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Full transcript of an interview with

NELLIE ROOT

on 21 AUGUST 1985

by Beth Robertson

for

'SA SPEAKS': AN ORAL HISTORY OF LIFE IN
SOUTH AUSTRALIA BEFORE 1930

Recording available on cassette

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Collateral Material in File 8505 includes:
Photographs (P)8505A,B

Cover Illustration The family photograph that Nellie Root's father carried during the Great War. Nellie, aged 9, is on the left. (P8505B)

PREFACE

If not for some sort of bureaucratic mix-up, Nellie Root (nee Spinks), born in 1906 in Lewisham, England, would have grown up in South Africa. Instead, in about 1912, her family sailed for South Australia and settled in Brighton. Mrs Root has never moved from the area. Her father, an ex-British Army soldier, was called back to Europe for six years during the Great War. However, by this time Nellie's mother's parents and most of their other children had also immigrated to South Australia, settled nearby, and established a carrying business. Nellie was a tomboy who deserted her grandfather's horses for motorbikes when she met her immigrant husband-to-be. However, after her mother died in about 1921 she became her father's housekeeper and she remained in his home even after her marriage in 1931.

Mrs Root was 79 years of age at the time of the interview.

Mrs Root readily confesses that she has no memory for dates, and only her birthdate, date of marriage and children's births have been verified by documents. Otherwise she has a lively and vivid memory and is a relaxed speaker. The interview was recorded in her kitchen and sound quality is generally good.

The interview is two hours and fifty minutes in length and was recorded in one session.

'S.A. Speaks: An Oral History of Life in South Australia before 1930' was a Jubilee 150 project conducted under the auspices of the History Trust of South Australia for two years and two months ending December 1986. The Interviewees are broadly representative of the population of South Australia as it was in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Selection of Interviewees was guided by a Sex and Occupation Sample calculated from the 1921 Census and Interviewees were suggested, in the main, by people who responded to 'S.A. Speaks' publicity. Each interview was preceded by an unrecorded preliminary interview during which details about the Interviewee's family history and life story were sought to help develop a framework for the interview.

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NOTES TO THE TRANSCRIPT

Readers of this oral history transcript should bear in mind that it is a record of the spoken word. It was the policy of the Transcriptionist, Chris Gradolf, and the Interviewer, as editor, to produce a transcript that is, so far as possible, a verbatim transcript that preserves the Interviewee's manner of speaking and the informal, conversational style of the interview. Certain conventions of transcription have been applied (i.e. the omission of meaningless noises, redundant false starts and a percentage of the Interviewee's crutch words). Also, each Interviewee was given the opportunity to read the transcript of their interview after it had been proofread by the Interviewer. The Interviewee's suggested alterations have been incorporated in the text (see below). On the whole, however, the document can be regarded as a raw transcript.

Researchers using the original tape recording of this interview are cautioned to check this transcript for corrections, additions or deletions which have been made by the Interviewer or the Interviewee but which will not occur on the tapes. Minor discrepancies of grammar and sentence structure made in the interest of readability can be ignored but significant changes such as deletions of information or correction of fact should be, respectively, duplicated or acknowledged when the tape recorded version of this interview is used for broadcast or publication on cassettes.

Abbreviations

The Interviewee, Nellie Root, is referred to by the initials NR in all editorial insertions in the transcript.

Punctuation

Square brackets [] indicate material in the transcript that does not occur on the original tape recording.

The Interviewee's initials after a word, phrase or sentence in square brackets, i.e. [word or phrase NR] indicates that the Interviewee made this particular insertion or correction. All uninitialled parentheses were made by the Interviewer.

An series of dots, indicates an untranscribable word or phrase.

Sentences that were left unfinished in the normal manner of conversation are shown ending in three dashes, - - -.

Spelling

Wherever possible the spelling of proper names and unusual terms has been verified. Where uncertainty remains the word has been marked with a cross in the right hand margin of the Interview Log and Data Sheet which can be consulted in the Interview File.

Typeface

The Interviewer's questions are shown in bold print.

'S.A. Speaks: An Oral History of Life in South Australia Before 1930'**Beth Robertson interviewing Mrs Nellie Root****on 21 August 1985**

TAPE 1 SIDE A

Could you start by giving me your full name?

Yes, my full name is Nellie Maude Norris Root.

Was Nellie your full Christian name?

Yes.

And that's what you were named?

Yes. It's not a cut off or anything - it's a full name.

What was your maiden name?

Spinks - that was my father's name.

Do you know if you were named for anyone?

Yes, I was named for my mother's sister and my father's sister. The Maude was my father's sister and the Nellie was my mother's sister. And the Norris was my father's mother's surname before she was married.

Can you tell me the date of your birth?

The fourth of September nineteen hundred and five, I think. [4 September 1906] I think that's right.

Where were you born?

It was Brookbank Road, Lewisham - eighty five I think, but I'm not quite sure over that address. But that was where my grandmother lived and I was born at the house where my grandmother lived. She lived there until she died.

Why was your mother living there?

No she wasn't living there. She just went there for Grandmother to be the midwife, you see. Grandmother had done quite a lot of it, so -. They had rooms - - -. Mother and father had rooms and Grandma had plenty of room in her big house, so Mother went there for the confinement.

Where were your parents living?

They were living somewhere near but I can't just tell you where.

But in Lewisham?

In Lewisham, that's right.

And did you remain in that same accommodation during your early years in England?

Yes. Right up until we left to come here. That was partly the reason we came here - because my father didn't like living in rooms and he wouldn't go and live with Mum's family. We couldn't get any accommodation. It wasn't very easy to get and what you could get was hardly worth having, you know, and so he - - -. That's what really sent him on looking around for somewhere else. Because he'd just come back from the South African War [Boer War] when they were married. They'd been going together before the war and when he came back from the war they were married and still looking around for a place, or something. It was quite a while before they eventually got the migration through and came out here. I just don't know how long they waited.

But anyhow I was nearly seven when we came here. Well, six I was in September and we got here on Easter Monday and the Outer Harbour was all closed down. There wasn't a shop or anything and we pulled in at the harbour at early morning and we were shooshed off the boat on to the wharf and then all our furniture and things came up and was all put up against us. All in heaps, one another - everyone sitting by their - - -. And so many of them didn't know what to do or where to go, but my father, being an Army man and used to giving orders and organising, he - - -.

Well, he had an old pushbike that came with him. So he got on the pushbike and he knew that they were building the breakwater at Glenelg, so he just rode from Outer Harbour to Glenelg on the pushbike. And when he got there there was no one working. It was a holiday - it was Easter Monday. So he thought, 'Well, I've got to find an empty house somewhere,' so he rode around and rode around, in and out and all about the streets. Eventually there was a little cottage right on Brighton Road at Hove. He found that was empty, and he went to the neighbours around until he found out who owned it and where so that he could rent it for us. So he did that.

Then he came all the way back - no he didn't, that's wrong. He went riding around looking to find someone to cart our luggage - you know, all our gear - and he found a man that had a big flat top dray and two big horses. Well they had to go from - Glenelg they were - and they had to go to Outer Harbour and it was practically dark by the time he got there. And then we all piled in - all the luggage and us - and we had to come back from Outer

Harbour to Hove to this little cottage. There was no lights - there was only kerosene lamps those days. And the first thing Mum and Dad did was to get the beds out and put us kids to bed. I think Dad must have bought some food somewhere too, because I know we never had anything to eat or drink because there was no shops or anything down Outer Harbour.

How had you spent the time that he was away?

Oh, me. I'm mad on animals. I went round looking at the horses and things. There were paddocks with horses and things - big wide open paddocks. Horses and cows and things. And my mother kept coming to look for me, and I'd go and come all the time. And when my brother or sister got a bit irritable I'd take them with me. I've always been very fond of animals, especially horses. So the ride back was a thrill, but of course we couldn't see very much - it was practically dark by the time. It was pitch dark by the time we got back. All our mattresses were rolled up Army style in canvas - rolled up, you know. And Dad said the first thing he was going to do was get those off, put them down for Mum to put us off to bed, because they couldn't do anything with us running around. Anyhow we got there and we settled down.

The next morning Dad got up early and went over to the breakwater and he got a job there.

I'd love to talk more about that time. Perhaps first we could just fill in the background of your family in England. Could you first tell me your father's name?

Oh yes. His name was Frank James Spinks. He is related to the silversmiths to the Kings and Queens and they've got a big shop in one of the big main streets in England. He's one of the younger - very younger - sons. As usual, the younger sons go in the Army or the Navy or something, you know, for the English older families.

So he came from a fairly well to do family?

Well yes. Quite a well to do background. And my mother - her father had a brickworks. You know, making bricks - brick family - and he was fairly well off, but not that - - -. Well, he was comfortable.

Did your parents ever get assistance from their families?

No. They did it all themselves, and I think I remember Mum saying that they thought it was a terrible price they had to pay - thirty pounds our fare cost us. And my mother was always saying what a terrible lot of money that was. Because we had a cabin, but all the other steerage passengers had a big empty place right down under the bottom with bunks all around. One place

for men and one for women and they weren't together. But we were all together in a four berth cabin.

Do you know the date of your father's birth?

The tenth of - now wait a minute - November? No I can't remember what it was.

Well, do you know how old he was when he died?

He was ninety three but he'd married again and gone back to England and he died in England.

What year did he die?

It must be about twelve years ago I think.

About 1973. So he would have been born about 1880.

Yes, somewhere around that I should think.

Do you know where he was born?

Yes, he was born - I think it was Golders Green, or something like that. I couldn't be too sure of it.

And you say that his family were silversmiths?

Yes, but he was one of the very younger ones.

Did he have a lot of brothers and sisters?

Yes, there were about eight I think - eight brothers and two sisters. But my mother, they had thirteen children. They came out exactly nine months after we did - just before the fourteen eighteen war started. They'd only just landed. Of course they were lucky. They had us here and my father, being an organiser, he went and found - - -. There was an old hotel on the Brighton Road and - what it was used for - but it was a hotel, anyway. And it was empty and he took a six months lease of it and put them all into this hotel. Brought them from the boat straight to there, with bits of furniture - some - and then they had some of their own furniture. And of course a lot of the girls were married and a lot of the boys were married, so it was a huge family, coming together. They lived there for about eighteen months I think. The war was on - well and truly on - when the boys went to the war and the women decided they weren't going to stay there and they all wandered around looking for smaller places to live on their own.

Do you know why your grandparents' family had decided to come out en masse?

Well, I don't know. I suppose they must have talked it over and, us being here, Grandfather decided - - -. Things were bad in England at that stage - very bad - just before the fourteen eighteen war, and I think that they decided that they couldn't do any worse - couldn't be any worse. And of course Grandfather thought he'd be able to start up building, but he didn't have the money and he didn't have - - -. There wasn't anything, you know - - -. There wasn't the facilities or anything here. So he finished up buying a lot of horses and carting - you know, carting things and big heavy drays and things like that - and he and his boys worked that. But then four of them were killed at the war. I think that only three came back. And some of the son-in-laws - two of the son-in-laws were killed in the war.

As we go along we'll be moving backwards and forwards and filling in details. Could you tell me at this time your mother's full name?

Ellen, Florence I think her second name was, Laundry.

And where was she born?

She was born somewhere around - not too far away from Lewisham. Just close around there.

Do you know if your mother ever did any paid work?

Oh yes. She was in a Lord and Lady's house and she started there as an under - well, low down person - and she finished up there as a cook. So she was there - I think she was about twelve when she went in there, and she finished up as a cook. Went right through the whole lot, and cook's the top - you know, usually the top person in a house like that. So of course she was a very good cook.

Did she leave that job when she married?

Yes.

So how many years do you think she would have been in service?

Fifteen or sixteen years.

Did she tell you much about that time?

Yes she did, but I don't sort of - - -. You know how children don't take much notice of things you hear, and someone else talk about them, 'Oh, yes, I remember Mum saying that!'. But I can't remember it myself.

Was it a big household?

Yes, it was right in London - on the outskirts of London - because they had a big mews, as they called it, where the horses and that all go. Of course my mother - - -. I must have take after her, because she used to spend all her spare time out with the horses in the mews and I suppose that's where I got it from. (laughs)

Had your father done any other work before he joined the Army?

No, I don't think. I think he might have - - -. He was a carpenter really, you know - I mean, he did a lot of carpentering - and whether he got that through the Army or whether he went first - - -. I don't think - I think he was at school mainly. He had a very good education.

Where did he go?

One of the big English schools - I just can't - - -.

What we'd call a private school and they call a public school?

Yes, that's right. One of the big boys' schools. All his family went through those. You know, the girls went to big girls' schools and the boys went to the boys' school. But Mum's family didn't. They didn't stay on that long. I mean, they had so many children they couldn't afford to keep them going. All going along. Another thing with the building - like the brickmaking - they could only work in the summer because it all froze over in the winter and they had no work in the winter. They had to just scrounge around and get whatever work they could to live - keep going with. But when the summer came and the people started building - needed bricks again - well, then it was a mad rush. Through the winter, you know, when it was all frozen - - -.

