hiko or been told to think big.

ADD TO THE RECORD

The DNZE contained some 6000 headwords. Since its publication the Centre’s researchers and a number of eagle-eyed correspondents in different parts of New Zealand have continued to note new or unfamiliar New Zealand words or usages. After investigation to confirm that they are indeed New Zealandisms, several thousand previously unrecorded items have found their way into our Incomings Database, accompanied by citations showing how the words are used. Among the likely New Zealandisms that have been added to the Centre’s database recently, for example, are hotwater cupboard, conservation estate, paralympian, farmstay, zorbing, parallel importing, tiki tour, queenmaker, party hopper, waka jumper, munted, kai card, zip-zap, Jafa, and fifty-oner.

The rural sector has, of course, contributed many words to New Zealand English over the last 150 years. Recent examples collected at the Centre include shuttle stallion, cocky’s string, hell-mustering (the word mustering as a farming activity also first appeared here), bog orange, and bot-bombs. At a time of rapid change in farming, even the familiar stock and station agencies are nowadays often referred to as agribusinesses.

PROFESSORIAL GIFT

A very special and much-appreciated contribution of a different kind to the work of the New Zealand Dictionary Centre has recently been made by Emeritus Professor Ian A. Gordon, who both inspired and trained a whole generation of New Zealand lexicographers from the 1940s. Professor Gordon has donated to the Centre’s library a splendid collection of English dictionaries, some of which date from the 18th century. His generous donation includes the first eight editions of the Concise Oxford Dictionary. The evolution of this familiar and widely used small Oxford Dictionary from the time when the Fowler brothers were editors will itself make an interesting study at some future time.

NEW DICTIONARY IN THE MAKING

A major new project now under way at the Centre is the compilation of the New Zealand Oxford Dictionary. In addition to covering the words from the general lexicon of English that readers might like to consult (to check the meaning, pronunciation, or spelling of adjacent or interlocutor, for example), the new NZDO will contain several thousand New Zealandisms such as those mentioned at the beginning of this report, and which help give New Zealand English its distinctive flavour. The systematic coverage of New Zealand contributions to the general lexicon of English as it is used here is being complemented by the inclusion of a large number of brief encyclopedic entries covering distinctive or significant New Zealand places, historical events, institutions, icons, and individual New Zealanders. It will be possible to report more fully at a later date on this large project as it develops over the next two or three years.

Researchers at the New Zealand Dictionary Centre continue to welcome comments and observations on New Zealandisms from readers of NZWords. We can be contacted via our website at www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/nzdc (see below), by email at <nzdc@vuw.ac.nz>, or at our postal address: The New Zealand Dictionary Centre School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Victoria University of Wellington PO Box 600 Wellington.

The New Zealand Dictionary Centre is pleased to advise that it has at last set up its stall in cyberspace, at the address above. Warms thanks are due to Dr Paul Warren of the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University, who has developed the site for the Centre. With the silver fern motif of the Centre’s OUP dictionaries in the background, and Harry Orsman’s landmark DNZE standing tall beside the recurrent index, the site projects a distinctive local and lexical identity. As well as essential information about the Centre and its staff, there is opportunity for visitors to send details of newly encountered New Zealand words by means of an online template and to call up all issues of NZWords to date. Links are provided to Oxford University Press Australia and New Zealand, the Australian National Dictionary Centre, and the Oxford English Dictionary. This is a start; as always, readers’ suggestions for augmenting and enhancing the site will be welcome.
City to Surf, the four avenues, little Bosnia, the O’ruter, Rangi, shagroon, Show Day, the Strip. No prizes for guessing, given the title above, that these are all what I want to call Canterbury or — to use another of them — Cantabrians’ words. The fact is that without assistance these living outside Canterbury are less likely to recognise the referents and the commonality of these terms than those within. They exemplify a regionally restricted form of New Zealand English vocabulary, undoubtedly paralleled (to some extent at least) in other parts of the country by usages equally peculiar to Cantabrians. How do we come to have Kiwi words that in many cases will be unfamiliar to a majority of New Zealanders, and where do they fit into a view of our variety of English more generally?

The existence of words and meanings peculiar to New Zealanders as a whole is of course not in doubt. In our home-grown dictionaries, and above all in The Dictionary of New Zealand English (DNZE) with its full historical coverage, we find ample evidence of a strong collective or national identity.

