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Full transcript of an interview with

EDNA FROST

on 18 July 1986

by Beth M. Robertson

Recording available on cassette

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Abbreviations: The interviewee's alterations may be identified by their initials in insertions in the transcript.

Punctuation: Square bracket [ ] indicate material in the transcript that does not occur on the original tape recording. This is usually words, phrases or sentences which the interviewee has inserted to clarify or correct meaning. These are not necessarily differentiated from insertions the interviewer or by Somerville Collection staff which are either minor (a linking word for clarification) or clearly editorial. Relatively insignificant word substitutions or additions by the interviewee as well as minor deletions of words or phrases are often not indicated in the interest of readability. Extensive additional material supplied by the interviewee is usually placed in footnotes at the bottom of the relevant page rather than in square brackets within the text.

A 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. A parenthesised question mark (?) indicates a word that it has not been possible to verify to date.

Typeface: The interviewer's questions are shown in **bold print**.

Discrepancies between transcript and tape: This proofread transcript represents the authoritative version of this oral history interview. 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 tape. See the Punctuation section above.) Minor discrepancies of grammar and sentence structure made in the interest of readability can be ignored but significant changes such as deletion 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 any other form of audio publication.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	iii
Notes to the Transcript	iv
Family and Background	1
Father's lay preaching on Yorke Peninsula	
Education as 'mature-age' student at PAC	
First marriage and adopted daughter	
Grandmother's frugality	
Father's stroke	
Childhood	14
Wauraltee farm	
Illness	
Shopping and dressmaking	
Farm labourers	
Playing house	
Teeth and eye troubles	
Schooling	36
Wauraltee School and a relieving teacher	
Arbor Days	
Lothian House, Semaphore, boarding school	
Travelling on the Juno	
Father's death	42
Return to the farm	
Move to Salisbury	
Work	47
Muirden's College course	
First job, with a 'so-called solicitor'	
The Co-op Building Society	
Marriage	51

Collateral Material in File 8620 includes:
Photograph P8620A

Cover Illustration Edna Newbold aged twenty one in 1925.

PREFACE

Edna Frost (nee Newbold) was born in 1904 on the family's wheat and sheep farm near Wauraltee on Yorke Peninsula. Her father was also a lay preacher in the Methodist Church and often was away all day on Sunday travelling between services. Edna was the fourth of five boisterous children; a sixth, her oldest sister, having been adopted by Edna's father before this, his second marriage. In the latter stages of her schooling Edna, like her siblings, went to boarding school in Adelaide and she did not enjoy the experience. In 1920, four years after he had suffered a stroke, Edna's father died and Edna left school to help her mother and brother with the home and farm. Three years later, when her brother married, Edna, her mother and younger sister moved to live near an uncle in Salisbury. Edna attended Muirden College and worked briefly for a 'so-called solicitor' and then with the Co-op Building Society until her marriage to a commercial traveller in 1929. She had one son.

Mrs Frost was 81 years of age at the time of the interview.

After a hesitant start, Mrs Frost warmed to the task and spoke with assurance about her childhood and youth. Good recording levels overcome a lot of extraneous noise (traffic, aeroplanes, voices).

The interview sessions resulted in three hours of tape recorded information.

'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.

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Abbreviations

The Interviewee, Edna Frost, is referred to by the initials EF 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 EF] 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 Edna Frost [redacted]
[redacted] on 18 July 1986

TAPE 1 SIDE A

Could you just start by telling me your full name from when you were a girl?

Edna Newbold.

Did you have a middle name?

No.

Was that unusual in your family?

We all only had single names.

Of course your married name is - - -?

Frost.

Can you tell me the date of your birth?

December the thirtieth, 1904.

Where were you born?

Wauraltee.

Where would you describe Wauraltee as being?

It's on Yorke Peninsula, between Port Victoria and Minlaton.

Is that where you spent your childhood?

Yes, until I was eighteen.

What happened then?

We moved to Salisbury.

I'd like to ask you a little bit about your parents. Can you tell me your father's name?

Benjamin Williss Newbold.

Was he born at Wauraltee?

No, he was born at Delamere.

We were just talking about him. You say he came to Wauraltee with his family when he was about twenty three years old.

That's right, yes.

How many in his family?

[queries question]

How many made up his family?

There was one brother and four sisters.

Were they all on Yorke Peninsula when you were growing up?

Yes.

What was your father's occupation?

He was a farmer.

What sort of farming?

Mixed. Sheep and crop growing.

You were telling me the other day that he had another activity in lay preaching.

Yes, he was a local preacher as long as ever I can remember until he was smitten with a stroke.

With which church was that?

Uniting, or the Methodist church in those days.

Of course before the turn of the century there were three branches of the Methodist church, the Wesleyans and was it the Bible Methodists. Do you know if he was from one particular branch or the other?

No, I only knew the one. It was just the Methodist as far as I know.

What did his involvement with lay preaching concern?

Oh, he used to take as many as three services on a Sunday. He would leave home at nine o'clock in the morning and drive sixteen, seventeen, eighteen miles to a town and take the service in the morning, and go across country and take a service at three o'clock, and then go to another country town and take the night service and get home about eleven o'clock. That was in a horse and trap - no motorcars.

Would he travel alone?

Not always. Usually there was a teacher. She was very keen to go with him, and we were all tiny. Occasionally my mother would go and my adopted sister would go, but there were times when he went alone.

I was having a look at a map of area, and Wauraltee was pretty much isolated from other townships. What sort of townships would he be going to preach at, do you remember?

Yes. He would go to Koolywurtie, Urania, Maitland, Minlaton, Port Vincent, Curramulka. I don't think he ever went to Stansbury. I'm not sure about that. But those in the district.

Do you gather that he was the only lay preacher in the area?

No there were several others, but we usually had a minister and an assistant minister. But as long as ever I can remember my father would take services, and of course he'd take services in our church.

Would there be a service in your church every week?

Yes. And then we used to have Sunday night service. My brother would officiate at that. Not very many people attended of course, because there wasn't a big - - - [population EF].

Apart from your father and brother, did you have other lay preachers come to Wauraltee?

Yes, a Mr Art Kelly from Urania, he used to come. I can't think of any others that we had.

Who was the official minister?

They changed them around. There was the Reverend E.C. Harris, the Reverend Pointon.

Would you see the official minister every week at church?

Oh no. No, but in those days they would - - -. The main minister was situated at Minlaton and when he was to take the service in our church on a Sunday morning, he would usually come on a Saturday afternoon and stay the night.

Did he stay with your family?

Yes. Our home was known as the Parsons' Refuge. (laughs) Because anyone preaching who'd come any distance, usually came to our place to dinner before he went on to the next circuit to take the service.

Were there other churches with an actual building in Wauraltee?

No.

Was there a Methodist church?

Oh yes. It was a lovely stone church, and now to see the front of it all knocked in and hay stacked in it, it's not very nice.

No. Was your father in his daily manner a religious man?

Yes. Every morning we would have Bible reading after breakfast and we always had to kneel to pray. We were naughty once. A cat came in and instead of us praying we were pulling the cat's tail. (laughs) And any man that was working on the farm, he always invited them to stay if they wished. None of them ever stayed but he always invited them.

Did you children find it burdensome having a father who was the lay preacher?

No. No, in our day things were accepted. You know what I mean, it's not like - - -. This is what I find very different today. Things are not accepted. It's a matter of letting people do their own thing - there is no example. I think his example has been wonderful to us right throughout all our lives.

What sort of values do you think he tried to instil in you children?

Well, we had to be honest and do unto others as we'd have people do to us, and, you know, to have our faith.

Are there any particular milestones in your involvement with the church that you remember from when you were a child - any special occasions?

You mean the service or anything?

Yes.

Our Harvest Festival was always lovely. There was this platform with the table for the pulpit on, and for our Harvest Festival all fruits and sheafs of hay and part bags of wheat and anything that was grown - water melons that were cut and made look nice - and that was all put across the platform or the church. That was really something, for us to go in and unlock the door in the morning - it was done of a Saturday afternoon - and then on the Sunday morning to go in and see all this preparation there. It was very interesting.

Who would have mounted the display? Did the adults or the children get it ready?

Oh no, the adults. Mainly it fell to our family.

Did it?

Mainly. Occasionally some would come along and help, but mainly to our family.

Because of your father's position, was the family involved in any way in taking care of the church building?

Yes, we used to go down and sweep and dust it, and I'd have a play on the organ. It was lit by kerosene lamps, you know, in the ceiling. They had to be cleaned. The hymn books had to be looked after.

You've mentioned what a long day it was on Sunday for your father. Did he spend a lot of time during the week preparing?

Yes, he would sit up until two o'clock in the morning preparing his sermons, and his one wish, after he had the stroke in 1916 - or two wishes - one was to preach at Maitland, the Sermon on the Mount, and I have forgotten what the other sermon was and where, but he never had the wish fulfilled. He got a lot of joy out of preaching.

What do you remember of his technique of preaching? Was he a convincing speaker?

Oh yes, he was very - - - [fluent EF]. He had a lovely flow of speech - he could speak well. He was self-educated. He paid for himself when he was twenty one to go to PAC [Prince Alfred College] for twelve months to further his education. That was a big thing in those days.

Yes. Do you imagine that he'd only had the normal primary schooling before then?

I think so, I would think so.

Did he tell you what it was like being an older man?

No, we never ever sort of got down to that - and it's a shame really - not to know. But he gave my brother five years there - he was a boarder for five years at Princes.

What do you think your father's attitude was to getting an education?

Oh, I think that perhaps it was to give him more knowledge and possibly improve his speech. I really wouldn't know for sure.

You've mentioned that your brother also became a lay preacher.

Well not exactly a lay preacher, but he would just take the service for the few of us that went on a Sunday night.

Do you know if there was any tradition of your grandfather being involved in the church in that way?

No, he wasn't. No, none of the family. One [of his daughters EF] married a Baptist minister, but, no, there were none that were involved in church work [in their earlier years EF].

Did your father convey to you children that he thought it was important for you to get a good education?

Yes. We were all sent over here to college, but when he died I left college and I went home and helped my brother as much as I could.

Did you yourself ever travel around with your father when he was preaching?