Do you know what sort of work they did in the winter?

What ever came along. I don't think they - - -. They couldn't pick and choose, they just went looking and whatever they got they'd do it. They seemed to manage.

Had your grandfather had teams of horses in England?

No, he'd come from a farm where they'd had horses. That was why he - - -. And he'd been apprenticed to the brickmaking, you see. That was why he knew all about horses, being born on a farm. Oh, I can't think of the name of the place now. That's why he - after he couldn't start up a brick place - he decided that the next best thing would be horses.

Did your parents ever tell you how they met?

Yes. My father used to come walking past where my mother worked and she said he always carried this stick and he used to swing the stick, and she said one day she jumped out and frightened him and he dropped the stick. And she said, that's - - -. She must have been a bit of a (laughs) - you know. I don't know what you call it. But I don't think she was very shy. She was quite - - -. She was very self-possessed. She knew what she, you know - - -. Of course, I suppose there was a big household there and there'd be a lot of people and she was only twelve when she went there. She probably grew up with those people, I suppose.

Was your father already in uniform when they met?

He was always in uniform. I never saw him in anything else, really, until we got on the boat, and then he came out and I didn't know him. (laughter) It was part of him, you know, it was just a part of him.

Do you know what sort of work he did in the Army before you left England?

Yes, he was in charge of - oh, laying out the camps and, you know - - -. I suppose possibly that's where he picked up a bit of his carpentry work. When they were moving camp and that sort of thing, he'd be in charge of clearing one camp and moving the next one. He was a Lieutenant all the time I knew him. The English Army uniform's very smart and I always remember him when he had stars on his shoulders, and I always wanted one of those stars, but I never got it.

Do you know what year your parents married?

I think it was - - -. I came along about eighteen months after they were married, and I was born, what did I say, nineteen hundred and five. Yes, so it would have been nineteen hundred and three I should say.

I don't think I've asked you when your mother was born. Do you know the year of her birth?

No, I don't.

When did she die?

She died when I was sixteen.

That would be 1921?

Yes, about that time.

And how old was she when she died?

Oh, she was only - she was only in her late thirties, in her thirties. She was quite young.

Can you tell me about your brothers and sisters? You were the eldest?

Yes, that's right.

Can you tell me their names and the dates that they were born?

Yes, my sister was next to me, and her name was May Lily Norris Spinks.

When was your sister born?

She was born three and a half years after me. But there was a son between us and he died. He died before we left England. He was only a few weeks old when we left - - -. No, couldn't have been. I had another brother and sister. But the brother died before we left England. I don't know how old he was. And the sister died just after - after my father had gone back to the war. Left here and gone back to England in the Army. And that sister died before he got back, so he had a daughter that he'd never seen. She was only - just toddling around she was. And meningitis was going around. It was over in the camp - there was a big camp here where Colonel Light Gardens is now. There was a huge military camp there and it was raging through the camp, this meningitis, and my little sister got it somehow or other. I don't know how that happened but, must have come into contact with it somehow.

How old was she?

She was about two and a half I think, very young.

Do you remember the illness?

Not really. They quarantined - - -. She was taken away and quarantined - put her into quarantine, because it was spreading so quickly.

Do you know where they took her?

At the Adelaide Hospital - Adelaide Children's Hospital, which wasn't as big as it is now.

That must have been a very sad time.

It was. It was a very bad time for my mother, exceptionally bad for her. Luckily I was old enough to understand that - - -. I suppose I was a bit of a help.

So from what you've told me, you were the oldest, then there was a boy who died. Do you know how soon after your were born he was born?

It was between me and my sister, and there was three and a half years between my sister and I, so it was in between the two.

And how old was he when he died?

He was only six weeks.

Do you know why he died?

Well, my mother had asthma and he sort of took the asthma. When he was born he had asthma too and, of course, a tiny baby - it was very bad. My mother never had it herself after that, and she always said that the child took and it left her, but that's an old - - -. No, she suffered from asthma all her life, my mother did, and yet - - -.

It just left her?

Yes. Of course, we were out here pretty soon after, so I mean to say, we left England before the winter came when she would have got it most, and by the time we got here it was possibly the better climate here that was the cause of her losing the asthma.

So was it just you two girls in the family?

Yes, apart from the little one that died. Yes. That's the family as it was. It finished up like that. [shows photograph - see copy on file]

So when was your younger brother born?

He was born - I can't remember. No, I can't remember when. There's two years between him and my sister. I was about five and a half when he was born. He was quite small. I wished I'd have had - - -. Mum had a photo that was taken in England before we left and I couldn't find it. I rang my sister in the West and she said she didn't think she had it, but she'd look through. But evidently she hasn't got it because I haven't heard from her. But my father was with us in that one - a similar thing. But he was a little baby in arms then. Then was taken on the wharf in England before we left.

What was his name?

My brother? Frank James. Frank was my father's name and I think James was a family name.

I'll speak again of this photograph when we get up to the stage of your father leaving for the war. What do you remember of life in England before you came?

Well very little really. I can only remember going to school - freezing cold feet, freezing cold hands and face. And the schools had great big coal fires in

the school rooms. I can always remember that. But I can't really remember that much. I think the idea that it was so cold, I just wiped it out of my mind. I hate the cold, I always have, and I just wiped that period out of my mind. I just didn't want any more to do with it.

Do you know how old you were when you started school first?

Yes, everyone started at five in England.

So you'd been for a couple of years.

A couple of years, yes. And when I got here I was - you know, I went to the Brighton school. There were twelve children at the Brighton school, and my sister and I made fourteen. They put me in the infants with my sister. I was very upset over that. That was - - -. I hated it there because the children - - -. We were the first migrants that they'd had there and, of course, we spoke very 'jammy', as they call it, and they used to chase us and copy us talking - you know, copy our talking, and tell us we were stuck up and all that sort of thing. Oh, I hated that, I really did. And yet I finished school there. I was twelve when I - - -. They took me out of the babies after a while because they knew I'd had more schooling, and I was twelve when I finished school there - finished there - and then I should have gone on to the high school but there was no transport. I couldn't get to - - -. See, there was the Adelaide Girls' High School was there - just a small one - and I could have gone but I couldn't get transport. I didn't have any way of getting into town.

I'd like to talk a little bit more about your time at school later on. You've mentioned that your mother gave birth to you at her mother's home, and that was the family that later came out.

No, my father's mother - not my mother's mother, my father's mother.

So did you know your father's people well?

Yes, very well. We were very close. They were a very close family. Well, so were my mother's family really, but when they came out here, of course, I knew them better than I did in England.

Did you keep in touch with your father's people?

Yes, I did, right up until his oldest sister died, and then I wrote to her daughter - she only had one daughter - and I wrote to her for years, but it just petered out. You know, there really wasn't anything in common.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A: TAPE 1 SIDE B

Did you know why your family decided to come to Australia?

Yes, because things were very bad in England. There wasn't any work and there wasn't - - -. Oh, the weather was bad and, you know, it was generally bad there.

At what stage did your father leave the British Army?

He left after the South African War [Boer War], but they didn't release him. He was kept, you know, sort of hang fire - if they needed him again they could call him back at any time. Because they'd put a lot of money in his training and that and they didn't want to lose his - - -. So, anyhow - - -.

How did he earn a living in the intervening time?

Oh, well he had a lot of back pay and they had a lot of money collected in the Army and I think he was pretty well off really when he married. He knew that - - -. He didn't know really what he was going to do when he was married but he sort of - - -. I think he probably looked around and didn't like things as they were because there was no work or anything, and then the family all came. We were costing money and we couldn't - things were getting worse. So I think that was when he - - -. He'd been over to South Africa and he thought what a wonderful country it was. He thought he'd like to go there and take us there, because there was no cold weather or anything like that. So that's why we left England.

Can you tell me about the muddle in South Africa and South Australia?

Well that must have been a muddle with the migration people. They must have put down 'S.A.' on it - or possibly they had nearly a boatload here so the 'S.A.' was just transferred over to South Australia. I know my father was very frustrated. But then someone told him, 'Don't worry. It's the same sort of climate. It'll be all right. You'll be all right there,' and he just took it in his stride as soldiers have to do.

Do you know if he had much warning of the change in destination?

No, only about two weeks, I think, when they called him up to go. They told him there was a passage for him and when he went to see about it, it was South Australia and of course he wouldn't take it at that stage. He said he'd have to talk it over with my mother and their people too. I think they all had a family gathering and decided that they'd take it anyway because he might be ages before he got a passage to South Africa.

Had he been waiting long?

Yes, quite a while I think. I think it was a fair while.

What, a year, or - - -?

It could have been a full year I think.

Do you know how he spent his days before you left England?

Not really. I didn't - - -. I was too young to take note of those sort of things.

Do you know if he had plans of the sort of work he wanted to go into?

Yes he did. He knew what he wanted. He knew the building was his line because it was the nearest to what he'd been doing in the Army. And he was definitely going into building. He was very capable. He'd been used to ordering men around and getting jobs done. He just knew what he wanted and did it. There was no fuss about it.

Do you know if he ever worked at all in his parents' business?

No, never. He wasn't interested in that. He would have gone into the Army at eighteen I should think.

Do you remember how you thought about, knowing you were leaving home?

Yes, I was very upset. I can remember that because my father's sister - - -. I adored her and she adored me, and we were real pals, and I couldn't get over leaving her. That's the one I told you I wrote to and her daughter after she'd died and kept a little correspondence with her. Well that was her. She wasn't even married then - she didn't have any children of her own - and I think I must have been one of the first of the grandchildren, something like that. Anyhow she adored me and I adored her, and of course when I had to leave her I was terribly upset. You know, at the age when it upsets you. And the night before we left - - -. We had to get on to the boat very early in the morning and we went and stayed with my father's people and they had a big house with upstairs bedrooms, and there was beds all pushed up together and we were all - - -. Anyhow she said to me, 'You coming into my bed with me?' and I slept with her that night, and in the morning I didn't want to get up and I didn't want to go. I was terribly upset over it.

Were there tears?

Yes, tears and crying, and she was crying. She didn't want me to go. She was very upset too. But the other two, they were too small. They didn't mind. They just stood it in their stride. But I was old enough to realise that I was never going to see her again and I never did.

Have you ever returned to England?

No, I haven't.

You were saying your parents had a lot of furniture and belongings with them. What sort of things did they bring here?

Well, in the bedroom in the other room I've got a chest of drawers that came out with all the linen in it. And that's got - oh, it's a beautiful old chest. It's got locks on it and all the keyholes have got brass all round them. That was put down in the hold and someone tried to rob - was robbing, stealing things from the hold - and someone tried to rob them, and they'd broken one of the locks. They got to one small top drawer and got things out of it. Mum said that was just a few towels in there. I think she said some glasses - some breakables anyway - that they didn't have time. Someone must have disturbed them because none of the other locks were touched. And they were all loaded up with sheets and blankets and towels and, you know, all of the linen that she had for the household.

You say that you had mattresses rolled in canvas. Did you have bedsteads as well?

Yes, we had them. You know, the old iron bedsteads. They were all packed in crates.

Did you have a complete house full of furniture?

Well, not a complete house, really, but we had china and cooking utensils and things, all that. They all came out. They came out for the thirty pounds so I don't think they did too bad. (laughs) I mean, it was quite a big load when they put it on.

And when you took it off at the other end.

Yes. I know I had to look after my sister. My mother sat on the front with the driver, and my brother on her lap. I sat at the back of the trolley with my legs hanging down and my father had his arm round me, holding me so that I wouldn't fall. And I had to hold my sister.

When was this?

Coming home from Outer Harbour on the trip home. It was nearly dark - getting darker and darker all the way down. And there were no roads. There wasn't a road. We were up and down, bumpy, lumpy old road.

What do you remember of the ship that you came on? What was it's name?

Well, it was the Orama and that was sunk in the First World War. It was the Orient Line boat. Then they had another one, and they named that after it. But that was the first Orama.

You say that your family had a cabin.

Yes, a four berth cabin. I think it must have been second class. I don't think it was first class. But it was a very nice cabin and we had beautiful meals and that. Well I enjoyed them anyway. We had a table and that. The steerage people, they were more or less got their own meals, I think. Because I don't ever remember seeing any of them at meals or anything.

Did you mix with them?

Yes, I did. I was allowed to go and play with them. Because I don't think there were very many that weren't steerage.

Did you know anyone else on the ship?

No, we didn't know anyone, but we got to know a few people. There was an Irish family there, and that was the girl who sent - was my friend.

The one who you sent you photo to?

The one that I sent my photo to, yes. They were very poor. They were in steerage, and they had a crowd of kiddies, and they were very poor. My father more or less took them under his wing and found a place for them to go.

In Adelaide?