However, dialect study elsewhere, whether geographical or social, does not stop at the level of national communities but seeks differences among still smaller regional groupings of speakers. Such variation is a significant and well-documented feature of the major northern hemisphere Englishes, as evidenced by works like The English Dialect Dictionary and The Dictionary of American Regional English. Nearer home attention to lexical differentiation within Australia has recently produced a number of regional dictionaries. Tasman Terms: Words from the West, and (most recently) Voices of Queensland. For all New Zealand’s relatively small size, there are words in at least some quantity that serve to reflect regional (intranational) identities and characteristics here also.

Linguists have generally concluded that NZE is a highly uniform variety regionally (although not socially) speaking. Other than the celebrated southern South Island post-vocalic /r/ (the ‘Southland burr’) our accent appears to show no marked local peculiarities, despite insistent claims to the contrary made from time to time by lapserons. But is our vocabulary as constant and uniform as we commonly imagine it to be?

There are certainly a few well-known cases of inter-regional lexical variation in NZE, The Otago and Southland use of crib for bach, and the North Island preference for punnet over potte, for example, have frequently been commented on. A certain number of words have been identified as specific to Southland or to the West Coast of the South Island or to the South Island generally. Some of these cited variants are no longer current, and where they remain they might seem to be merely exceptions that prove the rule of uniformity. On the other hand, Laurie and Winifred Bauer have recently provided evidence of systematic variations in children’s playground usage in three broad New Zealand dialect areas.

Different Words for Unique Things

Examples like crib and bach illustrate one major kind of regional variation, where two words exist for the same thing, either mutually exclusively (more or less) in two areas or with both terms used in one area and only one in another. In either case we have a kind of intradialectal synonymy (called ‘heteronymy’ in some accounts). There is, however, another class of regionally restricted word (or word-sense) where reference is made to something found in one region and not in others, so that there can be no question of finding synonyms for it in other varieties or subvarieties. All regional vocabularies have these two kinds of items, those with contrasting equivalents elsewhere and those without. It is the latter category I suggest, that gives by far the greater yield of regionally restricted words and meanings within NZE.

All major areas in New Zealand are likely to have significant numbers of terms with purely local reference or origin. Of the more than 80 items these will be known to a greater or lesser extent outside their own area, but their origins and predominant use lie within one specific region. Words associated with my own Canterbury locality are used to illustrate this kind of variation here, whether Canterbury is more or less lexically distinctive than other New Zealand provinces is an open question.

As well as in more obvious areas (indigenous loanwords, say contrasts between NZE and AusE usage can elsewhere be quite subtle.

Sky digital subscribers now exposed to more in the way of Australian political news on Channel 17 might among others have noted that whereas we refer to plain GST (i.e. the tax in general), this recent import into Australia commonly comes with the article added: ‘How has the introduction of the GST affected your business?’

Two further observations about lexical distinctiveness regionally within New Zealand are suggested by the present investigation. One is that local variation is much more substantial when historical as well as present-day materials are taken into account. Of the more than 80 items found in DNZE that are identified by labelling or definition as specific to Canterbury in some way, about half relate to past events and circumstances, having become obsolete at various times from the earliest European settlement onwards.

The other point similarly is that the more proper names one includes in the inventory of terms, the stronger the case for local distinctiveness becomes. To the list compiled from a search of DNZE I have added another 50 or 60 examples from my and others personal experience, and almost all of these are proper nouns and phrases. The extent to which capitalised terms are admissible in dictionaries (and accounts of lexical variation) is arguable, although the argument has been rather left behind by the increasing number of ‘encyclopedic’ dictionaries currently being produced (the New Zealand Oxford Paperback is one such). Even these, however, confine themselves to entries for more prominent places and persons, leaving the many thousands of other names (which do in fact figure prominently in everyday discourse) to be gathered in atlases, street indexes, telephone books, business directories, and the like. For the purposes of the current study proper names are admitted where something other than simply the primary denotative name for a place, institution, group, etc. is involved. Hence abbreviated and other indirect, derived, or secondary forms are those meriting inclusion here.

The most explicitly regional terms in this set are those employing the primary geographical and provincial name as modifier. Historically the transference of the English city name to New Zealand begins with the Canterbury Association, founded by J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield in 1848 under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which undertook the establishment of the Canterbury Settlement on the Canterbury Block purchased from the New Zealand Company. Emigrating up the initial wave of Anglican settlement in late 1850 and following years were predictably dubbed Canterbury Pilgrims, alluding to Chaucer’s medieval travellers (and occasionally Pilgrim Fathers with a North American analogy).

Detailed investigation of New Zealand’s botany and zoology in time revealed restricted distribution of certain species, to some of which a provincial label could appropriately be applied. DNZE records Canterbury broom, Canterbury mudfish, and Canterbury smell, and we can add, for example, local varieties of alpine hebe called Canterbury, and the internationally known Canterbury trade mark (H. cheesemani and H. tetrasticha). Canterbury lamb is a rather different kettle of fauna, being the name by which all export New Zealand sheepmeat was long known in the principal market of the UK, neatly exploiting the original Englishness of the name as well as acknowledging a prolific antipodean source of the commodity.