Only to go to Koolywurtie [about six miles away EF], and then if the organist didn't turn up there I would play the organ.

Had you had lessons?

We were taught the piano, yes, and of course an organ's not much different. The other services were too late, because he was a firm believer in early to bed for the children.

How early would that have been when you were a child?

We had to be in bed before my father came home from working on the farm, and he would always come down with a peppermint each and kiss us goodnight, but we always had to be into bed, so that would be about six o'clock. Summer time it'd be a little bit later. But he always believed in us being in bed.

Did people seek your father out for assistance because of his position in the church? Did they come to him with troubles or anything like that?

Not that we would know of, no. No, that wouldn't be divulged to us at all - we wouldn't know that. See, where today, children are involved in everything that goes on, where we weren't.

Did you feel that you perhaps missed seeing something of your father with him away on Sundays? Would it be every Sunday?

Oh, I don't think so. See, he'd work - leave early in the morning [during the week EF]. We didn't see a great deal of him really.

No, that's what I was thinking.

Not like today, because it was hard work for those men.

How early would he be gone in the morning?

Breakfast was at six, and they would be gone at seven. Their horses had to be harnessed and if the paddock was away from the home they all had to just walk along with the horses. They were all harnessed ready to be hitched to the machine, whatever they were working, whether it was ploughing or fallowing or harvesting - you know, to the harvester. They would be all ready to just be hitched, as they called it, to the implement.

With him away working during the day and preaching on Sunday, was there anything in particular that your father did with you children during the week?

If he was home - - -. It wasn't every Sunday, of course, that he would be away. If he was preaching in just the afternoon he'd be home and we would all sit around the fireplace in the dining room and have Sunday School at night.

We'd have to read the Bible and he would tell us a nice Biblical story, and we'd sing, and again I'd be at the piano. We'd have verses of scripture to learn for the next week. When Father wasn't home, then Mother would take us for Sunday School - Sunday School, we called it.

Was there also an organised Sunday School in the town church?

No there wasn't, not in my day.

Was the church in town used for anything else, other than the Sunday service?

No it was only used for the service. Oh, occasionally, now, what did we have? - lantern slides. Now who'd bring that? The British and Foreign Bible Society. They would bring lantern slides in those days, and that would be in the church, but other than that it was only used for - services.

How did you children look forward to something like a lantern slide evening?

Liked to go out for something - something wonderful.

What sort of subjects would they be depicting?

Oh, I've forgotten. I can't remember that.

I wonder if it was overseas views.

I suppose it would be of some missionary's work or something. But that was in the very early days, that we had those.

You were mentioning last week that your father had been married once before his marriage to your mother. Did you know anything about the circumstances of that marriage?

[Very little. EF]

Was that to a girl from a local family?

[Yes, she was Miss Kate Leonard. EF]

How did it come that she died?

In those days there were no hospitals, and she was pregnant and kidney trouble set in. Those days there was nothing could be done and she died - seven months I think it was. Of course the baby went too.

I'd like to ask you a little bit about your father's parents. Did you know your grandfather, his father?

Oh yes, he was lovely. He was a dear. Snow white hair and snow white whiskers. Yes, he was glorious.

You knew your grandmother as well?

Oh yes.

Did they live near you?

Yes not very far. How many miles would that be? - about - - -. Oh, I suppose three or four miles. We would go with our father to see them. He always went once a week and he always called them Pater and Mater.

Did he?

Yes.

I wonder where he'd got that from.

I don't know. Always called Pater and Mater, and we'd drive - - -. Oh, sometimes it would be in the spring dray, with the horse, or it'd be in the little hooded buggy for the horse.

Were your grandparents retired when you knew them?

Oh yes. They had an accident, but they got over that all right. I don't know what happened to Grandad - whether he had a stroke I don't know, I've forgotten. Because Grandmother lived many years after Grandad died.

Did she live on her own?

No. She had a housekeeper. Then eventually she had a stroke and went to her daughter's and she lived with the daughter.

You were telling me last week that your grandmother was extremely frugal in her use of food.

Yes.

Could you tell me a little bit about that.

What, about the eggs and that?

Yes.

When eggs were cheap - tuppence ha'penny a dozen - we couldn't eat them because she needed the number so as to get the price, or else get the amount of money. Then when they were scarce, she still had to have them because she didn't have the number to sell. Dear old Grandad asked for two eggs after he had his accident, and she said, 'No, Father, you'll only have one,' but he got two eggs.

Did she keep a lot of fowls?

No, but you see in the moulting season, as you know - when fowls moult - they don't lay, and that's when the eggs were dearer. But eggs didn't get to a very high price. Tuppence ha'penny a dozen's not much, is it?

No. Where would she sell her eggs?

A man would come around in a van, with just a little bit of drapery and odds and ends of groceries and vegetables. He would take eggs and butter and take it back to the shop at Minlaton. Although in the early days when we had the local shop in Wauraltee, well, she could get rid of them there I suppose. But I don't remember her with butter. It's a strange thing, isn't it?

Would she keep several dozen fowls, or how many?

Oh yes. They'd have quite a few. You'd have to. Because they had the wheat, you see - it didn't cost them anything for the wheat. They'd have to buy bran and pollard of course. It was to keep them safe from the foxes that was the trouble.

How did you do that?

You had to have high wire netting fences right around the fowl yard and make sure they were all in and shut the door of a night.

Did your family keep fowls?

Yes. We had fowls and ducks and geese and turkeys. The foxes would scratch in under the wire netting at times and kill fowls. They would just murder them, you know, they'd not eat them, only just kill them then go on to the next one.

What were some other examples of your grandmother's frugality?

She used to make - I've forgotten the name of them - little biscuits. It was only dripping and flour with currants in - we loved them. I think she used to sprinkle a little bit of sugar on the top. Marvellous, you know, how things change - children today wouldn't eat them, but well, we just had to. And we're all living to a much older age, on our dripping and lard.

Did your grandmother ever live with you when you were growing up?

No, but we went to stay with her when her housekeeper went on holidays. Six o'clock of a Sunday morning, 'Come on and get up. You don't rob the Lord of his day'. We'd try to stay in bed, but there was no hope - we just had to get up. She'd put the horse to the trap and we'd go down to service at eleven o'clock.

I'd like to ask you a little bit about your mother's side of the family. What was your mother's name?

Elizabeth Rebecca Phoebe Illman.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A: TAPE 1 SIDE B

Did she grow up on Yorke Peninsula?

Yes, her home was only just up over the hill.

What did her people do?

Farm - mixed farming.

How far away would her parents have been living from you when you were growing up?

[Three quarters EF] of a mile. It was only just up the road and over a hill.

Did you know whether your mother ever did any work outside of her own home?

No, she stayed with her mother - they helped in the house.

Was that a large family that she was from? [break in recording] So how many in your mother's family?

Ten - five boys and five girls.

Were most of them living on Yorke Peninsula?

There were two who moved away - three. Three brothers moved over this way on land somewhere, but the rest all lived on the Peninsula.

You mentioned that your father visited his parents once a week. How often would you have seen your mother's parents?

I don't remember Grandad Illman at all, but Mum's mother used to come and stay with us, to give the single daughter a rest, you know, away - she was sweet. She would come and stay with us, oh, twice a year possibly. My mother would drive to Minlaton and see her, but then they used to come more because the aunt and Granny - it was easier for them to get away than for Mum to get away.

So your grandmother was being looked after by a single daughter.

Yes.

I think that was quite common.

Oh yes. And then when her end came, well, of course Mum and all of them took their turn to go and help look after her. Not today - they don't do that today. It's so different.

Was she ill for quite some time?

No, not very long. Then the aunt lived on there for years on her own.

How would you describe your mother's character?

She was a very quiet person - very, very quiet - a very nervy type of person. [She was very reserved. EF]

You're a tall person yourself. Was the whole family tall?

Oh, average. My youngest sister was shorter - a little bit shorter than me. No, about average.

Did your parents ever tell you about their courtship and how they got to know each other?

Oh, no, that was never discussed. (laughs) Something quite unusual. These days the children ask and they tell them, but in our day you wouldn't mention it. We just lived as children. It's very hard to describe. We went along - we did as we were told. Oh, sometimes we would be naughty, but we went along - we did as we were told. We never asked 'why' anything. I don't know why we didn't, but we just didn't. I think in those days that we accepted what was told to us.

Did you know, when your father's or mother's family came to Yorke Peninsula, whether they'd been opening up virgin bushland? Did they ever talk about the early days?

No, I don't know anything very much. There's never been a family gathering of the Illman family, so therefore their past has really gone. There's not much - - -. I have rung cousins and asked them and they just say, 'No good asking me - I don't know'. At times I wish that people wouldn't ask me the things that they do, because I've had to do quite a bit of hunting around, you know, to find out, but I suppose it's been worthwhile really.

I'd like to ask you a little bit about your immediate family - your brothers and sisters. Who was the oldest in the family?

Well, as I told you the other day, there was the adopted girl, and then my brother. Then there were two sisters older than me and one younger.

So there were five girls and a boy. He was very much outnumbered. What was your oldest sister's name, your adopted sister?

Just her christian name?

Yes.

Dorothea - Dorrrie. Yes, she was known as Chips.

Why was that?

Because she was always out collecting chips into a bucket ready to light fires.

Did you ever know the circumstances of her being adopted by your father?

My father would come over to PAC Old Scholars' Week and he always visited a Mr and Mrs Crawford. They had a lady housekeeping for them, and through Mr and Mrs Crawford my father found out that she had three children in the Walkerville Children's Home. So in course of time he adopted the daughter. I don't know just how old she was - I think she was about ten, but of that I'm not positive. There were two boys left in the Home - John and Peter - and Peter died of TB, or consumption in those days and there was no cure. When Jack [John] was old enough, he came out and made our home his home. Dorrie's mother was the housekeeper for my grandmother and we used to call her 'Mother', and our own mother 'Mum'.

That's very interesting. Do you think that Dorrie's mother came over to Yorke Peninsula at the same time Dorrie did?

Oh no.

Was it afterwards?

Oh, it was after my grandfather died. It's just that my father got her to come over to be housekeeper for Grandmother.

So your father had adopted Dorrie before he re-married.