Yes. They finished up here, living at Brighton. Their father turned out to be a real rotter, though. He used to beat them all up - get drunk and beat them all up. But he was a wonderful horseman, as the Irish all are. He was mad on horses and he worked in the stables. They had a small racing place - now what's the name of the racecourse quite close to town?

The one on the other side of town?

No, this side as you go in.

Morphett?

No, not Morphettville, there's another one. Right close into town.

I'm afraid I don't know.

No, I don't either. Anyhow he worked there with the horses. But on the way home there was a couple of pubs and he'd stop at the pub each time and get drunk. Then he'd come home and bash up the kids. And that friend of mine, she'd always come running over to us whenever the - - -. We were quite a good way away from them, but she'd still run over to us and stay with me the night until her father got over his booze up.

How long did the trip out take?

Six weeks. You got to know people quite well in that time and under those conditions.

What was the trip like? Was it rough at all?

At times it was. As a matter of fact my mother never got out of bed, I think it was about three weeks. When we first got on it was very bad - it was very rough, you know - and she was very, very seasick. I was seasick for a little while but I soon got over that and I was running around. Because there was no Mum to look after us and Dad couldn't keep track of us all the time. So I used to take my sister by the hand and down to steerage we'd go. And we'd have real fun down there because a lot of their mothers and fathers were sick too - the children that were there. So you can just imagine, we had a real hectic time down there.

What sort of things did you get up to?

Oh, nothing, just playing. You know, just what kids do. There wasn't much room really. There was one part on the deck where they had fenced off so it was quite safe, and the children couldn't fall over. We were allowed to go out there if the weather was all right. They just used to turn us all out. We'd all go out and go mad - run round and round. Of course we hadn't seen daylight practically. We'd been living under - down in the steerage.

Do you remember the ship sailing into Outer Harbour?

No, not really. Because I was in bed, you see. We got there daylight in the morning and we were out - off the boat, before - - -. About nine o'clock, something like that - very early. The luggage was all unloaded and everything. So, you know, it was a - - -. I couldn't even - - -. Well, I suppose I'd gone to bed the night before and slept right through - just woke up and I was here.

Do you remember your first impressions of Adelaide?

Yes, I do. I thought, 'Oh, what a lot of land,' you know, no sea - no sea any more, it's all land now. But it was all dirty old sandhills and rubbishy - you know, it wasn't settled there. The Outer Harbour was just stuck there on its own. There were very few houses or anything there.

Had you had any idea of what to expect?

No, I hadn't thought of that. I hadn't thought that far ahead. I wasn't old enough to think of that much.

Can you remember your parents' reaction?

My mother was very upset really. She wasn't at all happy after being so seasick. She was very unhappy. If my father hadn't have been so used to handling things I think we would have been in a very bad way. Like the Kelly's - the people that Father took under his wing and helped them out. He wasn't. He was hopeless and the mother wasn't so bad, but he had no idea what to do. If it hadn't been for my father I don't know what would have happened to them.

What happened to them on that very first day?

Well, they had to stay there and wait a while. I think they slept on the wharf with their things, because after my father had got himself a job, he went down to look for them. Then I think he must have organised it, I don't know. Anyhow, I know that they lived - - -. They found a little house in Brighton which was not far from where we were. I think possibly my father found the house for them and just took them there.

You've described to me the first day that you arrived and your father found a house and then the next day - - -. Was it the very next day that he found work?

Yes he could have started that day but he didn't because, as I said, he had to go down and pick up the other family. He had some jobs he wanted to do at home. But he was never out of work at all. He just got work quickly and easily, and then of course he was called back after two years. Just getting settled nicely in. Everything was going as it should do - smoothly and nicely - and then he got his papers to say that he had to go back because of the war. So he went back and left us.

Can we talk about those years at Brighton before your father left? Can you describe the home that he found for you?

Well, after the little cottage - we didn't stay there for about - - -. Oh, just before he left we got another house which was further down the Brighton Road - a big house.

What was the cottage like?

A nice little cottage, only it was very small.

How many rooms?

Only three. And it was a brick - not brick - stone, you know, the natural stone. And it's still standing - it's still there. I think it's been added to but the original cottage is still there.

Did it have much of a yard?

Yes, huge. I don't think there was any fences - I don't remember fences. I think it was just stuck there. It was huge - we could go where we liked.

You must have noticed great differences between where you'd been living in England?

Yes, I suppose I did, but I didn't - - -. I don't remember that it worried me very much. Of course, we had to go to school too. My father was a great one for pushing us off to school - 'You've got to get your education!'

How soon after you arrived did you begin school?

I think it was only a week. We started the following week.

Did you father rent the cottage?

Yes.

Did you continue renting until you moved to Marino?

Yes. He was thinking of buying the place where we went to but he took it on a rental basis and then he was called back for the war and Mum just stayed there. It wasn't too far away from her people, because they came out nine months after we were here. They arrived, as I said before, and they lived fairly close. So it was quite handy for her.

Can you tell me what his work involved at Glenelg?

Well, they were building the breakwater there and he had to - - -. I don't know - I don't know what he had to do really. I wasn't old enough to ask about.

Would you know whether he was in a supervising position or labouring?

I don't know. No, it wouldn't have been labouring, I don't think, because - - -. If it was anything it would have been carpentering I should think. If they had carpentering on that. I don't know whether they did really.

You've said that there were only twelve at the school that you went to. What do you remember of the school?

There was only two rooms - and it's still there too. Those two rooms are still there. There was a headmaster, who I thought was an old dragon, and he had two of his daughters for teachers. That was the school.

What was their name?

Whittington. I'll never forget that. (laughs) He was an old dragon.

Was there infant - - -?

Yes, right through. There weren't that many people around. And then it got big. Well, my children went down there to school too - the same school. It had grown a lot since I went to it.

What do you remember of the subjects that you learned there?

Well, really it's the only school I do remember because I never went beyond that school. I must have done all right because I did all right after. I don't think I'm illiterate or anything.

Which subjects did you enjoy in particular?

My best thing was sewing. I used to get the prize for sewing every year. I was very keen on sewing, and I was never any good at arithmetic. I hated that. But spelling I wasn't too bad. And history and geography - I was very good at those. But the one that I really needed I wasn't any good at and I'm still no good at it either.

Why do you say you really needed it?

Well, I mean, you have to know arithmetic. It is a handicap to you if you can't. I find it a handicap now and again even now, at my age. I should have learnt some now at this age, but I never ever touched it - I hated it.

Can you remember comparing school in Australia with what you'd experienced at home in England?

It was so entirely different, because the schools in England were so big and there was only these two rooms down there, and they were only small rooms at that. Of course, as I'd gone the school had got more children. You know, there'd been quite a lot of people had settled around and there was quite a few more children there.

You were indicating before that you were fairly unhappy when you started?

Very, very unhappy, until that old headmaster left and we got a new one. But I think I was in Grade about 5 or 6 then.

Can you tell me about that unhappiness? What caused it?

Well it was just, I think, we were so different from the children here. We couldn't sort of - - -. We had nothing in common. We just couldn't contact. They were all Australian born children and they only knew Australian things, and we didn't know anything like that. I think that was the whole cause of the unhappiness. Luckily for me I had that friend of mine who came on the boat with us - that family too. So it wasn't quite as hard as it could have been if I'd have been flopped down there on my own.

Did she go to the school as well?

Yes, she went there too.

Did you make friends amongst the other children at school?

Not really. I never really got very close to any of the girls there. I suppose it was the different environment, you know. We didn't have anything in common. Because they didn't know anything about England and I didn't know anything about Australia.

You said that they thought you were a bit stuck up? What did you think about them?

Oh, I thought they were dirty little brats. They used to go to school with no shoes on and, oh, that horrified me (laughs) - no shoes and socks. My mother was horrified over that too. We'd never be allowed to go like that.

What was your parents' reaction to the school?

I don't think they worried much about it. I think - - -. We must have been getting along all right there. I think they were quite good teachers, but it was just that they were Australian too, and they didn't like the way we spoke. They'd sort of - - -. Every time we said something that wasn't exactly as they said it, we'd get stopped - 'Stand up and say that,' and say it like they told me to say it. Not say it how I had said it - say it their way - and it was very frustrating.

Can you remember any of the words?

No, not really. There were so many.

Do you think you lost your accent fairly quickly?

Yes, I think so. We had to. There was nothing else for it because, apart from the Irish family who also had a different accent to us, we didn't have anyone else to speak to, so we had to lose it. We jolly well had to get into the Australian way of talking.

What was your parents' attitude to that?

Well my mother didn't like it. She never ever spoke - you know, he always had the English accent - she never lost it. But my father did. He fitted in. Well, I suppose, being in the Army he just naturally fitted in anywhere.

You said that some of the other children at the school didn't come in shoes and socks. What were their parents' backgrounds, do you know?

No, they just worked around locally, but I don't know what they - - -. I didn't take notice of it and wouldn't have thought to ask what their parents were doing.

Would you consider that they came from a different class to you?

Well, I don't know, but I think my mother did because she was horrified at them running around all the time with no shoes and socks on - out in the street, and they were grubby. We were never allowed to get grubby. It was a terrible thing.

So they didn't have to wear shoes and socks, even in the classroom?

No, they never made them wear them to school. If they didn't want to wear them, they didn't wear them. I don't suppose - - -. If it had been a bigger school they may have done so, but seeing it was just such a small school, I suppose it didn't matter.

Did you attend school every day?

Yes.

Were there ever any reasons that you wouldn't be sent to school?

No, I don't think. I never ever remember any. The only time I remember not going to school was when I had typhoid fever.

How old were you then?

I think I was twelve - somewhere around that. I was in Adelaide Children's Hospital - isolation hospital - about six weeks, something like that. But typhoid fever was going around then too. Because there was no drainage, you know, those days. There was no drainage at all. And at the school I think it started, because there were several others at school had gone to hospital before me. And yet my sister and I slept in the same room together, and yet I got it and my sister never got it. It's a funny thing how those things happen.

Do you remember that time in hospital?

I do. It was funny, I didn't like it (laughs) and of course they weren't allowed to come in and see me. All I could see - them outside walking along. They weren't allowed to come anywhere near me and if they brought anything the nurses would have to bring it over and give it to us. But I know the nurses were lovely. I liked the nurses - they were very nice. But I didn't like the hospital.

You said that you got on at school fairly well. Do you think your time at school was worthwhile?

Yes, definitely. As I say, the only thing was arithmetic that I couldn't get on with. But I was always pretty good at geography and history. Anyhow I wasn't extra good, but I was good enough. We had all sorts of things then that they don't have now, but I can't remember what they were.

You would have had composition and the like.

Yes. Oh, I wasn't too bad at that. My mother always used to say, 'Oh, you can always tell a good story,' so I must have been pretty good at that I think. (laughs)

Did you play sport at school?

No, we never had any sports at all. I don't think there was any sports. I can't remember any sports here at all, until I met my husband, and he was playing in the Brighton Football Team. And that was the first time I ever remember going to the football match or any sports. Of course, naturally, we still stayed - - -. Brighton Football Club was where the Glenelgs take their men from, you know. And of course we were - - -. When they were playing - the teams were playing - our team was always Glenelg, and my team still is Glenelg, although I don't know any of them from Adam. I still barrack for Glenelgs.

Would you have liked to have gone on further after primary school?

At school? No, I don't think so, because I didn't like sitting down - I liked to be moving. You know, I wasn't a sedentary person at all. I don't think I would have gone. If I'd have gone to anything I would have gone to sewing, I think, but I didn't. My mother wasn't strong. I just stayed home and looked after the family. My sister went. She went to a doctor's place. There was a doctor in Jetty Road in Glenelg and she spent all her teenage years with them.

Doing what sort of work?

Housework, and looking after - - -. Bringing in the patients and, you know, whatever there was to be done. She was there about seven or eight years, I think - I'm not quite sure which.

So what age were you when you left school?

Well I should have had to be fourteen before I left, but I'd got through by twelve - - -

END TAPE 1 SIDE B: TAPE 2 SIDE A

Yes, you were explaining why you didn't stay at school until you were fourteen.

Well, I went sometimes, I didn't go all the time. When I went to school I didn't do any lessons. I used to go down and look after the infants. Sort of help the teacher with the infants. They asked me, I think, if I wanted lessons - wanted to do something there - but I'd done them all the year before and I just - - -. There was no challenge and I just - - -. So I used to go down and look after the infants. And I loved little children - I used to get on real well with them. I had to go some of the time each week because I wasn't allowed to leave school until I was fourteen.

I think there would have been a minimum number of days in the year you had to attend.

Yes, that's right.

How do you account for finishing the school work so early?

Well, I just got through. When I started there I didn't start in Grade 1 because I was beyond that. I think our education here was way behind the English system of education. After a couple of weeks they - I was just put up two or three grades and I kept up with them. If I'd have started and gone right through probably I would have taken the - gone till I was fourteen. But I think that the English education was far ahead of the education that we were getting here.

With your father's background - his sort of education - do you think he wanted you to go on?