Byellipsis Canterbury lamb could become simply Canterbury (or prime Canterbury), and the name tout court (as with other toponyms) can also have frequent metonymic uses, especially with reference to a sporting team from the province (‘Canterbury win Super 12 again’), to the University of Canterbury (‘studing Classics at Canterbury’), and to the clothing company Canterbury of New Zealand with its internationally known Canterbury trademark (‘Canterbury wear’.). After World War I, like Auckland, Wellington, and Otago, the noun was pluralised to denote one of the New Zealand battalions organised on regional lines (‘the Canterburys fought at Gallipoli’), so that an individual soldier might be a Canterbury. A common current provincialism of the name produces Canty, which could be given a spoken realisation (unlike Wgtn, say) but appears never to be.

CANTERBURY TRANSPLANTED

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Differences with the Neighbours 2

Trans-Tasman lexical contrast sometimes takes the form of different meanings attached to the same word item in the two countries. Bush (as the bush) is a prime example, together with floral and fauna terms like bellbird and cabbage-tree.

What does an Australian mean by saying they have found twenty dollars ‘down the back of the lounge’?

Refinement associated with that part of the city, and other Canterbury place names are represented in such forms as Rangitata gorge (local name for the paradise duck) and (stretching the boundaries of the region to the limit) Mount Cook (a weta) and Mount Cook lily (for which a 19th-century alternative name was Rockwood lily, after Rockwood Station in Canterbury).

Mention should also be made here of certain indigenous local names overlaid and superseded by English forms at the time of Pakeha settlement, from which the Maori awareness in recent decades through bilingual naming and signage etc. Thus the Maori word for the area where the city of Christchurch now stands is Otautahi (‘the place of Tautahi [a Ngai Tahu chief]’), translates as Christchurch and is used in the city context. Similarly Waitaha, referring originally to the plains of the Canterbury region, has become the Maori word for Canterbury as defined in Pakeha geography, for example in the name of a new State Special School in the region, the Waitaha Learning Centre. Other Maori names associated with particular localities in the city and province are ‘resurfacing’ in this way too. These are the oldest Canterbury words of all, with pre-Canterbury origins.

The need for the abbreviation Cantabrian is the greater because there is no single word for a resident of what is by far Canterbury’s largest centre of population (cf. Auckland, Wellingtonian, Dunedinite; *Christchurch or *Christchurchite was never a starter). Christchurch, like other big cities, has acquired its share of nicknames: the straightforward Garden City is the most familiar; Garden City of the Mounted Rifles. Canterbury’s full name as a county was simply as Canterbury, New Zealand, and as an abbreviation (with or without stop), again chiefly written, and especially as (and adjective?) Timaruvian (for which a 19th-century alternative name was ‘chuh-chuh’; Canterbury’s second city, Christchurch, also yields the noun (and adjective?) Timaruvian (the noun recorded in DNZE from 1889), evidently on the model of Peruvian; one Christchurch suburb, Fendalton, unusually, has its own derivative, Fendaltonian, which has connotations of affluence and

Colonnial Coinages

Returning to the beginnings of city and province (at least by 1853), there are other distinctive regional terms to note. Other settlements had their first ships (and New South Wales its rather differently motivated First Fleet), but Canterbury remembers more precisely its first four ships, the Charlotte Jane, Sir George Seymour, Creesy, and Randolph, which arrived in mid-1851, the Canterbury Association vessels to set sail from Home, arriving in Lyttelton close on one another’s heels in December 1850. Their nearly 800 passengers constituted the main body of settlers, although other ships soon followed; there were moreover a number of European families already established in Canterbury in the 1840s, for whom the unusual word pre-Adamite (noun and adjective) was later reserved, conferring a quasi-divine status on the Rhodes and Deans and others who were the ‘real’ first (white) settlers in the region. (Cf. OED Adamite and pre-Adamite from 1930, but it has subsequently been antedated to 1907, and it might well have been a 19th-century usage. Contemporary documentaries sometimes distinguish the pre-existing colonists from the pilgrims by using the term old settler for the former.