Yes. He had a housekeeper - [Miss Warren EF]. Yes, he had a housekeeper, so he adopted Dorrie.

How old would Dorrie's brother have been when he came over to Yorke Peninsula?

I just don't know what age. I suppose he'd be in his late teens.

Did he move in and live with you?

Oh this was his home. When he didn't have a place to work in, he'd come back, and he was there when he enlisted [for World War One EF].

I see. So he did farm labouring work.

Yes.

You've mentioned you had an older brother. What was his name?

My brother?

Yes.

Menalaus. (laughs)

Did your father ever comment why he called him Menalaus?

No, I never ever knew.

What was his nickname? He must have had one.

Mick - always called Mick, nothing else.

It's interesting. You've mentioned how your father called his parents Pater and Mater, and to have a son with such a name as that. Do you think that might have come out of his year at PAC?

Oh, it could have, I don't know. We always laughed and said, 'Well, one of us should have been Helen' - Helen of Troy. (laughs)

Did he continue coming to PAC Old Scholars' evenings during your childhood?

He came until 1916. He bought a motorcar and they came home, and that would be mid-July [1916] and he died in August [1920]. He was four years with the stroke. That was a terrible time for us too, you know. We were only kiddies, really. Nineteen sixteen, what would I be? - I'd only be twelve.

So he died in 1920 after four years.

Yes, and we used to - my youngest sister, who was four years younger than me - while Mum could go out and have tea, we'd go down into the - - - [room EF]. He was in his bed and Mum had a single bed alongside of him. We'd lie on that and we'd sing and he would sing with us. He couldn't speak properly, but we'd have nice times with him like that. Yes, he was four years. Terrible time. He went to a strawberry fete and he came home - he was so upset because people wouldn't speak to him. We would never leave him, even although we were young. It's surprising how quickly you can pick up what they're talking about, yet people wouldn't talk to him. He was hurt.

His speech was badly affected was it?

Oh yes. Everything for a long, long time, it was 'Yes'. It was, 'Yes, yes' - that'd be a sentence - and we'd have to think very carefully and - - -. It's surprising how quickly you pick up some little thing - it may be a movement of his hands - and we'd be on to it. And, oh, he'd be that delighted because he couldn't understand why we couldn't understand what he was saying.

Did his own brothers and sisters call his parents Mater and Pater?

No, it was only my father. Yes, it was always Mater and Pater, and I have used that quite a bit. Funny, isn't it, how it sticks to you?

Dorrie would have been quite a few years older than the rest of you children then.

Well, if she was ten - yes, she would be. I think she was ten years older than my eldest sister, so - - -. Oh yes, because I can remember her standing me on a stool in the corner and smacking me with a strap because I threw wheat at my eldest sister. I can remember kicking - every time she went to hit me I kicked her. See? We did naughty things. You'd better not put that in!

No, that's all right. I like to hear about energetic children. (laughs) Was Dorrie expected to do a lot of the housework, helping your mother?

We all had to help as we grew up. Oh yes, well she would be treated as a daughter and have to help. She didn't go out to work. There was milking of the cows, you know, and all that sort of thing. And then when it got down to Una and me, I had to clear the food from the table - from the dining room into the kitchen - and she had to bring the dirty dishes out. We had to take turns. One week she would wash and I'd wipe, and then the next - - -. And there was no sink. It was a dish and a big tray, and the water had to be carried from the stove over to the - - - [table EF]. Then when you'd finished, that all had to be wiped down and the dish water had to be carried way outside and thrown away. There weren't any drains or sinks.

Where did you place the bowl that you did the washing up with?

On a table. There was this certain table and the dirty dishes had to be packed one end and washed and put on the tray to drain, and then whoever wiped them had to put them away. That was only one of our chores.

Was the washing up water just thrown anywhere or did it water something?

Oh no, that was thrown away out. It had to be away from the house. It could go under almond trees, mainly.

Was Dorrie treated any differently than the rest of you in the family?

Oh, I don't think so. We all got on very well together. She married - oh, when did she marry? She must have been married in '20 - '21. She was married in 1921.

That was after you'd left Yorke Peninsula.

Oh no, we didn't leave there till '23.

'23. So she married someone locally did she?

Yes.

I wanted to talk a bit about the house that you grew up in. Where was it in relation to the little township of Wauraltee?

Oh, it was quarter of a mile east of the township.

What can you tell me about it?

It had seven rooms. A kitchen, dining room, four bedrooms. The sewing room was a huge room - it had a lovely big open fireplace and big logs, you know. I don't know why they called it a sewing room. It was more or less like a - more

like lounge, or perhaps in these days a rumpus room. Of course the dairy was separate. That was a separate building. We went across from the kitchen, across and down steps. The bathroom was separate. The bath tub - oh, it was a huge thing, I don't know where they got it - and the water was a chip heater or paper, you know. You know what I mean, you put the paper in and you burn the paper and it makes the water hot.

Of course we had to be very careful with water because it was only on house catchment. We had three underground tanks and of course we had to be very careful because if we had a severe summer - - -. We had reservoir water that ran off the road - that was for the garden. And of course the laundry was separate - that was right away from the house.

You say you had reservoir water. Was that piped in?

No, it just ran off the - - - [road EF]. Down the hills and round the road and in [to two concrete lined reservoirs totalling about one quarter of a million gallons EF]. That was another thing, you see, because they didn't have the pipeline through there in those days. We had two big underground tanks for the cattle and sheep and for watering the garden.

Would that be pumped out of the underground tanks?

Have to draw it in buckets. Oh, we had a windmill - I'm wrong. We had a windmill that would draw it, some of it, but from two of them we had to draw the water. So that one particular tank, underground tank, with the windmill attached, and iron tanks - that was kept for water in the house, in the kitchen. We didn't have to carry the water for that. When I look back, I still think that we had lovely times. I think our life was - it was happy.

Did you feel in need of anything when you were growing up?

Well no, but our school holidays would be very boring, you see, because there was nothing to go to. You just had to amuse yourself with your play house or go for walks. Although we weren't far from the sea, we never got to the sea very often.

Did you know how to swim?

No. (laughs) No, I couldn't swim - I could sink. (laughs)

You mentioned your outside bathroom and the big bath tub. What was the bath tub made of?

[Galvanised EF] iron.

Did it need more than one person to lift it?

Oh yes. Oh, it was big. You could get the whole family sitting around and still have room to move. (laughs)

And you were saying you didn't use it as children?

We had used it at odd times, but more often we were bathed in front of the stove in the kitchen where it was warm.

What sort of a lavatory did you have?

Well, you had to walk down the yard - one of those, you know. It had to be emptied, the bucket.

So it was a bucket, not a deep hole.

No. That was another one of our chores - we had to scrub the seats. In the summer time you'd be terrified to go there because you'd have to push the door back and look that there's no snakes. See, the snakes would come.

Were snakes common in your area?

Oh yes, they'd even come up to the back door for the water to drink. Oh yes. We had a magpie and he'd call out, 'Snake, snake,' and he'd - - -. Often he would call out and they'd run with sticks or wires, and then he'd laugh. (laughs) Oh no, snakes, they were horrible things. One day I killed a little diamond snake - you know, they've got a black diamond [mark on the skin EF] - and they're deadly poison. It was only a little thing so I thought I could beat it, you see, so I killed that one, but I was scared of them - I didn't like snakes, not one bit.

Did you hear of anyone being killed in the area?

No. And the day that we were coming home from school, we were walking through this stony patch and the snake was up ready to strike and my sister had the milk bottle - we always took a bottle of milk to the teacher - and she threw the glass bottle at the snake. She missed the snake, but scared it - it went. Oh no, it was ready to strike. I'm terrified. I still don't like lizards either.

Yes, you were talking about the house, and it sounds as though it was a fairly large one. What was it made of?

Limestone, and a verandah on three sides.

Do you think that made a difference to the heat, or keeping it cool in summer?

Oh well I think it does. Yes, I do think that verandahs make a difference. There were north, east and south verandahs.

Did you ever use the verandahs - having people sleep out there?

Yes, we used to sleep out. Nice - it's lovely.

Would that just be at a particular time of year?

It'd be in the summer time.

With all you girls in the family, how were the sleeping arrangements made? How many to a room?

Dorrie and Vera had one room, and we other three had the other room. Oh, that was a huge room. The rooms were big.

Did you each have your own bed or did you share?

No, there were two of us. Any two'd sleep together, and one in just a single bed. Then we eventually got single beds.

When you were sharing a bed, was that a double or a single?

Double, yes. Then eventually they got rid of that and we had three single beds.

Was the house situated in an area with a front yard and back yard attached to it?

We had a back garden, a flower garden. My mother was very fond of flowers. And in the early days my father had a lovely garden - front garden - beautiful chrysanthemums, and he'd disbud them and - - -. When a sheep was killed [for meat EF] they would catch the blood and then put that into the garden. Used to grow nice vegetables. But as time went on, I suppose he probably was tiring - I don't know - and it wasn't so - - - [wonderful EF]. But beautiful lettuce - great big hard firm - it was lovely. Out the east was another little garden and all on the east verandah my mother had lovely pot plants. Then at out back - there was a stone wall at the back, and behind that there was a plantation of almond trees. Then further down from that was an olive plantation.

During your childhood, did your parents harvest both those crops?

Not the olives. No, my father just liked the trees. But, of course, the almonds we would gather.

Did you sell the almond crop?

No, we used them. See it was different in those days. You made use of things that you grew because you didn't have the opportunity to get good vegetables, or fresh vegetables. I can remember the greengrocer coming with a case of apricots for us for jam, and they were just jam before he got there [because the fruit was squashed EF]. So we made use of most of the things that we grew.

Did you still use those apricots?

Oh yes, they made jam. Well you had to, or you'd have to go without. The apricot jam in those days was made in great big pots. Some people even made it in the copper. See, we had to make all jams. I still make jam. But we had to make all our jams - plum and - - - [apricot EF].

You've mentioned you had a big open fireplace in what you called the sewing room. How many other fireplaces in the house?

