

Mad dogs and Englishmen.....

It was a hot July day and my boss had nominated me to visit a farm on Dartmoor to dehorn a herd of young cattle. It was a long hot journey, about 20 miles in fact, and cars in those days had none of the modern luxuries such as air conditioning. I was rather hoping that the cattle would turn out to be calves, which would only have tiny horn buds, and so would be a simple job, but my hopes were dashed as I pulled into the yard. About 50 huge bullocks stood there, glowering at me, with equally huge horns protruding from their heads. My heart sank as I knew it was going to be a very long, very hot, day!

Eight hours later I was exhausted. The bullocks had been chased round and around to get them into the crush; firstly to inject the local anaesthetic, then to dehorn them and stop the bleeding, and then again to further cauterise those that had knocked the wounds and that had started to bleed again. It was a messy job and all those involved were covered in sweat, blood and excrement.



I needed to get home quickly and soak in the bath but my heart sank as I hit the main road into Princetown and immediately got caught in a very slow moving trail of traffic. It was a very hot humid evening and there was thunder in the air. As I crawled up the road I thought I was going to

expire from heat stroke. At long last I got to a roadblock and found my car had to be searched as an alcoholic murderer had escaped from Dartmoor prison, injuring several people in the process. The policeman took one look through my window and his eyes came out on stalks. A beetroot coloured fellow covered in blood was just the sort of man he had been warned to look out for! It took all my endeavours to explain my way out of that situation, and I doubt the policeman ever really did believe my story. He probably thought it was the ranting of a mad man even though it was confirmed I wasn't the person they were looking for!

That night I was plagued by nightmares of being trapped in a boiling car, covered in blood, with policemen hammering on my windows! Imagine being in this situation; which is just how it must be like for a dog shut in a car, on a warm day. So please remember, even if its only mild outside, the inside of the car can soon become like an oven once the sun comes out. Never leave your dog in the car on a warm day, it will overheat, and may die. It really is not worth the risk.

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