The word shagreen is arguably the most curious term in this early colonial set. Wrongly defined in some overseas dictionaries, of uncertain origin, and variable in its meaning (and spelling) to some extent, shagreen (or shagroon) was the term used by New Zealanders to indicate a number of grasses. Citations show the word being used, mostly disparagingly, of various ‘outsider’ elements in the developing population, contrastively with the pilgrims of the Canterbury Association; in particular it denotes the initially unwelcome Australian pastoralists who were being attracted to the region’s plains and back country at much the same time as the first ships arrived from England. (These sheepmen were also several decades ahead of their predictions of disaster for the English settlers’ plans for dependence on arable farming.)

Although Arnold Wall, notably, advanced an alternative origin (in the English slang form shabroon, ‘shabby or disputable person’), the lexicographical consensus has been that shagreen derives from shagreen, a spelling of Irish /seachran/ meaning ‘wandering’. This is Edward Morris’s explanation in his Austrail English (1898), later adopted by the OED and DNZE among others. Considerations of spelling might count against the more recent form, but the word one instance of shagreen with <p>; all the same it remains difficult to counter his objection that a body of English (and Anglican) settlers is an unlikely context in which to find an Irish word brought to (brief) prominence. Moreover, there’s a semantic shift here (finding pejoration), which is not easily explained.

Other words marked in DNZE as having particular reference to early Canterbury include burst (up) (of large runs, to subdivide or be subdivided), Cookham’s (in full Cookham’s boarding point, possibly a corruption of sheepsherd’s lookout), grass-thief (a person grazing sheep on another’s run), gridiron (to purchase alternate strips of land, effectively securing the intervening strips against other buyers or users), rooster (a job-seeker), skinner (one exhausting land by constant sowing of a paddock), eat (one’s) tutu or foot (to adjust to the trials of colonial life, as it were like stock ingesting poisonous plants), and V-hut (the basic tent-shaped dwelling favoured for construction in the early years of settlement). Beyond examples of this kind it is noticeable that Canterbury citations predominate in DNZE entries for much of the more general New Zealand high country and pastoral farming lexis.

From the 20th century there are miscellaneous obsolete items such as Bell’s brick (a loaf), (Harry) Pannock (mislit for what the Christchurch manufacturer, the Perishable (a transpalsive goods train named for its contents), padlock referring to the Waltham railway yards in Christchurch (hence PDK chalked on a wagon = ‘send to Waltham’), a particular kind of intelligent seaman (a master of trains), shagroon (a shepherd’s lookout), grass-thief (a person grazing sheep on another’s run), gridiron (to purchase alternate strips of land, effectively securing the intervening strips against other buyers or users), rooster (a job-seeker), skinner (one exhausting land by constant sowing of a paddock), eat (one’s) tutu or foot (to adjust to the trials of colonial life, as it were like stock ingesting poisonous plants), and V-hut (the basic tent-shaped dwelling favoured for construction in the early years of settlement). Beyond examples of this kind it is noticeable that Canterbury citations predominate in DNZE entries for much of the more general New Zealand high country and pastoral farming lexis.

A Canterbury usage of American origin, Deep Freeze, part of Cantabrians’ consciousness since the mid-1950s, has slipped from view in the last two or three years. There is an association with the withdrawal of the US Navy involvement in the US Antarctic Program (Operation Deepfreeze) and the closing of the naval support base at Christchurch Airport, which was for so long referred to simply as Deep Freeze.

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Many older usages have of course remained in use. The Canterbury region is idiosyncratic in its observation of one of New Zealand’s statutory holidays. The Anniversary Day celebrated (on various dates) in other parts of the country passes virtually unnoticed in Canterbury (15 December), the public holiday being transferred to Snow Day, the Friday of the Canterbury & G.P. Show Week in Christchurch in November. This week to racegoers is alternatively Cup Week, during which both the New Zealand Trotting Cup (at Addington, i.e. Addington Raceway) and the New Zealand Steeplechase (at Riccarton, i.e. Riccarton Racecourse) are contested. Show Weekend is the long weekend including the holiday, which at the show itself is traditionally known as people’s day.

Like other cities, Christchurch has developed a repertoire of distinctively named events in its sporting and cultural calendar. The City to Surf mass-participation fun run from Cathedral Square to QE2 (standard local usage for the Queen Elizabeth II Stadium); the Coast to Coast endurance race (west to east across the South Island); the one-day cricket match (for Commonwealth Games); and events belonging to the City Council’s ‘Summertimes’ programme, such as the Festival of Romance and Classical Sparks (an open-air concert), can all be included here.