In our bedroom there was a big open fireplace. Our bedroom was once the kitchen and it had - what do you call a stove in the wall? Brick oven - and of course where the oven came from was an open fireplace. So there was that one and then we had a grate in the dining room, and of course the kitchen had the stove. And on the stoves in those days - we had a Fountain. A big vessel standing on top of the stove that you'd fill it with water and it had a little tap on it. Then at the side of the stove was what we used to call the copper. Whether it was because there was a strip of copper down the front and a copper lid, and that was always filled with water. We had to do all that. All filling had to be done with dippers.

Would that be a source of hot water in both cases?

Yes. Oh, and we had a kettle.

Did you regularly light fires both in the sewing room and your girls' room?

Oh not in our bedroom we didn't. Only when I had pneumonia.

How old were you then?

Eleven.

Were you ill for some time?

Yes. I went to school in the morning and I had this terrible headache and the teacher sent me out to lie on the hard seat in the shelter shed, and then she said, 'Well, you'd better go home,' and it was raining. So I went home, I got wet and my mother wasn't home and I got into bed with all my clothes on.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B: TAPE 2 SIDE A

My mother had been to Minlaton for the day and when she came home, of course, I was very sick. So they had to go for a man on a two stroke motor-bike to ride fourteen miles - no phones we didn't have them in those days - fourteen miles for the doctor to come. Well he came the next afternoon. Believe it or not, they heated up a tin of antiphlogistin and with a knife he spread it on me, then wrapped me in cotton wool and left me. Oh, I really was

ill. I was craving for a drink, and in those days you couldn't - you mustn't drink - and every hour I had a dessert or a tablespoon of aconite in water one hour and belladonna in water the next hour, and that was all I had to drink because it was wrong to drink when you had a fever. Oh, it nearly killed me.

But my mother nursed me - she looked after me - and the doctor had to come with - - -. I don't think he had a motorcar then - I think it was later when my father was ill that he got a motorcar - but he had to come fourteen miles, and I wouldn't be the only person on his rounds, you see. But we survived and got through. But, oh, I can still - - - [remember EF]. Poor old Mother she paid - in those days it was a lot of money - five shillings a dozen for oranges for me, and they didn't have a drop of juice in them. It was November, you see, and the oranges were finished really.

I often wonder how we did survive. Well, then when they took the antiphlogistin off me - I was supposed to be wrapped in cotton wool for the summer. I couldn't bear it because we had very hot summers, you know [heat waves for EF] three weeks at a time. But I had to be very careful.

What was the antiphlogistin supposed to have done for you, do you know?

That was to cure the pneumonia.

Was it all over you?

He spread it round the side wherever I had it. Say it was this side, well he spread it all round and then wrapped me in cotton wool. When you think back, you know, a doctor [I knew of] - I won't say where he was - but this doctor, it didn't matter what you had wrong with you, from your head to the tip of your toes, it was the same bottle of medicine. But people survived. In there [EF has written an account of her childhood for her young relatives] did you read where I was supposed to be delicate and my father used to boil sarsparella roots? Didn't you read that in there?

Yes.

He'd give it to me. Yes, I was the delicate one of the family. (laughs) I'm still going. Then they had that terrible thick black licorice, and they mixed it with linseed - boiled that up.

What was that for?

Cough. I used to get terrible colds - still delicate, you see. When Grandmother would come I'd hide in the olive plantation. I couldn't take it - it was dreadful. But, oh, she'd make you take anything, but I couldn't.

A lot of people have told me about being given regular 'opening' medicine.

Oh yes.

Did you have that in your family?

No, we didn't, but families that we were connected with did. After an Arbor Day or any outing that they had, it was always a dose of bluebottle oil.

Bluebottle oil?

Castor oil, and they always called it bluebottle oil.

Did it come in a blue bottle?

Yes. Oh yes, that was a cure-all for everything. But they didn't give it to me. I didn't have to have that.

You've mentioned how at different times in the year it'd be difficult to get fresh fruit and vegetables. Did you have a greengrocer visiting the area?

No, we had to grow our own. Onions, cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuce, radishes, beetroot - all that we grew. You just had to because, as I said, with the van when it came around, see he'd only have the vegetables on the top [of the van EF]. Well, one week he would come and stay at our place - that was the end of the journey, so there wasn't much left [of the vegetables EF]. The next week he'd only come out for the day so we had a better choice, so that therefore you had to grow things. My father always had cases of apples and we were never allowed to eat any fruit after two o'clock. I don't know why. We could eat as much as we liked. We could have sultanas and currants and apples, but after two o'clock we were never allowed to eat the fruit.

Was that so you wouldn't spoil your dinner?

I don't know. Whether it had any effect on us I wouldn't know. But we were just told that. We didn't question why, you see, so we just went by. But beautiful Rome Beauty apples we used to get. You don't see them now.

Where did the greengrocer come from?

Oh it wasn't - that would be sent direct from a garden here in Adelaide.

You said that the greengrocer's van came round.

Oh, the van that came round came from Minlaton. For years, it was a Jaehne's van that used to come. He was the one that had the groceries and tapes and a little bit of drapery. It was only an ordinary little coach sort of thing.

What was the town of Wauraltee like when you were growing up?

There was a Methodist church, a shop, a Post Office, the hall, school - house attached - and six houses. That was the size of the town then.

Did you mention earlier that the shop closed at some time?

Oh yes, it closed. That carried a little bit of - - - [everything EF]. You know, they'd have a few tomatoes and other things, but it was never very fresh.

Did that close during your childhood?

Now, when did that close. Yes, I think that closed - - - [in my early days EF]. See, it was a branch of the shop at Port Victoria, and it closed down - it wasn't worth it to keep going.

What did your family do once the shop closed?

We just had to - - - [manage EF]. My mother would make two trips into Minlaton a year, and you'd get from the van what things you wanted [when he called EF]. Necessary things like sugar. Sugar was always bought in the bags - you know, sixty pound bags - flour was always bought in big bags, big wheat bags. You had to buy in quantity, otherwise you would run short. I often wonder how they managed. Well, I mean, you'd have to plan well ahead to be able to keep your supply up. But then, of course, they didn't have all the things that they have today. What I mean, you'd have your sultanas and your currants and your sugar, flour and ordinary things, because we just went along with ordinary food. We didn't have all the overseas things that they have now, we wouldn't be able to cope.

What about clothing? Did your mother buy clothing or do dressmaking?

I think Dorrie used to make our underclothes. I can remember at school I made a calico chemise, I think they called it, and it had insertion - all hand made - that was all backstitched on. And then we used to wear camisoles - you had to buy those. You remember - camisoles are back now, different. What they had them for I wouldn't know. Singlets would have to be bought. But nighties and things they would make. Then we had a woman who would come in periodically to make us a dress, and she'd come and stay.

Was she local?

Oh, she'd go around, move around from place to place. She actually didn't have a home. Her home was where she was working.

For what period of time would she stay with you?

Well it would depend. If all we girls had to have a dress made, it would be a while.

A week or - - -?

Oh, it'd be more than that. It'd be two or three weeks she'd be, and then she'd move on.

Was it the same woman who came for several years?

Oh yes, she came as long as I can remember. Until she died.

Do you remember her name?

Yes, Nance Willis.

Was she a widow or a single woman?

She was single.

That must have been a difficult living.

Yes, and yet - - - [necessary EF]. See, they wouldn't face it today. I suppose we'd find it a bit hard to go back to it too.

Would she come to you once a year, or - - -?

Oh, sometimes twice a year. She might be booked up. She might have a couple of weeks spare and be booked up for someone [later]. Well she'd come and do what she could in that time, and then when she'd finished at the other place she'd come back. It was all a case of everybody helped the other.

Would you girls help with the big sewing bee while she was there?

We would never be allowed. No. Although I think that we probably would annoy her - I don't know.

What sort of age woman do you remember her as?

Age is so hard to tell, because a cousin of mine I thought was about twenty years older than me, and when she died whe was only six years older, so it would be very hard to know. But I suppose she would be in her forties - early forties. That's only guessing.

When she came, do you remember, did she have a room to herself?

Yes. Yes, she'd have a room. And then she had this big, what we called the sewing room, to sew. It was a lovely light room. She'd sit there. Hand machine, not a treadle - you know, the hand machine.

Did she travel with her own machine?

No, she used the house machine.

Do you remember at all how she got from place to place?

We'd take her, or we'd go and get her - whatever suited. You know, one would - - - [fit in EF]. If it suited them to bring her or it suited us to go and get her, well, they'd work that between them. She had a brother too, and he used to wander round from place to place, until he got with old Mr Fox, and he stayed on there. He used to swear, this Mr Fox. We were a quarter of a mile away and we could hear him. (laughs)

I was wanting to ask you, with your father being a lay preacher and a Methodist, were there various restrictions on you children's behaviour? For instance, on a Sunday, were you allowed to play or anything like that?

No we weren't allowed to play, and if anyone came it was very difficult. No, we were never allowed - we had to keep the Sabbath. We could go for walks. That's what we used to find a bit boring, you see, but my father was very particular about that - that we just had to not play games and squeal and yell.

What about his attitude to dancing?

Well, really we weren't old enough. You see I'd only be, what - 1920 - I'd only be sixteen, and there weren't the dances about in those days. Oh, at Arbor nights we could dance, but no, I just don't know what his attitude would really be for us to go to a dance. But, oh, I don't think he would mind.

Did you know what his attitude was to alcohol?

Same as mine - right agin' it. (laughs) He always had a bottle of brandy. There was a chest of drawers along the wall, and there was a bottle of brandy there - only for medicinal. It was never - I never saw anybody with any. Never had any out of it, but it was there if it was wanted. That was the only thing.

Was that the only alcohol in the house?

Yes.

What about if your father had men working on the farm? Would he insist that they were teetotal?

Well there was no hotel for them to go to, so that they couldn't [get liquor EF]. We were very fortunate, really, that most of the men were good living men. Those that weren't went back on the next coach. Such as one who came, and he didn't know how to harness a horse, so he must have not spoken the truth when they sent him over. Oh no, it's a funny thing, we had a Welshman and we had a Scotchman, but they never drank, not even when they went into Port Victoria with loads of wheat - they never ever had a drink. So they were

teetotallers. But whether my father asked for teetotallers, I wouldn't know that. I just wouldn't know. He may have.

Where did the labourers come from?

