

How This Book Came About

I had the opportunity to attend multiple clinics with Bob Vest when I first started learning about herding when I lived in the United States. I always learned a lot from Bob and appreciated his insights into learning and thoughts about how dogs and stock think and why they react in certain ways. I kept in touch with Bob when I moved to the United Kingdom, where I work as a clinical pathologist and farm part time. Over the last 17 years, I have had the opportunity to farm with my late husband, John Angus MacLeod, a renowned sheep dog trialist and stockman. Over the years John Angus and I had a flock of around 1,500 ewes with grazing on one of the highest continually-grazed hills in Scotland (Ben Ghlas and Ben Lawers, near Killin, Perthshire). I continue to farm with my new husband, Iain Kelly, a dedicated shepherd and stockman, now cut down to approximately 500 ewes due to loss of a grazing lease we previously held. I have had the opportunity to trial throughout Scotland, as well as participate in or view trials in England, Wales, Ireland and continental Europe. I have enjoyed judging sheep dog trials in Scotland, Sweden, and Italy and was honored to judge the Scottish National Sheep Dog Trial with Neil McVicar in 2011.

I have given a lot of thought to training techniques and working styles with various types of dogs and handlers. It is always interesting to watch a variety of dogs and handlers. It has been a real experience to work dogs on the hill and to be able to be part of the culture of shepherding and farming that still exists in the hills where the

Border Collie was developed. Over the years, I read a variety of books published by sheep dog enthusiasts and trainers. I felt that Bob's techniques deserved to be published, as well. I invited him to come over to visit in order to develop this book. He would do the talking and I would type and take notes, taking care of the organization and writing down things in this venture. So, with some urging from Rachel, Bob finally took a plane, a train, and a car and landed on my doorstep in Scotland. We took some breaks to enjoy dog training and the local countryside, but spent two weeks, with many hours of work daily to develop the first draft of this book.

When Bob went back to the United States we exchanged revisions by e-mail. Bob was to find an illustrator for this book, but passed away before this could be accomplished. After his death, this manuscript lay in my drawer for several years before I decided to pick it up again and finish it.

It is a labor of love and with great respect that I have reviewed the material and taken it for publication. It is an honor to have known Bob Vest and I hope that this book will help those that knew him remember his work and those that did not have the opportunity to know Bob, to benefit from his great expertise and experience.

Kathleen Freeman Kelly