THE REGION’S WEATHER

Locally meaningful terms are commonly found in the weather of a region. Winds seem especially prone to being distinctively named, personified even, from the Classical zephyr to the colonial bar. Canterbury winds are more prosaically and less uniquely titled, but are no less an ingrained part of the regional experience. The term of nor’wester (for ‘north-wester’), nor’westerly (for ‘north-westerly’), cold sou’wester, and warm, dry nor’wester have strong local resonances; the nor’wester above all providing a constant topic of report and conversation since earliest colonial times on account of its strength and of report and conversation since earliest nor’wester, the holiday, which at the show itself is developed a repertoire of distinctively named i.e. Riccarton Racecourse) are contested. The Orbiter is a Christchurch bus service following a roughly circular path around the city, linking major suburban malls etc., now added to the traditional complement of bus routes radiating out from the city centre; and the Strips are stations of a series of bars and restaurants, with much of the dining and other activities located on the specially widened strip of footpath outside these premises.

These two items (also the Crossing associated with the new Bus Xchange (sic)) take their place among a set of more established terms such as the Square and the Triangle, and further afield the Spit, the Estuary, the Groynes, and the Sugarloaf (the last usually referring to the television transmitter located there). DNZ&E has entries for the Plains and the Peninsula (Banks, that is) with Canterbury reference. A historical example is the Domain, now occupied by the Christchurch Botanical Gardens. Like the first ships, very specific to Christchurch are the four avenues bounding the original city block and running north to south, the province’s only four superintendents. At least some of these city and regional names will be shared with but have different referents in other places (the Peninsula means something quite different in Otago or the Coromandel, for example); in their own ‘dialect area’ they become an integral part of the local idiom.

TEAMS AND PERSONALITIES

The world of sport provides distinctive terms and names in Canterbury as in other regions. A key phrase here is red and black(s), applied especially to representative rugby teams, from the traditional colours of a Canterbury jersey (cf. similar formations elsewhere: Blues, Reds, green and golds, etc.) in DNZ&E but is a long-standing form. A secondary adjectival use is found with general Canterbury sporting reference: ‘Red and Black Sports Talk’ (a TV programme), ‘this is red and black country’ (in an advertisement).

Where particular sports are concerned, there has been of late a similar proliferation of names for teams at provincial level as at national level (see ‘Sporting New Labels’ in NZWords 2.1). The greatest media prominence is enjoyed by Crusaders, naming the Canterbury and Otago rugby union teams and franchise, and appropriately recalling Chaucer’s knight travelling to Canterbury fresh from foreign ventures; but Canterbury also has for example its Bulls, Cats, Cavaliers, Flames, Rams, and Red Sox, in league, women’s hockey, men’s hockey, netball, basketball, and softball respectively.

The writer’s inventory of Canterbury words of note is relatively small when compared, for example, to the numbers of entries in the Australian ‘State dictionaries’ (Voices of Queensland lists some 500 entries). However, the present list is certainly less than exhaustive, and readers in Canterbury and elsewhere are invited to make suggestions for others. Furthermore, if Cantabrians might be moved to offer sample lists of words and expressions with particular significance in their own parts of the country. A dictionary incorporating all New Zealandisms in regional use, Canterburyisms (if you will), among others, would make a substantial and engaging publication.

Tony Deverson grew up not far from Canterbury in England, and has taught at the New Zealand university of that name since 1966.
An enquiry to the Centre concerning New Zealand words originating in trademarks prompted a search of The Dictionary of New Zealand English for such items. Fifty-one headwords in the dictionary are recorded as being, or being associated with, proprietary names. The oldest registered trademarks appear to be those of nugget and zambuk, both from 1903. A complete list with brief annotations follows.

batt or pink batt: a pad of insulation material
bomb: orig. bom, a chocolate-coated ice cream
bomber: a petrol pump, later by extension a petrol station
bush devil: (possible proper name) a wire-fencing device used in fencing
buzz bee: the iconic pull-along toy
califont: (possible proper name) a gasfueled water heater (cf. Brit. geysier)
carbonette: (possible proper name) a coal briquette
chillybin: an insulated container (cf. Aust.isky)
Claytons: the non-alcoholic beverage; used adjectivally = sham, illusory
Cookham boots: stubby working boots (cited from 1872)
double-happy: a firecracker
dover: a knife, in the phrase a new recruit

dobber: a pad of insulation material
Dover: (becoming neuter)
dovers: a chocolate-coated ice cream
dover: (as verb) a firecracker
Dover: a water heater (trademarked 1933)
dover: a water heater

 Differences with the Neighbours 3

In respect of most of the notable transatlantic English contrasts, Aussies and Kiwis display a common allegiance, either to British or American usage or a mixture of both. We both have cars with boots, queue rather than stand in line, blizzards and a blizzard, and blizzards and a blizzard.

But it isn’t invariably so: Australia like the US has its freeways and (domestic) yards, New Zealand like Britain its motorways and gardens. And it’s Labour here not Labor.