From the labour bureau here in Adelaide, that's where he'd have to send for them.

Was it a particular labour bureau?

We only knew it as the labour bureau. We were never allowed to be around where the men were, but if we happened to be, we were never ever allowed to use the term 'red ragger'. Back in those days, my father always said we'd live to fear Russia, always, and we were never allowed to use that term. If the men were working out that side of the house, we had to be the other side - we were never - - - [allowed to be near them EF]. He was very, very fussy about us mixing with them. Well, we were only children - it was right, wasn't it?

What did your father think the men's attitude would be to the term red ragger?

I don't know whether it was because of his - - -. See, he was a very deep reader, and whether it was him saying that we would live to fear Russia, I really don't know, but we were never ever allowed to use the term. Nor were we allowed to use any slang.

Did you know of any trouble in the area, perhaps with men wanting to organise unions?

Oh I don't think - it wasn't a big enough place, you know. And the men, once they came - they would only be there for the season seeding or harvest, and then they would be gone, you see. There wouldn't be sufficient work to keep a man on full time then, not in those days. Later we did, because the Scotchman and the Welshman both enlisted from our place for the war. When you look back there's quite some sad memories really, but it's just something that - - -.

Do you think you father did have labourers on the property whose political ideas were different to his?

Well I don't think that he would discuss it with them, but he never ever wanted any trouble. Some of the people that you had sent over weren't very nice. Later on, as I say, the Scotchman and the Welshman, they were nice - very nice.

Had you children heard the term red ragger before your father told you about it?

Possibly we had at school or somewhere you know. There's always somebody to bring in words like that. I often visualise things that we did there and it was quite a happy life.

I wanted to ask you about the farm property itself. Did your parents own the farm that they lived on?

Yes.

I think you said last week that you're not very good on acreage, and saying how big a place is.

No. Oh no, it was a fair size. [About 2,500 acres. EF] Because there were one, two, three big acreages away from the house and then there was the property around the house. Oh look, I wouldn't have any idea.

Was the farm all in one area - all attached to itself?

No. No, there was the acreage around the homestead, and then across a road there was another two big paddocks - big paddocks they were - and then you went up another road over on this side, and there was a big paddock there, and you went further on and there was a paddock there, and then further on we had two. I don't know whether Grandad had bought that and divided it up or whether my father eventually bought it - I don't know. I think that some of it might have been given to him, but I think the rest of it, I think possibly he bought, because it was sort of divided out.

What was the main produce from the property?

Wheat, barley, oats and sheep. We kept cows but didn't go in for breeding cattle, not for selling. Speaking of one block of land, when motorcars first came in, my uncle was called upon to take a man who was sitting in the middle of our ripe crop smoking. He was a swaggy, and they said he was filthy dirty and they called him Buttons - he had a bag of buttons with him. We were lucky that he didn't set fire to the crop.

Was he someone who had been in the area for a time?

No, we didn't know who he was. Because we used to have swaggies come round, you know - men carrying their billycan and their blueys - looking for work. We had one whose clothes were all patches, and he was known as Patchy, and he used to come around regularly, and 'I'll cut wood for a feed'. He'd cut the wood and you'd give him perhaps a hot meal and then pack him up a bundle of food, and away he'd go to the next place with his billy.

Would you give all of them work who called by?

Yes, but of course you wouldn't run that risk because of accidents - you know, if anything went wrong. Yes, you sort of had pity on people and helped them where you could and when you could. Because we used to have a lot of men travelling the road looking for work. Not much of a life would it be?

So you remember that during your childhood?

Oh yes.

You've mentioned that your father would get labourers from the labour bureau. About how many men would he have working for him at a time?

Well, there'd be himself and sometimes an uncle would help - my uncle - and he'd probably have one man sent over, until he got this Welshman and this Scotchman. They were there, oh, quite a long time. They stayed on right through. They were good, clean men, as I say, and they enlisted and went to the war from there. One came back - - -. Oh, they both came back, but the Welshman had Bright's disease and died. He was in - you read that in there - he died in the military hospital at Keswick.

Of course the Point Pearce Aboriginal Mission was in your area.

Yes. [About twelve miles away. EF]

Did you have workers from there?

Yes, we used to have shearers. One was lovely. His name was Lewis Adams. He was clean - he was lovely - and he was a regular. But we'd have other - different ones would come with him - and one was a - - -. He said he was from a Japanese prince. Oh, he used to frighten me. Fine looking, but very, very big. And then Lewis's brother came. His name was Tomty Adams, and oh, he'd cheat. He'd say he's shorn more sheep than - - -. What I mean, they had to tally them, and my brother would tally them. Tomty would come late - he'd never come back with the others. But poor old Lewis Adams was so clean. It looked as though he'd been cleaned with boot polish, you know, he was so shiny. And if the others left the table before he'd finished, he would go - he would never stop and finish. But my father and the white men [and the black men EF] all ate at the same table - they would never make any difference. One day there were visitors and our father had to go into the dining room with these visitors - I've forgotten now who they were - and my uncle and the other white men all sat at the kitchen table with [the natives EF]. Never made any difference. That was a hard time, with the shearing - they used to shear with just the hand blades, you know. And bringing in the sheep and taking them back to their paddocks.

Did you children help with that at all?

Well, after school, if there was anything we could do, but usually we were kept away, you know, from the - - - [shearing shed EF]. We'd take up the afternoon tea, we could do that, and do things, but - - -.

Would the shearers live on the property while they were shearing?

Yes. [It was too far to travel each day EF] - they'd go home weekends. And they'd shear until Saturday dinner time and go home and be back Sunday night ready for Monday morning. Not like today, finish Friday night.

Where were the shearers and the farm labourers quartered?

That was a nice big room attached to the stables. Like, it was all built - - - [of stone EF]. It was separate from the stables, you understand, but that was all nice for them there.

Would the Aboriginal shearers sleep in the same room as the farm labourer?

Oh no they wouldn't. They would be locals and they would go home.

The farm labourers?

Yes.

You mentioned the Welshman and - - -.

They came later. Now, what happened there? Oh then the shearing used to be done at my grandfathers, and that was different. And the dipping of the sheep, that was most interesting, you know. It was like a big trough and you'd get the sheep in, and they had to go down into this and walk through it and come up, and you had to make sure that you'd dip their head under, because if you sold any sheep with tick, you were fined, and that was a most important part of shearing.

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE A: TAPE 2 SIDE B

You were mentioning earlier, that apart from the sheep you had fowls and various kinds of poultry - geese and ducks. Did you have water for the geese and ducks to swim on?

Well, in the winter time they had plenty, and then usually they'd be killed at Christmas you see, so that they wouldn't - - -. Oh, they'd get into the fowls' trough, or they'd get into the cows' trough and have a - - -. But I used to hate the geese because they'd hiss at you all the time. Oh no, we used to set the broody hens, you know, eggs under them, and the little chicks - hatch the little chicks out. I think it's an interesting life. It's something that very few children know much about today.

Did you have many horses on the property?

Oh yes, we had working horses - you know, the draught horses - but I don't know how many really. And we had, one, two, three, four, five horses that I can recall - light horses. We had a little pony to ride. See, we used to have to either ride to bring in the cows or walk, and I can remember bringing the cows in - - -. You could only follow the cows, and cows know the track. The fog would be so thick [some mornings EF] that you wouldn't be able to see the house or anything, and you'd just follow the cows. But it was to find the cows to bring them in in the morning [that was the problem EF].

Was that a regular chore? Did you have to do that every day?

Oh, take your turn. Mine was usually to gather the eggs, feed the fowls. The summer time was the problem. We'd have to carry water over - throw it all round out of the tanks, to give them somewhere cool to scratch and to lay. And you'd have to carry it over for them to drink. No, our chores were varied. We'd have to bring in wood to fill the wood box for wood for the stove. We didn't have to bring in the heavy wood for the open fireplace. That was big pieces - that was too heavy. Of course you had to walk and look everywhere to find the nests, because the fowls would go anywhere. They were out in the yard and the only way that you would find them would be if you heard them cackle you'd go quickly to find out where they were.

How many cows did you have at a time for milking?

That would vary too. Oh, we'd have four five, perhaps six. By the time you had the milk and you separated it for the cream and the butter, and you had to feed the separated milk for the pigs. They thrive on milk and barley and that. One cow, her horns used to grown in, and they had to keep sawing them off - grow into her head - and she was the one that would eat brown paper, chew old shoes and even sleepy lizards.

Did you children help with the milking?

Oh yes. I didn't do a great deal of the milking. I didn't like cows - I was never fond of cows - and I don't like horses either. No, the other girls used to do the milking - the older girls - because my younger sister, she was still only going to school when we moved to Salisbury.

What about working the separator or that sort of chore?

Yes, well, you put the separator together and there was a certain spout that the cream had to come through, so you had to make sure that you put it the right way, because the cream had to come out before the milk. There was one

for the milk, and you'd pour the milk into the big vessel on top and then you'd turn and turn, and it amazed me to see the cream separated from the milk. Of course the milk was [fed to the pigs EF] but the cream, that was the difficult part in the summer time, to keep the cream. Because in the early days we had no ice chest, no cool chest - had to put it down the underground tank and try to keep it. Well then it came in that they had the little safe - water safe - on the top, and the damp bags hung over [the sides]. And then later came the ice chest and if you weren't careful and watch, that the ice would all melt and you only had a little bowl and it'd be all over the floor. That's how we managed that way.

Then we used to make the butter. It all had to be - - -. You had to be careful that the cream didn't mould too. It would go mouldy on top, you see, if the weather was nasty. That was the hard time. You would put all the cream into this wooden churn. You had to turn the handle until it all turned into butter, and if we wanted to make buttermilk scones, well you'd save the buttermilk. And then you'd have to rinse [the butter EF] with rain water three times and then salt - put a certain amount of salt in it - and do it up in pound pats and sell it for sixpence a pound. And the last - it was one and six, that's fifteen cents - a pound.

Then the cream factories were built and they used to collect the cream and you were paid on butterfat. Don't ask me how, though. I don't know how they worked that out, but you were paid on butterfat. Well that saved a lot of loss to the farmers.

Did that come in in the time that you were living at Wauraltee?