Well I don't think he worried about the girls - they didn't in those days. No, I think he was quite happy. In fact it seemed to have turned out all for the best because I looked - I learnt to look after the home and all that sort of thing, and I just naturally looked after him when my mother died, and the other two. So I don't think I would have gone on any further.

You say that you enjoyed looking after the infants. Did teaching interest you?

No, not really I don't think. I'm sure once I'd have passed the infants, I don't think I would have gone any further. But the little ones that were just starting. I used to draw things for them, and all that sort of thing, you know, and tell them stories.

Perhaps now we can talk about the time that your father left again - when he got his papers. Do you remember him telling the family?

Yes I remember, because we were all crying over that. That was a terrible, terrible thing. Because, I mean, my mother wasn't a well person, and she - - -. Well, my father looked after everything, you know. He sort of run everything and without him we thought we'd be lost. But I think, really, it was the best thing that could happen to my mother because she seemed to get through it on her own. She was left to it and she just got on with it, and we were all happy and we had a marvellous childhood because we were quite near the beach - we spent a lot of our time at the beach, and my father was a marvellous swimmer and he taught us all to swim. And in my days girls didn't swim. I was a tomboy. I used to swim with the boys and, you know, it wasn't proper for girls to go swimming. But there was never ever anyone down at the beach. No one knew, you know, whether I - - -. When seeing me out in the water you wouldn't know whether I was a girl or a boy. Mum didn't mind. She thought it was a good idea that we learnt to swim. But my brother, he was a very good swimmer too. He did it quite a lot. And my son, he was State Champion Lifesaver for five years. He was extra in the swimming.

So when would your father have left to go back to England?

It was the middle of 1914 I think, or towards - it was the first year of the war. He got notice - it took about six weeks for the letter to come. I suppose by the time they found out who they wanted and sent him out, it would have been half way through the first year of the war. And then he had to get back again. It was another six weeks to go back again. It must have been towards the end of the first year of the war before he got back.

What was he called back to do?

Help train the troops. He was stationed in England for quite a while. Eventually he finished up going to France and then he went to Germany on the Army of Occupation and he stayed on there for a couple of years. So it made him - six years - he was away six years altogether. I didn't really know him when he came back - he was so altered, you know. I suppose he didn't know me either, I guess.

We were looking at this photograph that he carried with him while he was overseas. Was that taken after he got his call-up papers?

[NR and interviewer examine photograph] That was taken after, yes. That was posted to him. Mother had that done here. There was a photography place - Frank O'Neill's - in Adelaide.

Frank A. McNeill?

Yes.

Do you remember having the photograph taken?

Yes, I remember that.

Would that have been your Sunday best dress?

Yes, I think so.

Is that how you remember your mother?

Yes. She didn't alter much really. Her hairdos altered, but apart from her hairdo I think she - - -.

Yes, it certainly looks as though it saw a lot of travelling.

Yes, it has - it's pretty old. (laughs)

Did you have contact with your father while he was away?

Oh yes, he was a great writer. We always had letters. Every time he - - -. You know, we'd say to Mum, 'Any letters from Dad?' when we got home. 'No, no,' and then a couple of weeks later there'd be another letter. Never more than a few weeks. We'd always get a letter from him - he was a very good correspondent.

Did he write to you children individually?

No, just to Mum, with all our names on the bottom. It was my brother I felt sorry for, because he had no father and while we were at school he was only small and starting. And he saw all the other boys with their fathers and that, and he never understood that his father had gone away. It was very hard for him. I think really they weren't very close, either, when he came back. He was so shy - my brother - that he wouldn't - - -. I think Dad was a bit overbearing and they never really got on well together.

Could you tell me a little bit more about your parents? How do you remember your mother? What sort of person was she?

Oh, she was a nice person. A little bit delicate. She was never very strong. She always - - -. I suppose having the asthma must have done something. She used to like music and she liked - she like sewing and she always kept us very well dressed.

Did she make your clothes?

Made our clothes, yes. Made her own and ours. Even my brother's suits she made.

When you say that she was delicate, as you were growing up, was she bedridden?

No, never. She was just, sort of, always catching a cold or getting something wrong. No, she was never really bedridden.

Did she have to have help in the house?

No. Because I was big enough to help. I took over a lot of her jobs - well, all of them when she was not too well.

What was your father like?

He was no good in the house. He was no help whatever in the house. But he was a good man outdoors, you know, he always - - -. When we eventually got our own home and settled down he had it very nice. All the outside or inside that needed doing he had it all done. He was a very good tradesman really.

Which of your parents do you think had the most influence on your upbringing?

My father, definitely. Although he was away.

Why was that?

Well, I don't know. It was always my father I went to if anything went wrong. I never went to my mother because of the two younger ones I suppose and I was a bit independent. No, I'm sure it was my father that influenced me more than my mother.

What sort of values do you think your parents tried to instil in you?

They expected us to behave ourselves and not to do anything to be ashamed of, that sort of thing.

Were there any restrictions on your behaviour in the house?

Oh yes, definitely. We always had to say Grace before we had meals and we had to say our prayers before we went to bed. We weren't allowed to talk at table until my mother - - -. Not if we wanted to say anything. But that was only when Dad was home. He was the strict one. He used to make us behave ourselves.

When he was away did you - - -?

Yes, we played up a bit. (laughs)

What religion were your parents?

Church of England, both.

Were you regular attenders?

Yes, very much so as children. My mother was quite a religious person. While my mother was alive we never missed church, Sunday School and that. But after she died I didn't go quite so often, but I am still quite a good church person, even now.

Which church did you attend?

Oh, St Jude's at Brighton, and that was there when I first came here so that's a very old church. I was married there and my children were all christened there.

When you were young, did you get to know the clergymen well?

No, they didn't sort of bother with children, not then. Even though after I was married I didn't really know the - - -. I used to go to all the things on the church but I never really knew the parson. They seemed to be a bit stand offish. Not like the one we've got here. Oh, he's a darling this one. He's only a young chap, but oh he's a beautiful - you know, really is. He mixes in with everybody and anybody. He's just one of the best parsons I've ever known I think, really.

I was asking you about restrictions on behaviour in the household. Some of the things I'm thinking about would be your parents' attitude to, say, alcohol.

No, we never had it and it was never in the house. We never had it.

Did your father drink at all?

Oh, well, he'd have a drink with the men, but we never - - -. The women weren't expected to drink. That was a terrible thing for a woman. But he'd go out and have a pint, as he called it, but never very much. He'd always, you know, come home quite sober.

Did your father smoke?

Yes, he did. That is he did when he came back. He must have contracted that fault when he was in the Army. He didn't when we first - not earlier - but when he came back from the war he did.

Some families had restrictions on dancing or cards.

No, we was allowed - - -. Cards we weren't allowed to play. We were allowed to play 'Grab' and those sort of things, but he wouldn't have any - - -. They wouldn't have poker evenings or anything like that. It was just the children's games in cards. No mostly we had a piano and my mother played and if we had social evenings or anything, it was always round the piano singing, that sort of thing.

Did you have friends in?

Yes, quite a lot, yes. And we had a fairly big room and plenty of room to - - -. My sister was a marvellous dancer. She was very good. She was only a little thing and she was as light as a feather. She used to make up dances. My mother'd play for her and I think Mum must have taught her to dance, because she really was - she was a marvellous dancer. She'd do tap dancing and she'd do all sorts - any sort of dancing. She was just like a little bird hopping around. But I, I was a clumsy clod. I couldn't dance at all.

Can you describe the house that you moved to in 1914 before your father left?

Well, it was a fairly big house. All one floor - there was no upstairs. And it had a big verandah round three [sides], and it had a window - windows that you lift up looking out on to the verandah - and we always had chairs and things there out on the verandah. In the hot weather, used to sit out there at night. Because there were no street lights or anything in those days and no electricity or anything - an odd gas lamp at different places. Down by the Brighton Hotel - that was there too, the Brighton Hotel. That was Thatched House Tavern in those days, and - - -.

What was your house made of?

Bricks - and stone I think, if I remember rightly.

Did it have an iron roof?

Yes. Galvanised iron roof.

What were the verandahs made of?

They were just sort of verandah hung over, and they had wooden floors.

Do you know how many rooms the house had?

I think it was six. There were three bedrooms I know. And then we had a big - - -. At the front part there was a big room that had the piano one end and the dining table the other end, and there was a big window that went right up to go out - two big windows - on to the balcony. Sometimes we'd have our meals out on the verandah that side.

Were the windows from floor to ceiling?

Yes, right up. And they'd sort of lift up. They weren't swing ones. They went lift up.

You'd told me four rooms. What were the other two rooms apart from the bedrooms and the front verandah?

And the kitchen. There was a laundry too, that's right. Not many people had laundries those days. They mostly did their washing outside. But we had a laundry, I remember that.

Did you have water in the house?

No, we didn't. We had a big underground tank. We had to go out and pump the water and bring it in buckets and things.

How did you manage for, say, washing up?

Oh, we had a big stove and we used to have a big iron kettle thing, always on the stove. It was a wood stove and we'd always have hot water in this big iron kettle. It was always there, fairly hot.

What about wash days?

Well, we'd have the - - -. Mum had a - I don't know what it was, a copper or something - outside. She'd light that up and get enough water and bring it inside into the laundry and wash. We had a wooden bench with bowls - no, round tubs, two big round tubs - and an old hand wringer. Then, you know, the way they used to turn them and the water had to be emptied out. And I used to carry it out, spread it out all over the ground outside. There was nowhere - no sewers to put it into. It all had to be carried in and carried out.

What about bath days?

We'd have the copper lighted up and the water'd be the same. We'd bath in the big tubs that we did the washing in.

How often did you have baths?

Oh, a couple of times a week. We were - - -. A lot of people didn't have them I don't think, but my mother was a fussy one and we always had a couple of times a week. Always on Saturday night we had a bath, I remember that. Because we had to go to church the next morning so we couldn't go to church dirty.

Is that when you had your long hair washed as well?

Yes.

Did your mother dress your hair in any way?

No, but she did my sister's. My sister had curls. You can see how they hang on the shoulder there [refers to photograph of family]. She used to brush it around her finger and curl it up.

Did she put papers in it?

No, just brush it round the finger. It was a natural curl and she brushed it round her finger and they made it sort of curl up. But, as I said, I wasn't a mother's girl, I was a father's girl, so my hair just got what I did to it.

How big a yard did you have at that house?

Oh, quite a big one. It must have been a couple of acres at least.

And what did you do with the yard?

Well, not much. My father was no gardener and we mostly used it for playing in I think. Mum had a few flowers tucked away here and there. When we first went in there was this - - -. One side had a big blue hedge. Now what was that called - plumbago? Do you know it, plumbago?

No.

It's got a pretty blue flower on it and I remember sitting there the first morning when I got up and looking at this. The beautiful blue colour flower. I always remember that. Whenever I see plumbago I remember that big hedge of plumbago down the side of the house.

What other plants did you have in the yard? Did you have any trees, fruit trees?

No. Yes we did, we had a mulberry tree - a big mulberry tree. That's right, and that was right down the bottom end. That was the only tree. Oh, it was a gorgeous tree. You know, great big and lovely shade underneath it. But when the mulberries were ripe they'd drop down on you and they were purple - stain get on your clothes. But it was a lovely tree.

Did you have any flowers?

No, not really. There was no water for flowers. Couldn't afford the water, you know. We didn't have enough water to have any garden. My mother'd put in a few peas or beans or something like that, and she'd go round with a bucket and water them every day, but you couldn't really have any garden because they couldn't water them.

Did you ever run short of water?

Yes, quite often. We had - - -. During the First World War there was a big drought, and when we went to school, we all had to take our own drinking water. I know several families didn't have any water and I used to take two bottles because we had a huge underground tank. We couldn't get the bottom part up - you know, the pipes didn't go down far enough. And when it got so dry we couldn't get it with the pump, my mother used to get a big long rope and tie a bucket on with a brick in it and put that down, and then we'd have to

pull that up to get water. And we never bathed. We had to go down to the sea and have a swim because there was never any water for a bath.

How do you remember coping with the Australian weather?

Well I loved it, but my mother didn't like the hot days. She was very much disturbed by it. But I loved it. I ran round. I used to go down to the beach and take off my shoes and run round on the beach. Oh, I think the children - we all sort of got on all right with it. I still like the hot weather anyway - I don't like the winter.

Did you mother regret the move to Australia?

I don't think, because her family came you see. I think she was quite happy with her family here. My father must have a bit, I think, because - - -. See later on he married my mother's sister. She was the only one - - -. She was an older sister and she was married and didn't come here. She stayed in England. Well, when my father was on leave he'd go and stay with them. Years later her husband died and she came out for a holiday and my father married her and went back to England with her. Of course we were married then, my sister and my brother and I - we were all married then. But I'd looked after my father since I was about sixteen I suppose, until then.

How did you mother cope when your father left?