Oh yes. Yes, we had to take our turn of making the butter.

Did the cream factories come in?

Yes, that was before we left, yes.

And did you stop making butter then?

Only for our own use. But you think of butter. What's it now - a dollar something? (laughs) And this is where people of our age find it very difficult to accept the cost of things. Although we've grown up over the general increase, it's only the latter years that wages have been so good. Well, I mean, you had to look at things before you could buy them in those days. See, I can go back to the sticks of lollies that we used to buy for a ha'penny. You don't buy anything for a ha'penny today. Well, I don't suppose half the people know what a ha'penny is, do they?

Yes, you've mentioned pigs that you kept. Did you get meat from anywhere other than on the farm itself?

No, you killed all your own meat, cured your own bacon and made your own lard, you own dripping. We used to have beautiful dripping sandwiches with all the gravy in it, and my mother always used to stir it before the dripping set. We used to have dripping for morning tea, bread and dripping, and we used to have lard sandwiches for school. How many would eat lard sandwiches today, or dripping sandwiches? But it hasn't hurt us, has it?

Were you children involved with the slaughtering of the animals?

No, I used to hate to see them being killed. You'd hear the little pigs squeal, you know. No, we weren't. We used to stand and watch them cut them up. See, they used to cure their own bacon. I don't know how they smoked it - whether they put it into a room and set a fire. They used to like smoked bacon, but I don't know how they did that.

It might even be a fairly make-shift structure that was used as a smokehouse.

Oh, it would be. It would only be on - you know, on a farm - it would only be their own way of doing it. And then the bacon - there would be the sides of the bacon, and it would be cut in a piece like that and hung from the dairy roof.

And, see, keeping meat was another problem. We had a safe out on the south verandah where we used to keep the meat. It was all open - you know, enclosed with fine wire. Then once it came too hot, it was brought in and put on the dairy floor and Ice-aline was rubbed into it. Now, I don't know the value of Ice-aline and it was like icing sugar, soft and white. Now whether that had anything to keep it, I don't know, but we used to do that and then put it in a bag down on the cement floor. Or, if we wanted to pickle it, we would put salt and water and then saltpetre with an egg in it, and when the egg came to the top, that was the right mixture to put the meat in to pickle it.

You knew you had the consistency right?

Yes, when the egg floated to the top. What I mean, I think that they had some very sensible ways of keeping things because we lost very little meat, and we would have very hot summers. They were talking last night on air and they wanted to know about that very hot heatwave that we had when it was a hundred and seventeen. Well, we didn't have many like that, but we would have three weeks of it - perfectly blue sky, and it would be over a hundred degrees. Well, you know, to keep food without refrigeration was a problem, but we did, we managed.

We've been talking about various things with your childhood and you were telling me the other day that you were fairly adventurous children. I did want to ask you in particular about your childhood games at playing house.

Playing house?

Playing house and playing cooking, and things like that.

(laughs)

Talking about keeping meat, that fits in with that very well.

No, well, my sister was a very clean - - -. Even in those days - she was when she was grown up, but she was like it when she was small too, and she was the ring leader in preparing the homes - I couldn't be bothered. We had a lovely room next to the cow yard. We were there, all done up beautifully, and we had mats in the centre - you know, that was our carpet. We'd go out and gather eggs and we'd mix up eggs and dirt and, 'Oh, I think you have to have a bit more flour,' you know, and we'd put that in. And we were having a lovely cooking day when Dorrie came along. So, of course she didn't know that there'd be eggs in the mud, so we threw the egg shells under the carpet till she'd gone. I guess she knew that we'd been taking them, I don't know.

Then we were to have this blue bush that had a white flower, and in those days we would have seven pound tea tins - I don't know whether you have seen them, but we always bought seven pounds of tea in these tins. And we would go out and pick this white flower and put it into these tins - that was our tea - and we'd make tea. We'd leave it in the teapot. You shouldn't, but in those days we did - it'd brew longer and be nicer and we would do that. You don't want to hear about the sparrow.

Oh, I'd love to hear about that.

Well one day I had a dead sparrow and I plucked it and I cleaned it, and I hung it in our meat safe, which was a wire netting cage with big round holes in it, you see. When I went to get it the first time, there was more meat added to it [by flies laying on it] so I brought it in and I washed it, and I'd put it on the stove to cook in cold water and it'd go on like that for days. Well, you can imagine. The perfume was not very sweet. Dirty little things, weren't we?

Well, I think that was very normal for children. Did you do that sort of thing more than once?

I don't think my sister would allow me. I think that the odour got past her and she couldn't suffer it, because it was her 'house' you see.

What did you use as a stove? Was there any fire involved?

Oh no, no. A kerosene tin would be our stove and we'd have our little kettle, and we'd have our little old saucepan with a lid on it, you see, and cook it. But I didn't play a great deal in play houses. I was not - I'd rather climb trees. That was when I cut my hand on a galvanised iron fence. I was always climbing, getting into mischief.

Had you children helped your mother with plucking chickens? Would that be a chore?

Yes. And my sister, my eldest sister, Vera, and I, the minister was coming - we were left home. I don't know where Mum had gone but we were home alone - staying. She'd gone away probably to Adelaide, I don't know. Vera said, 'Well what are we going to do about meat for Mr Harris?' - that was the minister. 'Well,' I said, let's cut off the head of a fowl'. 'Oh,' she said, 'I don't think that we can'. I said, 'Oh yes we can'. We eventually got the head off and plucked it and cleaned it and cooked it for him, but he didn't know the agony that the fowl went through or we went through. Because we weren't that old, you know what I mean, and you have to know how to go about - - -. I'd never cut a fowl's head off in my life before, but there's nothing like trying, you see. He enjoyed it.

When you plucked poultry, would you use the feathers for anything?

Yes, we used to - - -. Not the big wing feathers, the little - the small feathers - and they were put on a piece of paper and laid on the oven door, open, and dried, and we'd make pillows. Speaking of bedding, we always used cocky chaff mattresses. Lovely and cool they were, and the filling was thrown away and replaced each year. The ticking all washed, and the cocky chaff was when wheat had been winnowed and it was the husks off the - - - [grain EF].

We had a big heap of that and one day we were running down over it - up one side and down the other. My father was coming home from his mother and father and he saw us, but we didn't think that he did, you see - we didn't think he could see us. So he went down to where the cocky chaff was, and he said, 'What's been up over the cocky chaff?' and we said, 'Oh, the pigs'. 'Well,' he said, 'the little pigs hadn't better ever go on it again'. We knew that he knew. It's a wonder we got away with it because he was very strict on the truth, but I think that perhaps he was in the good mood and took it. That day we were lucky, because he was very strict.

How would he punish you if you'd done something wrong?

Well I think a look from him, or a word, would be sufficient. The only one that I ever knew that he hit was my little sister, and I don't know what she did this day, and he smacked her with his hand. But that was the only time that I - - -. No, one word from him and we knew. And if we asked Mum if we could have something, and she said, 'Oh, you'll have to ask your father,' if he said, 'Ask your mother,' we knew we were right, but if he said, 'No,' that was it. We knew that we could get around Mum, but if he said 'No,' that was final. I only wish there was more discipline like it today.

When you were growing up, did you ever go away from the farm on holidays?

Oh, only down to this old aunt. I think I told you about her, didn't I - the one that lived with Granny Illman?

Oh yes.

We'd go down there but, oh, she was a terror. I never ever enjoyed it down there with her. You ought to ask Len [EF's nephew]. Len boarded there when he went to high school, and his main meals were [cold mutton] chops and [prunes and EF] boiled rice. But, you see, in those days, people didn't have the money to buy - - -. Perhaps she couldn't cook anything else - I don't know. Of course, there again, there was a fair age difference I suppose, and yet with Dorrie's mother who housekept for my grandmother, she was gorgeous. See, it depends on people doesn't it?

Yes. When you were growing up, before you came to live at Salisbury, had you ever visited Adelaide?

Oh yes. We came over here to boarding school, of course, and then - - -. Not very often, but I was over once that I can remember, with an aunt. And then I came with my brother and my sister - eldest sister, Vera - and then he took us through to Mount Gambier. In those days, to go - we went through the Coorong. When you go through the Coorong now and there's all that bitumen road, and when the [water level is low EF] out you can see where people used to drive. We had to drive, and we got stuck. See there was no road. And then it came that there was just an ordinary road, but to ride on the bitumen now, it's really lovely.

How old were you when you went to Mount Gambier?

Sixteen.

Before you came over to boarding school, had you been to Adelaide before that time?

Yes. I can remember coming to Adelaide with Dorrie and my father, and I had teeth out, and they bled and they bled. My father went and tried to get a doctor - we were staying at the Women's Christian Temperance Rooms - and he said, 'Go back and tell her to bite rag'. So I was told to bite rag and, oh, it made them worse. The bed was absolutely saturated with blood - I nearly died. The little maid - she was gorgeous - there. She said, 'Don't worry, I'll do the laundry - it's not much for me to wash'. I had to get up and go by horsedrawn cab to Port Adelaide to get the boat home. Nothing to eat, and all that blood loss - oh, I've never forgotten that. I remember that trip quite well.

How old do you think you were then?

I was only about ten.

These were milk teeth, were they, that you were having out?

I don't know, because they bled so terribly. I don't know what they could have been. They were back teeth. But you see, our [family's] teeth have got roots that turn up, and whether that sort of split the gums, I don't know, but it was a real mess, and I've never forgotten that trip.

Obviously you'd had trouble with your teeth as a little girl.

Oh well, you see, we never had a [regular EF] dentist. He'd just call round and you'd sit on an old fashioned kitchen chair and he'd stick a bit of plaster and mix up some stuff with oil of cloves, if there was a hole in your teeth. Well that was no good. What I mean, it's a wonder that a lot of us ever lived through the treatment that we had.

Do you remember how often you'd see the travelling dentist?

Oh, about once in six months. But, see, he didn't have a drill there or anything. He'd only dig it out, and you can imagine it - it'd be torture. I'll tell you what, we have been through - and, of course I think it was as hard for the dentist to have to - - -. Well, I suppose that's how they learned to do it - I don't know. Because I had my second teeth out quite young.

About how old were you?

I'd be in my early twenties.