She coped all right I think. With all the other sisters here - - -. When she couldn't cope we'd go and ask Auntie So and So to come and help, or something like that. Or Grandfather if anything heavy - we'd just go and ask Grandfather to come and help.

Let's talk about your grandfather coming out here. First of all, did you remain in the home that you had moved to shortly before the war? How long did you remain there?

Until my father came home.

You stayed there all that time. Did anyone else move into the home with you while your father was away?

No, we stayed on our own. When he came home we went up to Marino. He bought a house. There were some houses had been built there. It was a farm or something and they were built for the people that worked at the farm. I think it was the Kingston Estate. I'm not quite sure of that - I wouldn't - - -. But he bought one of the houses, which was also a very nice house. There again we had no water, no electric light or anything like that. But that house is still there and that was a solid brick - you know, solid stone - made out of heavy stone. It was a beautiful house that was.

You say that your mother's parent came to South Australia. What were their names?

Laundy.

What was your grandfather's christian name?

George.

And your grandmother?

Eliza.

Do you have any idea of their ages?

No.

When did they die?

My grandmother died a long, long time before my grandfather, and he was up in his - well up in his eighties when he died.

When was that?

Oh, that was long before the last war. I don't know what time.

When had your grandmother died?

She died several years before.

Before you married or afterwards?

No, before I married, she died.

And you married in 193 - - -.

No - I don't know. I can't remember when. I've got my marriage certificate, anyhow, in there.

About what time was it?

Well, my son is fifty two years old and I think I was twenty five or twenty six - something like that - when he was born. I'd been married about eighteen months when he was born.

So had you married before 1930?

Yes.

Well, we'll talk about that just in a little while. You say that a number of your uncles and aunts came out to South Australia as well.

Yes, mother's - none of my father's people did.

How many from her side came out?

Well they all came except one, and I think there must have been ten at least. May have been more, but I'm pretty sure there was ten of them - boys and girls - I just can't remember how many there were.

Where were your grandparents living during World War One when your father was away?

Well, they were living at Brighton. It was a big old house there too that had been a farm, and they lived there. That's no longer there. But it was a beautiful old home. And that also had cottages for the workers around it which the married girls took. Instead of living with their parents they used the two houses that were there.

You grandfather was in the carting business.

Yes, a carrier I suppose you'd call it.

What sort of goods did he carry, do you remember?

Whatever wanted carrying - timber - and he also used to cart cement from the cement works to the railway - after the railway station. That was later. Because I saw that railway built. I watched them scooping out the cuttings - the big cuttings. I used to go and watch them with the big horses scooping it out - all the dirt out.

Which railway line was this?

Adelaide to Willunga.

How far away was your grandfather's house?

Oh, about a mile I suppose. That was when Dad came home. Where we were - - -. We lived at Brighton till after the war when Dad came home. That was only a few steps away, you know, a couple of streets away - not very far.

END TAPE 2 SIDE A: TAPE 2 SIDE B

... she [Lady Kingston] didn't want to sell the land but the Government had taken it you see. She didn't have any say. Her husband [Charles Kingston] had died and she was just living over there with her maid. And she'd walk up and down the top of the cutting cursing the men [and waving a kitchen knife].

This was Lady Kingston?

Yes.

Do you remember her home?

Yes, they had a lovely place there. As a matter of fact I've got a beautiful old vase that came from there. My mother bought it when the place was sold up. My mother went to the sale and she bought several vases. My sister's got one and I've got one. It's a big - you know, quite valuable now.

While your father was away, did your grandparents have an influence on your upbringing?

No, none at all. Definitely not.

Why do you say definitely not?

Well, not with me. They may have with my sister because she was more mother's girl and she used to go with them. But I used to go out with the animals - where I could find. You know, I was a sort of - - -. I liked to go out and about. Though I did like sewing and reading. But I still liked to get out and watch the horses working and that sort of thing.

One of the subjects that I'd like to talk about with you is that of health and sickness in the family.

No sicknesses. I had typhoid fever when I was at school, but apart from that we had no sicknesses - very healthy.

You mother was delicate.

Yes, she was a bit delicate. That was chest - asthma, you know. I think the climate in England was the cause of that.

What did she do for her illness? Did you have a family doctor?

Yes, there was - - -. Not earlier, but later on when I was sort of - well, before she died. There was a doctor in Jetty Road, Brighton. They'd moved in there and he was her doctor. And there was a hospital at Glenelg - a private hospital at Glenelg - and she had cancer and they operated but it was too late. She was in the hospital down there at Glenelg.

How did you manage with illness before the doctor moved in?

Well, we never ever had any that I can think of. I suppose we could have gone to Adelaide. There must have been doctors there. We never came up against it. We were all tough.

Do you remember who diagnosed the typhoid fever in you?

I think I was running a fever at school - I think it was the school teacher, because there'd been others with it before me. I think that's how. I suppose they just suspected it was and bundled me off to the hospital.

Your youngest sister who later died, was born in about 1912/1913 was she?

No, wait a minute - 1915.

After your father went?

Yes, that's right. He never saw her. Yes it would be 1915 because he never saw her.

Do you remember your mother's confinement with that birth?

No, there was no doctor. The other women helped with that. It was just the done thing. The family did that.

Did she have the baby at home?

Yes.

In your home?

Yes. Her older sister came in and looked after her. Each night and morning I remember her coming in.

You would have been about ten years old.

Twelve I think I was, something like that.

How did you feel about a new baby?

Oh, I thought it was lovely. I really loved it - I thought it was beautiful.

Can you tell me about your sister's illness?

I don't really know much about it. I know that the camp was alive with this meningitis and I remember that everyone was being very careful and that. And the next thing I know my sister had died. I just - - -. I don't even think she went to hospital. I think she just died.

How far away was the camp?

Not very far. You know where Colonel Light Gardens is? Well that's where the camp was. And we were here - so it wasn't very far. My father used to ride his bike backwards and forwards there because he was in camp as soon as they called up. He had to wait for a boat to go back so he was over in camp there. So it wasn't that far away.

Do you remember your sister's funeral?

No, I don't really remember anything about that. I think possibly I was pushed off, you know, as they do. They don't want to sort of upset the little ones, or the younger ones.

Did your mother take it badly?

Very badly, yes. Especially with my father being away and him not seeing it. I always remember how upset she was that he'd never seen the child.

Did your mother have a stock of home remedies?

Yes.

Can you remember them?

Well they were mostly from her mother I think. What my mother didn't have my grandmother had. Oh yes, all sorts of things. She had a remedy for most everything. Castor oil or something like that. (laughs) 'Oh, you're all right. You've got a bit of a fever. Dose of castor oil and get some eucalyptus and rub on your chest,' or something. No doctor to tell you anything in those days.

How would she cope with the cuts and scratches that you must have had?

I don't know. I suppose she just washed them and put something on them - ointment or something. Sulphur ointment was the main thing I think they had then, which they made up from lard and put sulphur in it. I know the men used to have that. Grandfather had that in the stables and if the men got - were handling the horses - did anything, they got the sulphur ointment and put on it. That's the main thing I can - - -. That was lard with the sulphur mixed into it and put into a jar and they'd use it if they needed it. It was always kept in the stables.

Was there a chemist anywhere near you?

No. I think there might have been one in the city but I don't know because I didn't go into the city that much. The only time I remember going to the city was, we borrowed Grandfather's trap and Christmas Eve Mum would take us in to buy our Christmas presents. We didn't see them, but she'd go and buy our Christmas presents on Christmas Eve. We'd drive up in the horse and trap. It had to be in the daytime because we had to get back before dark because there were no lighting or anything and the horse always had to be unharnessed and put away.

Was that the only occasion during the year that you went?

Yes, that was the only time we ever went into the city.

Did you ever go to the Adelaide Show?

Not then. I was quite a bit older before - - -. I was able to go on my own was the first time I went.

Did your mother do any other sort of shopping herself in the city?

No, I think she did it locally. We had a shop opposite the school there and it was a universal store, sort of - sold everything. And when the children went - we used to go to school and we were at Marino - I used to take them down and I'd put the horse in the back of the stables at the back of the shop there. And that was the last two years of my life - my school life. We were living up there at Marino and we had a horse and buggy and I'd drive down, pick up all the kids - other children around that lived up there - and the chap was the running the store, he let me put the horse and buggy in the stables because his horses were out - while I was at school. So he let me put the horse into the stables there. And then I used to have to go and harness it up and put it back in the cart and take the kids home.

You say that was the last years of school.

The last, yes.

I'm just trying to get my dates straight in my mind. Do you remember the influenza epidemic after the war?

No, not really. Only thing I remember about that is that my cousin died, one of my mother's sister's children. She died during that epidemic. But there were quite a lot of deaths at that time I believe. But she also had asthma so apparently it ran in my mother's family because her father was my mother's brother, and she had asthma, same as my mother had had. So being out here in Australia must have helped her a lot though, because she was older than me when she came out really. Because her mother and father were married in England long before my mother and father. So she must have been older than me. But she died during that influenza epidemic.

There must have been quite a crowd of cousins.

Oh yes there were. They were only my mother's side. There were so many. I mean they all had big families and I suppose if I like to look round there must be some of them still around that I've lost track of.

Did they begin to attend the same school as you?

Oh yes, they all went to the same school. But most of them were after I left or else they left before I did, sort of thing. Some were older than me and they left when they were fourteen. Then the others were much younger and I'd left before some of them had started even.

What would have been the occasions when your whole family got together?

Oh, always at Christmas. We always went to Grandfather's place at Christmas. We always had a big do then.

Can you describe the day? How did it start?

We'd get up and open our presents and look around. We didn't have a Christmas tree or anything. There wasn't anything like that around. Then we'd always go down for lunch to Grandfather's. I don't know whether - I can't remember - - -. No, I don't think we gave any presents. Only got presents from our own. But all the cousins were there. We used to have quite a - - -. They had a great big room. It was sort of - - -. I think in the old house it had been a ballroom and they'd always had the - - -. The boys all slept in there and they'd clear the boys' beds out and they'd have the big ballroom with the big table in it all set up for Christmas dinner. And mostly they were ducks and chickens that they'd reared themselves. Because, with the horses, the chooks always used to go out and scratch and keep the - keep a little bit clean. It was sort of a natural thing to have chooks and that when you had horses. So there was always plenty of eggs and there was always enough meat. Chop off a few chooks' heads for Christmas dinner. But turkeys and things like that we never saw. But ducks we had. They had a few ducks.

What would you do for the evening meal on Christmas day?

I think we'd go to friends. I can't remember. Sometimes we'd stay there. It just depends I think. When Dad came home we made friends outside but while Dad was away we never mixed with outside people.

Why do you think that was?

I don't know. I think my mother just didn't want to bother with it. She had her own family there. She was quite happy to just go to them.

Let's talk a little bit more about the war. You must have been preoccupied with your own father being away. Were you fearful for him?

Very much so, yes. We were always, you know, horrified if we saw the postman coming around. Because there wasn't post deliveries much those days. They did have a post office that was built - I think it must have been during the war - and that was down at Hove. I don't remember them delivering letters though. But if the postman came you'd know that someone had been killed in the war. Everyone round the town would know that - - -. If you wanted letters you had to go and collect them yourself - you never got any letters delivered.

You said earlier that - was it four of your uncles died?

Yes. Well there was my - two of my mother's brothers were killed at the war, and two brother-in-laws were killed in the war.

How many of your uncles and brother-in-laws had gone?

There were six of them altogether of my mother's family - six of the boys.

Who went?

Yes. In-laws and brothers.

It must have thrown the family back on their own resources.

Oh, yes, definitely.

How did your grandfather cope with his workers gone?

Well, he didn't - - -. I don't know, he just seemed to go on. I don't know how he managed. He just - - -. I think he worked day and night practically because I remember they always had to get up early to feed the horses before they went to work, and when he brought them home they'd have to be bedded down and fed. So he must have been working pretty hard during the war to make things go.

What sort of activities did you have at school that were related to the war?

Well, we all used to do knitting and sewing, sort of, but apart from that there was nothing really I don't think. We made face washers. All the little ones knitted cotton - made face washers - and the older ones knitted socks and balaklava caps and that sort of thing. But apart from that, that was all there was to do.

Were the boys at school involved with cadets?

No, not that I know. I don't ever remember them then.

Do you remember the Declaration of Peace?

Yes, I do. I remember we all went down to Grandfather's and they all had a - they had a big night, they had a big bonfire and all the people around came and we all danced around the bonfire. Because there were so many people round had some - - -. Nearly of them had someone at the war. And when they saw our grandfather's - way out from the stables this great big bonfire built and lit - everyone who saw it came over to see and they found that the whole town was there by the time the bonfire had burnt down. (laughs)

But your father didn't come back straight away.

No, he didn't come back. He had four years in Germany.

So what year did he return?

About '21 or something I think it was. It must have been about that.

Well, you've said that your mother was very ill already.

Yes, she wasn't very strong.

How long did she live after he got back?

I was sixteen I think when she died, so it wouldn't have been very long. I can't remember just how long it was.

Perhaps not even a year.

Yes, it would have been two or three years really. I can't remember what dates.

Do you remember your father coming home?

Yes, I do. We went down to meet him at the Outer Harbour. I know I was very disgusted because I couldn't see him and - I didn't recognise him when he came. He'd grown a moustache and it wasn't my father, I know. I was very upset about that. Grandfather took us down in his horse and buggy, down to the Outer Harbour - my mother and us three children and my granfather went to meet him. He wasn't my father. I was a long time before I got round to realising that it really was my father. That was a long time - six years out of a child's life. Let's see, I was only about eight or nine I suppose when he went - and six years away, well!

You'd left school by that time, when he came back. You would have been a year or two out of school.

I think I was still going to school. No, the others were going to school, that's right. I know I was involved with school somehow, but I just can't remember what.

Did you continue to take them to school?

Yes, it was the only way. Yes, the only way we could get - they could go, you see, because there was no way for them to go.

How did your life change after you left school?

Not much really, because I just took over the housekeeping at home, after my mother died. My mother died and there was my sister and brother at home. My father. I just carried on from there, so it really didn't change at all, because I'd been looking after them anyway while my mother was not really well.

Do you think you would rather have been doing something else?

No, I think I was quite happy as I was. I always had a happy life. I never ever had any strife or troubles, you know.

Did you have any ambitions to work?

Not really, no. I just wanted to look after the family and keep things going.

Can you remember your mother's death?

Yes, I was quite upset about it. Yes, it was a bad time for us all really. She's buried in St Jude's Cemetery.

Did you attend the funeral?

Yes, everybody did in those days. All the family, you know, everyone.

You've said that your father then moved house?

Yes, we went up to Marino then and he bought the place up there.

He then bought rather than rented?

Yes. And he worked on the buildings - building. You know, there was plenty of building after the war because migrants were coming out. Then the Depression came and that's when I met my hubby and we were trying to get enough together to get married. Anyhow, my father didn't want me to get married because he knew if I got married, he thought I'd go and leave him, but anyhow in the end we finished up, my husband came and lived my father and my brother - looked after them. But my brother joined the Air Force so there was just my father in my father's house. I looked after him. That was all he was worried about, that he wouldn't have anyone to look after him. So we just stayed there and he was sort of one of the family.

You said that you married when you were about twenty four/twenty five in the late twenties. Did you remain at home looking after your father?

Yes, I stayed there, right through, until my father went to England. Then - my husband had died before that.

What year did your husband die?

I don't know - I can't remember that.

Do you remember about how long ago?

Thirty-two years.

That would be 1953.

Yes, it was not long after the war - the Second World War.

How did you manage for money when you were at home looking after your father and brothers and sisters?

Oh, I never had any shortage. My father always kept us well supplied with money. He never seemed to be short of money. He was always working - or his Army pay or whatever it was. No worries about money.

Did you have a weekly allowance or how was it organised?

Yes, weekly. I had an account at one store and the butchers, and I'd pay that weekly, you know. Dad'd come home with the money and I'd go down the next morning and pay it, what was owing. But there was always a bit left over so I could get clothes and things.

Were you able to save any money yourself?

Not myself, because it wasn't my - I mean, it was all general money, you know. It wasn't my money. But I managed to get a few things - clothes and things - for myself and get a bit of a trousseau when I was thinking of getting married. But I never really had any money to handle.

How did you spend your spare time in those days before you married?

I never had any spare time to tell you the truth. I was always busy. We had chooks and things, you know. I always looked after them. And a bit of a garden, in the winter, not in the summer. Used to put in some carrots and parsnips and potatoes and those sort of things in the winter. But in the summer time we had no water so I couldn't grow anything in the summer. I had a few flowers there - a couple of rose bushes I put in. They were more or less dead in the summer. No, it was pretty hard. I mean when you take - to do the household chores alone, were much, much more than the time it takes now to do housework, because you had to bring in water, take out water, and bring in things. There was no running water or anything like that.

And it was heavy work too.

Yes, it was. When I had my children even, you see, we had a rainwater tank and my father had put that up high so that it would run in - with a tap through into the laundry - so that I didn't have to go outside to do the washing, the baby's washing. That was done inside. And I had a line up inside for the wintertime.

The time before you married, did you still, for instance, visit the beach?

Yes, and even after I was married I visited the beach.

Would you go with friends?

Oh yes, friends and go on my own - it didn't matter. In the summertime I always went to the beach. Every chance, spare minute I got, I'd spend down in the sea.

Did you visit Adelaide more yourself after you left school?

No, I never went very much to the city. I wasn't a city girl. I didn't go into the city.

You would have been responsible for the family shopping at that time. Was there anything you needed to go to Adelaide for?

Well, when the train was going I'd go in occasionally, for perhaps Dad - buy Dad's working clothes or something like that. But, no I didn't go in very often. I wasn't a city girl. I didn't like the city. My sister did. She used to go into dances and that in the city, and she'd come home late on the train and I'd have to go and meet the train to walk home with her. But I never ever went to the city.

What sort of social activities were you involved in?

Oh, we had dancing here down at Brighton. There were Town Hall dance and the Convent by that time had been built and they had a big hall which they had a dance there, about once a week or something like that. Twice a week we'd go dancing. One would be at the Town Hall and one would be at the Catholic Hall.

Who would you go with?

By that time I'd met my husband. He was English. He came out here - working his passage on the boat. And he was sort of wandering around lost and my father met him on a job where he was at and he was looking for - my husband was looking for work, and he came to the job where my father was, and apparently my husband was broke, so he brought him home for tea. (laughs) And that was the fatal thing - that was it. (laughter) But he was very, very English and he never lost his English way. He was a real English - - -. Well, I suppose he would have been - - -

END TAPE 2 SIDE B: TAPE 3 SIDE A

We were talking about how you met your husband. He was quite a good deal older than you.

Yes quite a bit, yes. Well, I didn't meet him, my father met him and brought him home. That was how we met. Because I never would have met him because he was - he'd hopped off - - -. He came out on a boat from England, working his passage, and he just hopped off the boat and going around seeing

if he could get work. And he went to the job where my father was and apparently my father liked him. Well, being a soldier and having - you know, sort of, looking after people all the time - I suppose he just naturally took him under his wing and brought him home to tea that night. And then he had to stay the night because he had nowhere to go and so anyhow the next morning my father sent him up to the [Brighton] Cement Works up here and he got a job straight away and he stayed there for all the time. He never went anywhere else.

What sort of work did he do?

He was - now wait a minute. He was - I can't think. It'll come to me in a minute.

On the Wedding Certificate that we were looking at, it had him as a storeman.

Yes, that's how he started, but he finished up - he used to do all the assay testing. Before the cement was passed to be sold he'd do - chemistry work it was, testing the - making sure the finished product was properly all right to be sold.

Had he only just arrived in South Australia?

Just came in, yes, got off the boat that morning.

Your family seems to have a history of getting into it the day they arrive. How long did you know him before you married?

Oh, five or six years I suppose. You see my father wasn't for me getting married - that was why. He was all against it. So we just didn't push it. We just went along with him. And then eventually we decided that if - you know, I wanted to get married and he said, 'All right,' he said, 'You can get married if you live here,' so that was it. Anyhow my sister had married and my brother had joined the Air Force, so there was only my father, so he couldn't very well do anything else.

Did you feel responsible for him?

Oh definitely, yes. I always had been. You know, even when he went away I didn't like him going. I didn't think - - -. I thought, oh I knew I wouldn't see him again. Because I'd always been a father's girl, you know.

Did you not consider marrying and moving away without his permission?

No, I would never have done that, because I was too fond of him. Whatever he said was - - -. His word was law with me. And if he hadn't have given his consent I would never have married.

Did it strain relations between you and your father?

Not a bit. No, we lived happily together and there was no worries. My father loved the children. He really was very good with the kiddies.

What was your husband's background?

I don't really know much about him. I know him from when I first met him. He was very well liked in his work and I think Brighton Council have got some records of the football team that he used to work with, and things like that.

Do you know what his people did in England?

I haven't a clue. I've got an idea they may have been farmers - I don't know.

Did you not keep in touch with them?

No, I don't think he did. He must - - -. I don't know what happened. Anyhow he must have written to this younger brother of his because - - -. He must have kept in touch with him because he nominated them out here to come to Australia and fixed up everything. He even got a house for him to come to. So he must have been in touch with them quite a bit. But as far as I was concerned I didn't know - - -. He was the only one in the family, you know what I mean.

He was fifteen years older than you.

That's right.

What sort of work had he done before he left England, do you know?

I think he was working on a newspaper. That might have been a storeman's job too. I think it must have been because I know he used to talk about the newspaper. But it wasn't writing or anything for it. It must have been looking after the - storeman's job, sort of thing, I don't know.

What did you do together during this period of your courtship?

Motorbike riding! He had a bike - I had a bike. And we used to go out to Sellicks Beach nearly every weekend. He'd race in the races and then we'd pack up and come home, dead tired. (laughter) Mostly it was motorbike racing.

When did you get a motorbike?

I got the motorbike, oh, only when I knew him. I used to ride his, and he reckoned he couldn't get it often enough for himself, so he said, 'Oh, you'd better go and buy one for yourself.' I said, 'Oh, that's a good idea,' so I did. And I rode that for years. I think I was the first woman that ever rode a

motorbike in South Australia because every time I went into the city the policeman on point duty would hold me back and - you, know, they'd sort of stare at me. It was funny. (laughter)

What sort of a motorbike was it?

It was only a small little Levis - I don't know if you ever heard of it. It was only a very small motorbike. My hubby had a big twin thing that he used to race. Of course I couldn't be left out of it. As a matter of fact he used to go out and do road racing and I'd have to follow behind carrying all his tools in case anything broke down.

Did that happen before you married as well?

Yes. After - when the children started to come - that was the end of it. And I put that motorbike away in the shed and my son used it to go to work on when he first started work. So I think that was a pretty good buy really.

Had there ever been a motor vehicle in your family before you got the motorbike?

No, I just took to it like I did to horses I think. It was just one of those things.

I don't think you would have had to have had a licence, did you?

Yes. Two and six.

Did you have to do a test?

No. No, no tests. I had a driving licence too. I had that for 48 years - my driving licence. And the first one I only paid two and six for that - no test or anything.

When did you learn to drive a car?

Soon after the children were coming. When the children were coming I just changed over from the bike to a car.

As you say, you must have been something of a strange sight to most people, on a motorbike? How would you dress when you were riding?

Oh, I had riding britches. You know, like the - - -. With jodpur things, mostly. But sometimes I'd go in dressed in my skirt and I'd have to tuck them in. We used to wear bloomers with elastic round and I used to tuck them in my bloomers like that so that they wouldn't blow up - skirts wouldn't blow up.

Were you considered rather daring?

I was considered a tomboy.

What did your father think of your motorbike?

Oh he thought it was great. He had one himself too. (laughter) He used to go out with us when my hubby was racing.

Had he had a motorbike before?

No, he never had it. He just took to it quite well too. Oh, he rode it for years after we were married. It was the only transport he had to get around on really.

Did you use the motorbike to go shopping?

Yes, before I had the car I did. I'll tell you an incident too. When Amy Johnson came here she came to Morphettville racecourse - landed on the racecourse. And it was pouring with rain - a day like this something - and they'd been digging up Brighton Road putting the sewers in. All down Brighton Road they were just putting the sewers in. And all along the side of the road were heaps of dirt and the rain had washed it down all across the road. And when I came out from the side road on to the Brighton Road, I just turned in and I opened up and the back wheel skidded and slipped, and I went sliding along on top of the bike. The bike like that, and I held on to the handlebars with my legs hanging out the back, and I went for a long, long way along. And a chap in a car was coming along chasing me. Eventually when I stopped he stopped, and he said, 'Good God, are you all right?' I said, 'Nothing wrong with me.' (laughs) He thought it was a great joke.

And you went to see Amy Johnson?

Yes, I'd been over to see her. It'd been raining all the time and I was soaking wet through. When I finished up from that I was all mud as well as water.

When was it that she came?

I don't remember dates. I'm not much good at dates. But that's the first time when she - you know, she's been here and I went over there to see her, because I wanted to go flying too. I would have gone flying too if I'd have been wealthy enough. It was only the lack of money that I didn't go.

You must have followed with the interest the first powered flights.

Yes, and all the cars. I followed the car racing. At that time there was a terrible lot of them, and I was very interested in cars and bikes and mechanical things.

Where did that stem from?

I don't know. Of course hubby was interested so possibly - - -.

So it was after you met him that you became interested?

Yes.

Did you say that you rode in riding britches?

Jodpurs.

Did you see many women with jodpurs on?

No, only on horses - only the horse riders. Well, I mean I rode horses - I had jodpurs - and it was automatically I went from horses to motorbike in my jodpurs.

Would you have done your shopping in the jodpurs?