I think that was very common.

Yes, in my time. Oh yes, well children now go to the dentist almost from the day they're born.

Were you troubled a lot with toothache when you were growing up?

Oh yes. Oh, yes, you'd get holes - they'd decay. My mother would mix up some stuff - I don't know what that was - with oil of cloves, and put it in and that would help. We used to have heated salt bags on your face. It wasn't very nice. But I don't think that we cleaned our teeth the same - although my father had his own teeth. I think the majority of people lost their teeth fairly early and that was it.

Were you glad to lose your teeth?

No.

Some people were very relieved when they lost their adult teeth.

Oh no, it'd be lovely to have your own teeth.

I noticed in the photograph you were showing me of your sister's wedding, both you and your sister had glasses as young women. How early did you have glasses?

Well I had glasses - - -. See, during the First World War, we used to knit, and we'd be knitting outside in the dark. I always say that that, I think, was the downfall of our eyesight. We knitted socks, kneecaps - you know what the kneecaps were, because they were open trenches and they were in water - scarfs, balaclava caps, and all that. After sun had gone down we'd be knitting. Wherever we went we had our knitting, and we all wore glasses. I also think that perhaps the opticians were keen [to prescribe EF] glasses too.

Where would you go to an optician?

Oh, I must have come over here to town for the first time. I was trying to think of his name. No, I can't think of it, and he gave me double sight, like I've got now, with the first [pair of spectacles].

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE B: TAPE 3 SIDE A

We've been talking a bit about family health, and you've mentioned that when the family needed a doctor it was quite a trip to go and get him. Was that the case all the time that you were on Yorke Peninsula?

Yes, when my father - when he had his stroke - anything that was wanted - you know, if the doctor was wanted - I'd have to get up on a Thursday morning and go down to get the mail at six o'clock, it was a horsedrawn coach. You either had to do this or get this man on the motorbike to ride down, which you didn't like doing, you know, if you could arrange other ways.

So you'd often send a message by the mail coach, would you?

Post a letter, yes. And they were very good. The doctor would come. It was better when he got a motorcar because he could make the trip in a day, but, you see, he'd have other people to - - - [visit EF]. And there was only one doctor - it wasn't like where you've got two or three, and he had to come fourteen miles.

I wanted to ask you about your school days. About how old were you when you first started school?

I suppose we started school at six years in those days - and I think I was in [Class 4 EF] when they changed from Classes to into Grades, and we had one teacher for all Grades.

You were saying earlier that the school was attached to the hall.

[The school teacher's house was attached to] the school. There were the three rooms, the kitchen, dining room cum lounge and the bedroom for the teacher - that was attached to the school. I often wonder. She did a marvellous job, I think. We always called her 'Teacher' - everybody called her 'Teacher'. She was an Irish lady and always talked about the boodle - her boodle - that was her money. But to teach five classes and then switch over to seven grades for one teacher - see, there'd be about thirty children to begin with in the school. That's a lot, you know, with mixed Grades. If it'd been one Grade it would be all right, but to have the mixed classes - I think she did a wonderful thing. And it was so different. We had a big chart on the back of the door and we'd go out there and learn the big A, little a, big C, little c. And then we had boxes of letters of the alphabet, and then we got the 'aw' and 'ow' together, and these were all in little - each letter had a little box - and from that we had to make words. This is how we learned. Today it's look and say, and I don't know how they remember it, but they do. That was how we started.

We had blackboards - oh they were scratchy things. And our old teacher - oh, we had to sit up straight, and the hand had to be on there, and doing painting, you know, it'd be just a brush stroke. She'd come along behind and she'd dig you in the back and, 'That's a splob,' she'd say to us.

A splob?

A splob. When it was no good, you see, it's a splob. Oh, she was lovely really, and the dear old thing never used a whistle. She'd come out and go like this [snap her fingers] and one day we all said, well we wouldn't see her, so we didn't see her - we went on playing. But we didn't do it again.

How would she punish you?

Well, I don't think that she really punished us, but I think we were so ashamed at what we had done, our conscience pricked us, because, had she told the parents - see, we got a bit worried - but she didn't. No, she really was a good teacher. What else do we want?

Oh, I had one teacher for three months, relieving, and oh, she was a horror. She disliked me and I certainly disliked her. If ever I met her I would tell her. It was shocking - she almost gave me a nervous breakdown. I could not do anything right. She would show me up, and I was not the type that could take it and she knew it. Oh she was horrid - she was really horrid. She used to have her boyfriend come there and she'd send us out in the yard. It was a wooden school and it had this big open fireplace, and it had a - oh, I suppose it was tin - around, up the chimney, and there was a hole in it. We used to go over and look in the hole and watch what they were doing.

What were they doing?

Well, not things that were nice.

Did you tell your parents?

No, we were too scared to. Oh no, if we said anything, what I mean, you know, there would be - - -. No, we just had to let it go. And when she'd go away for the weekend and she'd be late back, we'd all be there at school and my cousin would take us into the school and he'd be the teacher. We used to have the time of our lives till she came back. Well they can't do that now. Oh no, she was a terror. When she was going she said to me, 'I'm going,' - I think it was to Port Broughton, I'm not sure. She said, 'You'll be glad, won't you?' and I said, 'No, Miss Green'. I was that thrilled. Oh, I was terrified of her, and it's wrong. If you're terrified of a teacher you can't do your work. Now, what else happened? Do you want to know about our Arbor Days?

Yes, was that part of the school year - part of school?

Yes, a day would be set aside and trees would be ordered to plant in the school ground. My father gave the portion of the land to the school. We'd all have our hair in plaits ready for the evening. In the morning we would plant the trees, and then in the afternoon we would have races and there'd be skipping and 'winding the cotton and' - oh, all sorts of things like that. Then about five o'clock we would be given a high tea of meat rolls and sausage rolls, sandwiches, lovely cream cakes - all nice things, you know. That was the children's day - we were fed first - and then the adults would have theirs. Then we would go over to the schoolhouse to get ready for the evening. Wear

our best frocks. Sometimes we'd have ribbon around [the waist EF] and a ribbon tied in a big bow on our hair which would all be combed out, all fluffy. And Dorrie would spend weeks preparing us for our concert. We'd give lovely concerts. That was when the blue bottle oil'd be given to the children. But we always had to go home at ten o'clock.

One night we said, well, we wouldn't see father, we would dodge around [to hide from him EF] but ten o'clock came and he came and we went. We tried to dodge, but you've got no hope. Kids think they can do all sorts of things but their parents outwit them.

How would you get to school in the morning?

Walk. Oh yes, we'd walk, take our lunch - we'd cut our lunch. This was when I had the - - -.

Oh, the lard sandwiches.

Yes, lard and dripping sandwiches. Sometimes we would have pickled onion sandwiches, and the teacher got to know about things and I would take a chop, or perhaps two chops, and she would give me plum jam. I loved it, because it was out of a tin. She'd have the chops and I'd have the plum jam. She was like a dear old mother, really, to us.

How old were you when you came over to Adelaide to boarding school?

I'd be about fourteen.

Had your older sisters come to Adelaide?

Yes, they had both been. But my younger sister - she went to the Wilderness [School].

How did you feel about going to boarding school?

I hated it. I like home. Oh, to be away, and we had that plague of influenza where they had to fly a yellow flag if there was a case. Oh, if you saw the yellow flag flying, you'd run past the place. We went home. Yes, I think we went home - I think the school had to be closed. It was terrible.

Which school did you go to?

Lothian House [at Semaphore EF]. Or my sisters did, I went - - -. It was still Lothian House but others had taken it over. The Misses Stenhouse, they'd had that Lothian House College for years - it was well known. But when I went it wasn't anything very much. She had been a missionary and I think she thought she was teaching the blacks.

Do you?

Yes.

What was her attitude to the students?

Oh, it was the food that got me. I can't take milk in tea because the milk used to hang in strings on the cup - it was sour. And on a Thursday our meal was boiled sausages and it was only in water - no vegetables - and we had turnip tops and mashed potatoes with it, and that had to be eaten or you got no sweets. They'd cut up orange with custard, which we all loved, so we would swallowed down the boiled sausages to get the orange custard. Oh and other food, the food was shocking. I think it's necessary to have plain - good, plain food - but, turnip tops!

What did you think of your teacher as compared to the one you'd had at Wauraltee?

Oh well, she was a BA. And one we had, she was trying to teach us algebra, and this was her attitude - 'As this inkwell is equal to that inkwell, so are both inkwells equal - do you understand?' and we'd say, 'Yes Miss Walsh' - we had no clue at all. We were getting nowhere so we went to the headmistress and we said, 'Sack her,' and they sacked her. So that showed what they were - for kids to say, 'Sack the teacher'. Mind you, I think she had the brains but she couldn't impart the knowledge.

Were you part of the group who went to the headmistress? Did you go to the headmistress yourself?

Oh, the class went. Yes, we all went. We were all guilty. But to stand up and say, 'As this inkwell is equal to that inkwell, so both inkwells are equal - do you understand that?' Well we had to say, 'Yes, Miss Walsh' and we didn't know a thing.

Did you complain to your parents about the school?

No I don't think we would. I don't think that we would complain about anything. In those days I don't think that they listened to complaints. They might have in their own way but they never ever let you think that they did. No, we never ever complained.

Did you feel that you learned any more, coming to the boarding school?

No. No, because, as I say, they were BAs and I think they had the knowledge but couldn't impart it. Now, one girl, who was a student, we would be doing sums - arthmetic - and we'd say, 'But Gwen, how did you get that? What did you do?' 'I don't know, I don't know - I just did it'. Well, you see, people who, I

say are really clever, they can't impart knowledge, and I think that's really most important, to be able. (A teacher at Port Lincoln - this is sort of out of my years - she told me that the subjects that she found most difficult were the easiest for her to teach because she knew the pitfalls. She said, 'Any subject that I was good at,' she said, 'I couldn't tell - I couldn't impart that knowledge,' and I think that there's a lot in that.)

What were the boarding facilities like for you?

Well, we had no lounge or anything to sit in. We had to sit in the classroom if we wanted to, or go outside and sit outside. There was only two bedrooms and we were all - - -.

Lined up around the walls.