Yes, if I had to. No one took much notice, or at least I don't think they did. They might have if I'd have gone into town but I didn't go into town. If I was going into town I'd put my skirt in and tuck the skirt up under my pants. Of course town isn't what like it is now. You could park anywhere in Rundle Street - stop in front of any shop wherever you wanted to go. Whichever shop you wanted to go to you could get a park. But, golly, not a hope now. I haven't been into town for three years so I wouldn't know what town looks like now. It's three years since I've been into the city.

And you never relied on Adelaide much?

No, I've never liked the city. I didn't like it at all and even if I go away I won't go into cities. I won't go to any crowded places. If I go away it's up to Darwin or Western Australia, you know, and that sort of thing, where there's plenty of open spaces. I've travelled around a good bit. I went up through from Alice Springs - - -. I went from here to Alice Springs, from Alice Springs to Darwin and then back down through to - - -. I didn't go to Perth but I went back down - I can't think of the name of the town now - from there. I would have loved to have gone on to Perth but my money ran out so I had to come home.

Before you married, how far afield had you travelled?

Nowhere. Only in South Australia. I hadn't been out of South Australia since I came into it. But now I've been all over Australia. After my husband died I did a lot of travelling.

Before you married, how far afield in South Australia would you have travelled?

Oh, all round the little towns - the country towns. Quite a lot of the shows. See, with the horses we went to the country shows.

Why was that?

Well they had horses in action, you know, shows and that.

Was your grandfather showing horses?

Yes.

What sort of events?

Well, all sorts. Over hurdles and dressage and that sort of thing. But I didn't ever take part in those. I liked the horses and I didn't have any interest in showing off or anything. I just looked after the horses. And it's funny, I sort of had a way with them. If a horse was playing up, Grandfather would come to me and say, 'Go and look after that horse. They can't manage it,' you know. Of course I suppose the horses knew me anyway.

How many horses would he take to the shows?

Three or four, just all depends what sort of show it was and where it was - how far away it was.

How far afield did you go?

We used to go out to Yankalilla and all those - and round near Gawler and all the shows. Just - - -. Not that far away, because there was no way to get the horses there. We didn't have - - -. You know, the horses had to be ridden there.

Would you ride one of them?

Mostly yes. Perhaps I'd have two. I'd ride one and lead one. Just depended who went with us. But Grandfather always said for me to go because he knew that - he reckoned that I was better than the men with the horses. He reckoned I had more patience.

What age were you when you were doing this?

About seventeen or eighteen I suppose.

And for how many years were you involved with this?

Five or six years. In my teens, sort of, you know.

And how often did he go to the shows?

Oh, when they were there. Once a year. They'd be different ones and having different times during the year. But it was always spring, you see, while the ground was soft for the horses to jump hurdles. It was always a springtime thing. Probably we'd have five or six different shows before the local show

opened. He never ever showed in the local show. He didn't have time to do that. He had other work to do.

How long would you be away at the shows?

Oh, they were only a day show. We'd go early in the morning and come home late at night - never stayed anywhere. Unless there was some people that we knew. Sometimes we knew people in the town and we'd stay overnight with them. People that we'd met with the horses, you know, who had horses too, but not very often, no. We had people out at Mount Compass, you know, towards Victor Harbor - we had people there - and when there was a show out there we'd stay with them.

And did your sister go with you as well?

No, she wouldn't. She had nothing to do with it. I was a tomboy. She didn't approve of me. I was too rough and ready for her. She had to be dressed up pretty and look nice, but it didn't worry me if I got muddy and dirty - it didn't worry me. But she didn't like getting muddy and dirty.

What about your brother?

Well he was a quiet lad. No, he'd go - he'd just sort of go off shooting and that sort of thing. Either him and his mate or two or three boys. Or else he'd go on his own. He never had - - -. He didn't like horses. I was the only one in the family that liked horses.

So did your grandfather work these horses that he showed?

No. Well, he'd drive them in the buggy but not - they wouldn't be - - -. One horse he had - they called him 'Fireworks' and he wouldn't go into the buggy. He'd kick the buggy to pieces if they put him in that. But it was a beautiful show horse. He used to trot along nicely and he was the one that Grandfather always got a prize with if he was going to get one. So he kept that one just - what he called the 'lazy horse' who didn't earn his keep. But he wouldn't have any more that - - -. The others we could put in the buggy, but not that one. He was a real old - - -. (laughs) He wouldn't go in between the shafts and if he got them in there he'd kick and kick. So Grandfather just gave it away and said, 'Well, we'll keep him for shows and that's all.'

Did your father have a horse of your own?

No, my father never - wasn't interested in horses. We never - I never had any - - -. The only ones I had belonged to my grandfather.

Did you help your grandfather with the horses on a daily basis?

No, only when I had spare time. When I could get away from looking after the family I'd go - that's where I'd make for first and foremost, down to the horses. Until hubby turned up, and then I deserted the horses. (laughs) I didn't go to anything any more - the horses any more. But anyhow Grandfather was getting a bit old then and he only kept old Fireworks as he called him. He was about the only horse he had then.

Did your parents or your grandparents talk to you much about England?

My mother did. Yes, she did a lot because having worked in this society house she knew so much, you know, and she used to tell us. And she knew every one of the Royal Family - things about them. She didn't know them personally, but she knew everything about them and where they'd been and how long they'd stayed, and all this sort of thing. You just couldn't - - -. See if you asked her a question about the Royal Family she'd know it right away.

How did she keep up with the news about the Royal Family?

Well, it's the house she worked in. They would go to all the things the Royal Family went to, and they'd come home and talk, I suppose, and she'd hear them while she was working for them.

Did she keep up with that interest when she came to Australia?

Yes, she still did. She used to get all the news she could and she'd write to people and ask about them. Yes, she was very wrapped up in the Royal Family. But my father - oh, they were just people to him. He didn't worry much about them.

Did you father take an interest in politics?

No, he wasn't interested.

Do you remember your parents voting?

Yes, they used to vote.

And of course during the First World War there were two referendums on conscription. Do you remember talk in the family about that?

Yes, but of course my father was away so the only talk I'd get was when I went over the Grandfather's. I'd hear the boys talking about it. The younger boys.

How did they feel about it?

Well I don't think they worried. They took it in, well - - -. You see, before that war there was - the boys had to do military service. See, my brother had to go and do military service too, even after that war.

This was the Compulsory Military Training?

Yes, that's right. So I think they just took it for granted that if they were told to go and fight they'd go. It didn't seem to worry them.

What did your brother think about his military training?

Oh, he loved it. Yes, he really loved it. Because he used to be very good with a gun. You know, he used to go out shooting rabbits and things, and of course he'd get plenty of that when he was doing his training. I think my father sort of showed him how to shoot and all that sort of thing. Of course when he went for his compulsory training some of the boys hadn't even held a gun. So that pleased him rather, because he knew all about them.

And you were saying that your brother later went into the Air Force, didn't you?

Yes, that was long before the Second World War came. He was in the Air Force and he was stationed at - oh, where was the big station, I can't think of it? Anyhow, he was in there all through the war too. And during the war he was Corporal in Charge of the repairs. You know, when the planes came in - he was at Darwin - and when the planes came in he'd take charge of them, and he'd see that all the repairs were done on the bodywork. Not the engine, just the bodywork part, and he was - - -. He'd been inspecting one that had crashed and the wheels were - had to have all new fabric stuff in it. And he'd gone into this plane to inspect it while they were up in the air taking it out for a trial spin, and the petrol must have been leaking somewhere or something, and when they came down and he didn't come in, they didn't know what was wrong. Anyhow they went looking for him and they found him. He was bleeding at the nose and the ears. It was petrol fumes. They rushed him off to the hospital and that finished it for flying, but he was allowed to do sort of home service. You know, he was still - - -. Because the war was still on and they wanted his knowledge, but he was never allowed to go up in a plane after that because - - -. He had one ear drum burst. Then he was at Maralinga too, and he married the nurse - one of the nurses that was up there at the hospital. And he died three years ago with leukaemia and we think that it was caused by the Maralinga testing, because he went all through that. His wife died six months after him with leukaemia. The pair of them both died of leukaemia, so what can you think about other than that was the cause of it.

What about your sister? Did she marry?

Yes, she married - I don't know. He's got a farm over at Coobowie now, they have. But he was sort of a - - -. I don't know what he did really. He was

doing so many different jobs - never settled anywhere - and she was always short of money.

Did she marry before you?

Yes, quite a while before me. I used to sneak things up to her. I knew they'd be short of money because he wasn't - - -. He'd go to work and get money, and then he'd go and spend it on silly things. You know, he'd buy a bike or something like that - things that they didn't need. And he'd come home and she'd have no money, and he'd spent his wages that he'd got. Not on drink or anything, but it was just silly things. Anyhow, eventually, his father died and left them some property and they went out on the farm and he stayed there and they've been quite OK - no worries at all. So apparently he wasn't doing the right thing.

Yes, found his niche.

They've got quite a nice place over there at Coobowie and they're quite happy over there.

You sister must have been very young when she married.

Yes she was. I think she was about 19.

Where did they marry?

I think she married at St Jude's too. I'm pretty well sure she did.

Were you involved in the wedding party?

Oh, yes. I more or less got it all ready and got it all done for her. But I didn't with my brother. He was married in Yass, in Victoria. That's where the Air Force was stationed. He was married there. Her people lived there. There was a big Air Force base there.

Had you made new friends after you left school, with the different social activities that you involved in?

Yes, quite a lot, especially later when my children got older. See, we've got involved with the lifesaving and the football and tennis and that sort of thing.

You said before you were married you were involved with motorbikes of course, and weekly dances. What other activities do you remember?

Oh, just going to the football and the cricket, that sort of thing. But nothing that I actually took part in. These were just - - -. I went round because it was the home team, sort of - followed them wherever they went.

Did you have any hobbies yourself?

No, not really. Only I used to do a lot of sewing - a lot of fancy work and things like that. Still do.

Did you ever sell any of your work?

No, I was silly, I gave it away, and I still do. (laughs) I've got a granddaughter's birthday on the first of September and I was talking to her one day on the phone, and suddenly she came out and she said, 'You know Granny you gave me two tablecloths when I was married because I didn't have one to put on the table'. I said, 'Yes, are they still wearing?' She said they're worn out. So, I said, 'Oh well, looks like I'll have to give you some more for your birthday.' She said, 'Oh, would you?' So I've just made a small one - one to fit this table - with a cross stitch. Do you know the cross stitch? And crocheted an edge around it. I think she'll be tickled pink with it when she gets it. She didn't know what I was doing, I just said I'd do one for her for her birthday.

Did you still make your own clothes before you married?

Yes, right through. Most of my own clothes. It's only since I've been in this place - - -

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE A: TAPE 3 SIDE B

One thing that I'd like to talk to you about, being that you and your family were migrants to South Australia, and that is, could you tell me, when you were younger, what you thought an Australian was? How did they differ from you?

Well, I thought they were very rough and ready people. I never - - -. They never dressed for dinner or anything like that. They just - never even washed for dinner half the time. And as for going putting on a clean shirt or a clean dress, they just went in for dinner as they were, as far as I knew. You know, the ones that I knew. Unless it was a special something. But, I mean for every day, well, my mother and father would always make us - - -. If we came home from school grubby - 'Go and get washed and changed before you come to the table'. We always had, more or less, come to the table looking clean and tidy. But I'd been out to other people's, you know, with the other children, and they'd just go and - - -. They'd ask me over to tea and I'd just gone as I was and when I come home my mother used to say, 'I hope you washed your hands before you went to the table.' I'd say, 'No I didn't - they didn't.'

One of the differences they noticed then was in perhaps the behaviour and manners.

Yes, very much so. But I think, when I look back on it, I think our manners were exaggerated really, because I never brought my children up to those strict rules that I was brought up with. I suppose I turned Australian. (laugh)

What about when you were growing up - the way that people spoke to one another and treated one another. Do you think that was different in Australia to England?

No, I think if you made a friend you treated them as a friend and if you didn't like them you kept out of their way. I don't think that there was any - - -.

A lot of people say, of course, that England was much more class conscious.

Yes, very much so, yes. Well, I know my people were too. I mean probably that's why they thought the Australians were a scruffy lot. They didn't dress like we did. My mother wouldn't have gone outside the house unless she cleaned her shoes and put her gloves on and all that sort of thing. But people here, they'd just walk out as they were - walk down to the shop with an apron on and that sort of thing.

Did your parents teach you that some people in society were more important than others?

Well, there was always - - -. They had a great respect for people - like what they called the higher class people. They both had great respect for them. But they never really taught us. I mean they left it to us to make our own way about it and find out what we thought about it. They didn't ever - - -. Well, I suppose we grew up and there was no class conscience here in Australia and I don't think it ever registered with us really.

Were there any people living in your area that you would have considered higher class?

Well, the Hardys, but then I was very friendly with them so - - -. I was very friendly with Mrs Hardy, and, I mean, I don't know that it made any - it didn't make difference and she never thought of me as beneath her and I never thought of her as above me.

This was after you were married, was it?

Just before we were married too, as well as after.

How did you meet them?

Oh well, my father and Mr Hardy were in the same - oh, in the military sort of thing. He was interested in military, Mr Hardy was, and sailing and that sort of thing, and I think he met Mr Hardy and that's how they got together. I don't think they ever worked together or anything like that. But anyhow, they must have clicked somehow or other, because they were - my father was quite friendly with them.

Did they come to your house?

No, not much. Mostly we went to their place, because they had a bigger place and they always had someone helping, you know, with all the housework and that.

And Mr Hardy's christian name?

Thomas. Thomas Hardy & Son, the wine people.

Were there people in the area when you were growing up who were considered much rougher than the others?

Yes. There were a terrible lot of them. When we went to school we sort of - - -. There was a bit of a class conscience there, but it wasn't class, it was just cleanliness, you know? The clean ones wouldn't go with the dirty ones, and some of them were terribly dirty. A lot of them were Irish families. They came out just after the [First NR] World War - before my father came home. There was a lot of Irish people came. And they used to - - -. They settled here and they used to build an old bush humpy with bits of iron and tin around and they'd live in that, sort of thing. And any old house that was all dirty and that. There was a terrible lot of Irish migrants came about that time.

Could they not find work, do you think?

Yes, there was plenty of work. They found work but they'd lived like that in Ireland and they didn't know any other way. That was the whole trouble. There was quite a lot of them around this area. And round here - Marion - that's where they all settled. A lot of them put in gardens and - market gardens, you know. A terrible lot of Catholics around this area.

What was the teachers' attitudes to the children who didn't come to school clean?

Oh, well, I think they gave up because they growled and grumbled and sent them out to wash their hands and that sort of thing. But I don't think they ever thought that they ever had any hope of getting them to come to school clean. They just had to take them as they were.

Do you remember any conflict between the religious groups?

Yes, quite a bit. The Catholic - - -. The Irish were very strict Catholic. They wouldn't give an inch, you know. They had their set Catholic ways. And do you know, they'd even go to church with no shoes on and that horrified us. To go to school was bad enough but to go to church too. But they had to go to church because the priest was very firm on them. He'd really go round and

chase them up and make the children go to church. I don't know whether the children didn't have shoes or what it was, but I know they hardly ever wore them.

When you were at school was there taunting between the Catholic and the Protestant children?

No, not much. Occasionally the boys would get mad with one another and they'd call the other a Catholic so and so, and that's about as far as it'd go. Not really any wars or anything about it. They mixed in quite well.

Of course you had your Irish friend.

Yes.

They were Catholics?

Yes, they were Catholics too. But with me, that didn't matter. You know, that's what hurt me about the religion. I could go to her church but she couldn't come to my church. She wasn't allowed to go into any church but a Catholic church. They can now I think, but I was so upset over that. Mostly, if anything came up, I was the one that went - left my church to go to her church. I mean, I still didn't leave my church, but I was allowed to go. The people at my church were quite happy for me to go with her. But she wouldn't dare go in the door of my church.

What was your parents' attitudes to Catholicism?

I don't know really. You know, when I was married she couldn't come to my wedding. That was the most upsetting thing, because I wanted her for a bridesmaid but she couldn't go to my church. She couldn't go into the church but she could go to the reception and that of course.

Was your husband Church of England?

Yes.

Well, I think we've covered a good deal of ground.

I think so.

Just perhaps to finish up then. You came as a young girl. What do you consider yourself now, in terms of nationality?

Oh, Australian. I'm Australian down to - right down to my marrow bones. Yes, definitely. No, I have no loyalty to England. If there was a war between the two I'd be Australian, and when the cricket's on I'm still Australian. (laughter) But my hubby wasn't. If the cricket was going he'd be English and I'd be Australian, and he'd get really mad at me. He could never see why I

couldn't barrack for the English. He couldn't understand it. I was English and I should be barracking for them. But I said, 'I am not English. I'm Australian.' Only a few weeks back a woman came out from England to one of the girls that I was playing cards with, and she brought her mother along and she was out from England for a visit and she said something about English. She said, 'Oh, are you English?' I said, 'No. I was born in England but I'm Australian.' She said, 'You can't be.' I said, 'I am.'

What is it makes you an Australian?

Being here in Australia. And spending all my life here, and knowing and loving the country. That's all. I think it's a marvellous country, it really is.

Why do you say that?

Well I've been around all - - -. I've been to all the other States and all around, and I think it's just wonderful. The animals and the fauna and the flora. I think they're all absolutely wonderful.

Of course a lot of English folk find the Australian bush very drab.

Yes. Not me. No. It's warm - it's hot. That, I think is the whole - the root of it with me. I like the warmth. I hate the cold. And most of the time it's hot here, and I think that's why I settled into it so well.

Did you get into the bush as a child?

Oh, well, it was pretty bushy around here when I was a child, don't worry. (laughs) We used to go out shooting rabbits when I was about sixteen with different friends and that, and I'd always have a gun with the boys. I'd go with the boys. We'd go on our horses and that. And we only had to go out to Halletts Cove and there'd be rabbits by the dozens. We'd come home loaded up with them.

Were there kangaroos and wallabies?

A few, but very few, because it's too close to - - -. They've gone back further. But out round Willunga and those place, you'd see quite a few kangaroos and emus.

There would have been snakes though.

And snakes, yes, but they don't worry me.

No?

No, they don't worry me. You don't - - -. You just stop and let them go. You know, they won't hurt you if you don't hurt them.

Did you eat the rabbits that you shot?

Yes.

How about the skins?

Well the boys used to get them. Through the Depression the boys used to go out rabbiting and catch - and they'd dry them - and they'd sell them. And they'd get a shilling a pound for them. And they'd be saving up these skins and they'd - - -. All the best ones they'd get quite a bit for, and then the ones that weren't so good they wouldn't get so much. But that was all the money - pocket money - the boys had in those days, through the Depression.

Your husband wasn't out of work during the Depression was he?

No, he was always working. No, he was one of the lucky ones.

And of course your three children were born during that time.

Through the Depression, yes.

We were looking at their Birth Certificates earlier, and your first son, William, born in 1932, and then June in 1933 and Donald in 1939. What sort of work have your children gone into?

Well my son, he's a carpenter. Very interested in timbers of all sorts. The people he works for have done that calendar. But he's sort of organiser now. They've taken over most of the timber people. They took over the firm he'd been with right as a boy and they just took him with it, and now he goes all over the State organising - seeing that all these timber people got things as they're supposed to have them.

This is your oldest son is it?

Yes.

What about your younger son?

Well, he's like me - he's a wanderer. I never know where he is. He's been away for three months and I never heard or saw anything of him. Yesterday - Sunday afternoon - he walks in on me. And I said, 'Well!'. He said, 'Yes, I'm home'. I said, 'Home. Don't call this home. You're never here.' Anyhow, he said, 'I want a bed tonight.' I said, 'All right. There's a bed there for you if you sleep in your sleeping bag.' So that was OK.

What sort of work does he do?

He's got his pilot's licence and he's an automotive engineer. He served his time with the Airways and he's been all over Australia. And like me, there's

no other country like Australia. He thinks it's the most wonderful country in the world.

And what about your daughter?

My daughter - she is more like her father. She was in the bank before she was married. She was in the Savings Bank. And she married a farmer - a boy from Alice Springs whose people have a station at Alice Springs. And he came down here on holiday and stayed with friends that were her friends, so they got together that way. She wouldn't go back to the outback because she doesn't like the outback. She's not an outback person. And so he wanted to get married and she wouldn't go and live out there, so he left the station and came down here and joined the Police Force. And they married while he was in the Police Force. And then his father retired and came down here and that. Then they bought a farm here. His father bought a farm out Wasleys - out through Gawler - and that's where they are now.

And have you always lived in the south western suburbs?

I've always lived around this area - within, you know, a few miles of where I've - - -. But I sold the old home when I got - you know, no one there. I couldn't stay on my own, and I bought one of these units down at - oh, just behind the Masonic Village. It was two storey and I had a bad leg and I couldn't go up and down the stairs, so when I took - - -. When I paid my money and bought one of these units, they said, if we took the upstairs they couldn't sell them you see. And they said if we took one, if we ever needed to, they'd let us come down and get - - -.

Well, my leg got bad and I had a doctor's certificate so I sent it in to them and asked them for a downstairs unit. Well, I waited two and a half years before I got it. My leg had got better. Anyhow, this came up - this one - and I thought, 'Oh golly, this is it. I'm going to take this. I'm not going to drag up and down stairs for the rest of my life.' But this is a good thing really, because from here I can go to a nursing home, without a lot of trouble and that. And it doesn't worry my family you see.

When I had the home, Bill had to come and do all my repairs and that, because I couldn't afford to pay a man wages. And I was a bit worried about that and things were going wrong. So when this came up I thought, 'Good idea. No worries there and I don't have to worry anyone.' If I want any repairs done I just ring Maintenance and they come and do it.

Of course it's quite different to when you were a girl. What do you remember of how elderly people coped?

They went to their family and lived with their families. Well, I didn't want to do that. Not that I didn't get on with them, because I do. Because I had eight granddaughters and one grandson and, I mean, I get on marvellously well with all of them. And, I mean, it isn't that I wouldn't have gone to live with them if I had to, but I just didn't feel that it was fair.

What do you think has changed over the years that people don't feel as happy going to their families?

Well I think that the families don't want the - - -. The generation gap - that's what I think it is mainly. Not that I notice it that much. But I think mostly the younger ones do - the teenagers and that. They wouldn't want to have Grandma living with them. They might love Grandma in her own home, but they wouldn't like to have Grandma living with them. But I go out and stay for weeks with my granddaughters on the farms, and they always moan when I come home - 'Oh, Gran,' because I've got great grandchildren you see, and I mean, I get on marvellously with the kiddies. I'm always popular where the children are - the little ones.

And I've got one granddaughter lives out here at Morphett Vale. And I get on the train and go out to Noarlunga and she meets me there. And do you know, those kids can't - - -. They're waiting for that train to come in. The minute it's in they rush at me. It's marvellous to have it like that.

Well thank you very much for talking with me.

Thank you for listening. I don't often have a chance to talk about all these things.

Well, I think it's gone very well indeed. Just to finish off, let's talk about the other photograph that you're lending me. How old were you when that one was taken? [NR and interviewer examine second photograph to be copied for the file.]

Eighteen. And I had that taken because my mother wanted that one really. I can't remember what she wanted it for. But she insisted that I go and have it done, I know, but I didn't really want to go. Then I had a few friends and I gave some around, you know, to people.

You were saying that was only the second time that you [had had your photograph taken].

Yes, I hadn't had. This one hasn't got any name of the people Oh yes it has, it's got something there. Can you read it? Your eyes are better than mine.

Hammer or - - -?

Hammer - yes could be. There was a Hammers.

When had you had your hair cut?

Well it couldn't have been much before that, because my father wouldn't let me have it cut. But I remember I went down to Glenelg one day, with that friend of mine, and we both went in to the hairdressers - the barbers it was then - and had our hair cut, because everyone else was having theirs cut. So we went in together and had our hair cut. And then we both went home and got growled at. (laughter)

That was the style of the 1920s.

Yes.

And what did the barber think of all the girls coming in?

Oh, he was - - -. (laughs) They didn't like much I don't think. But anyhow they cut it for us and I suppose it was money for them. That's all they worried. And we'd been down to Glenelg to a picture show or something - something was on. Couldn't have been pictures because they only had them at night. But something was on down there. And we were idling walking around and walked past the barber's and I said to my friend, I said, 'I think I'll have my hair cut.' She said, 'I will too.' And then we went in and had it done, and oh dear, did we cop it when we got home? (laughs)

And that necklace. What do you remember about that?

Yes, that is ciro pearl sent to me when I - - -. My father's family sent them from England - the ciro. You know, they were - - -. I think they were imitation but they were - or else they were - - -. They weren't got like the ordinary pearl. I think they were the ones that the Japanese were making by putting the seed in, you know, the oysters. The Japanese were making them and one of my father's people - - -. It couldn't have been my grandmother. It must have been one of my father's - my father's sister - sent those out for me from Christmas one year. And I hadn't had them very long then.

Thank's very much for that.

INDEX**Notes to the Index**

Users of this Index should note that in many instances the particular word used for the index heading will not be found in the text. The conversational vocabularies of most people do not correspond to the Library of Congress subject headings which have, in the main, been adhered to in the construction of this index. Users are also directed to the main card index to the 'S.A. Speaks' project.

Abbreviations

P8505A,B Photograph in File 8505

passim 'in various parts'

Family names

Rather than index names of all family members and relatives mentioned in each interview, entries are included that indicate surnames (including women's maiden names) of at least the Interviewee's father and mother, and spouse, when applicable. Other relatives are indexed if significant mention is made of them.

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