Yes. I don't think much of boarding schools really, and yet some like it. They seem to think it's nice, but - - -.

Where was the school situated?

Semaphore. It's long since gone of course.

Did the teachers take you out of the classroom for lessons at all?

Have us out? No, they didn't have us out, but there was no comfort. There was no - - -. Well, I mean, you either had to go - and you couldn't lay on your beds. There was one maid there, who was very good - she'd bring us in things and stick them under the bed for us to eat. One day we had a water melon. Well, it was all right eating it, but we didn't know what to do with the seeds and the skin. So the girl next door was rather nice, and so we said to her, and she said, 'Oh, bring it out and put it over the fence'. We had to wait our chance and get it out and put it over her fence to get rid of it.

If you were caught doing the wrong thing - - -.

I don't know what they'd do.

Did they use the cane there?

No. Oh no, they only had girls. But they had one little girl there, and she was a little nervous wreck. Dear little thing, and they didn't treat her as a human being at all. No, it wasn't nice.

How long were you there?

Eighteen months. When my father died I left.

How often would you go home during the year?

Every quarter. We'd go home on the Juno - the steamer. We'd have to have a horsedrawn cab to take us to the boat, and this day we'd get on to the boat and chocolates were cheap in those days - oh, we were eating chocolates going down the Port River. It was a calm sea. We get to the Outer Harbor and over she went - down over the - - -. It was all battened down round the sides. All we could do was to lie on the deck - we couldn't keep up - and the crew were running and grabbing things. And of course we were never allowed to use the pillows that they gave you on the ship because they could have had germs in them.

Is this what your mother told you?

Yes, we were never allowed. So we used our suitcases for pillows, and we just lay on the deck. But we'd eaten this chocolate. We were lucky that we got through and we didn't suffer, but we didn't. But, oh, people were sick. It was a stuffy little cabin below - you couldn't go downstairs. It was too stuffy and smelling of oil. And we went home on the Juno and then coming back, sometimes we would have to catch the ship - or go to the ship - at Port Vincent. One day we got down there and our ship was out, and we had to be rowed out in little boats and had to climb up the ladders, because the tide had gone out - where it used to come into the wharf. Then we'd be going back with a big square sultana cake, and had all that to take on this little boat. Oh, the staff were good. They would help you to get up the ladder.

Then one day, we were going home - my mother was with us, and she wasn't very well, and we looked at her, and she was covered in measles. So she had to get a veil to cover her face, keep her hands in, and we took her home in a coach and it was hot weather. Poor thing, how she ever managed. Anyhow, we all went down with the measles, one after the other. So where she got them I don't know, but she picked them up somewhere. But in the hot coach - you know, closed in they are, you know what I mean. You just come up two steps at the back and walk through and that's all - covered in, with the seats along the sides.

Was it motorised by that time?

No, horses. No, the first motorbuggy, not motorcar, I saw, was a man who lived in one of the houses in Wauraltee. It was a motorbuggy and it had iron wheels - no tyres - that was the first, and then came the motorcar. We have seen a lot of changes - planes and - - -.

Actually, talking about planes, that was one of the things I wanted to ask you about - the local fellow, Harry Butler.

Harry Butler.

Did you know of him before his airmail flight?

Oh yes. Before Harry Butler went to the war he would come up to our Arbor Days, or concerts, whatever we had, and he would dance - long hair flopping down. And then of course he went to the war and he flew to Minlaton one Show Day in a [bi-plane]. It wasn't closed in like they are today. He was sitting there - you could see him. It was really wonderful what they did with those planes, so open.

When you say he danced at the Arbor Day Concert, do you mean he was dancing with other people?

Oh yes, yes. Oh, he'd dance with us kids if he could get us. Well, I mean, he was quite good. He had an accident. Another man was up with him and the plane crashed and he was never the same after that. They were both crippled up. He died quite early. The Red Devil, I think they called it, is over at Minlaton now.

That's right. Had you seen him in that one?

No, I hadn't seen him in that one, but I have seen the machine. No, I sent two letters with him when he took the mail, and my grandson has the stamps. I gave them to him because he likes that sort of thing.

Was he something of a hero amongst the local people?

Oh yes, he was. He was very popular. He married a teacher. She remarried after he died. She's still living, I believe, at Victor Harbor. I think she's ninety four. There was a write up about her not long ago. No, it was very sad about him, but of course all the planes, there's always the chance, isn't there?

Did you have any ambitions to go up in a plane at that age?

No.

Were you at the boarding school when your father died?

Yes.

How did you hear of his death?

A telegram was sent to the school, to the headmistress, and notified her, and I was put on the boat the next day and went to Stansbury and I was met by a cousin. I didn't know that he had died and I was a bit inquisitive with this

chap. I felt sorry for him afterwards, because I must have put him through a terrible time because he didn't want to have to tell me, but I got him in such a position that he had to tell me that my father had died the day before. That's life, isn't it?

Do you think it was a shock to you at the time?

Well, you go all cold and horrid don't you? And I think at that age, in our day, that perhaps we weren't up with those sort of things. I can remember a woman dying and I knew what time the funeral was going past the school, and I asked to leave the room. I saw it go past and to this day it haunts me. I saw the coffin in the hearse and I was worried for fear she would get dirt in her face. I thought it had a [top] like a fruit case that has cracks in it, and that worried me for fear she got dirt in her face. And that's still with me.

What about with your father's death - did you see him after he'd died?

Yes. I think it's nice. We were old enough. But, there again, they're very waxy - very waxy looking - aren't they? I can still see that.

Was there any question of you going back to school?

No. No, I stayed home. I used to go out into the fields with my brother and help him.

You were saying your father died in 1920 and it wasn't until 1923 that you came over to Salisbury.

Beginning of 1923, yes.

Would you get stuck into the farm work out in the fields?

Oh yes, I used to go out and pitch hay to my brother when he was stooking - not that he wanted me to - it was very heavy work - but he was lonely and, I think [needed] company. I like company myself.

Didn't you have a farm labourer working with you at that time?

No, not at that time.

Was there a reason for that?

No, I just think that - - -. Yes, later on, two English boys came out - and one married my sister later on - and they were there, but just at that particular time he was alone and I went out with him. They came later.

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE A: TAPE 3 SIDE B

You were mentioning that Dorrie got married in about 1921, or thereabouts. Were all of your other sisters still at home when you father died?

Yes.

And your brother.

Yes.

Did he marry at about this time or after you went to Adelaide?

My brother? No, he married in March 1923, when we came to Salisbury.

What were the circumstances after your father died and your brother looking after the farm? With your father being an invalid for so long, had your brother been running the farm himself?

Yes. You see he wasn't very old. Yes, he ran the - - - [farm EF].

You've mentioned before an uncle helping on the farm. Did they help when your father was ill?

Uncle - he would come for shearing only. But there was a married man that was there - he was there, and he was on shares for a while. Later these two boys came out from England and one stayed - the other went on - and this one married my sister.

Do you know whether your family was able to keep all the property that your father had been working? Were they able to keep it in work during that time or did you have to sell any?

Oh yes. It wasn't until he died that it was sold. Yes, he kept - he worked it.

Was some land sold after your father died?

No. No, not until my brother died. When my brother died [in 1943 EF] it was all sold. Because [his widow] was with five little kids, you see, and she couldn't - - - [get assistance EF]. The eldest was in the Air Force, but the others were all quite young.

So, why did your mother and the rest of you children move to Salisbury?

Well, we couldn't live in the house when my brother was married. She had a brother at Salisbury, and so we just moved there.

Did you move in with the brother?

Oh no, we bought a house, in Middleton Street. It's still there. When I go past it, you know, you see - - -. Rather old looking now, the same as me, isn't it?

Were you or your sisters involved in the discussion about where you'd move?

Oh I don't know exactly. I think that perhaps when there was the thought of moving, I think that perhaps we were all quite agreeable to going there anyhow - we were quite happy.

You didn't mind leaving Yorke Peninsula?

Well no. What I mean, we couldn't really do anything else when my brother wanted to marry. You know, you've got to do the right thing, haven't you?

How did your mother and you girls support yourselves when you moved to Salisbury?

I went to work. My youngest sister, she was working. My mother didn't go on the pension till not long before she died.

What about your two older sisters - what were they doing?

The one older than me, she was looking after some cousins, because she had the reason for staying there because the Englishman that married her was there - or close to her. Vera, the oldest sister, she stayed on the farm to help my sister-in-law for twelve months, and then she came over and she just lived there, and I eventually got married.

Do you think perhaps your brother helped support your mother with income from the farm?

Oh yes.

How was the move to Salisbury made from Wauraltee? Did you have a lot of household possessions to take with you?

No, we left the furniture there. Well, those days, you'd only put it on a trolley to move it I suppose, so it was left there - it was all nice solid stuff - and we bought new. I don't think we took anything at all. No, I don't think. It was - - -. And the motorcars in those days had only mica side windows, and they'd be broken, so that you couldn't use them to cart things. I don't know how it would have been done.

Did you take any animals with you - hens or the like?

No. No we left them.

So when you first made the move, it was just your mother and you two young girls was it?

Yes.

Did anyone else live with you? Did you have boarders in the house at Salisbury?

Oh, a girl stayed for a little while - a teacher. No, not really. Oh no, you like your home to yourself, don't you?

When you came to Salisbury, can you remember what you thought of the area in comparison to Wauraltee in Yorke Peninsula?

We just accepted it. There were floods that came down, you know, and went right across Paralowie Road and, he wasn't my husband then, but [Alan] rode horseback through the floods. Oh, the floods were terrific - they used to have shocking floods - and yet they've built on all that land that used to be flooded.

How did you find the people? Were they any different?

Oh I don't think so. They were country people in those days. Not now, because it's more thickly populated. No, they were all very nice really. Made us very welcome, and we played tennis. My mother played croquet and she enjoyed that. Of course in those days they had to light the lamps in the street. You wouldn't know the place now, it's so different.

Did you begin attending the Methodist church there?

Yes.

Would you say that was an important way of settling into the area, to get to know the church people?

Well I think you get to know the people quicker, and joining the tennis.

That was a church activity, was it?

Yes.

What about the croquet? Was that attached to the church?

No, that was nothing to do with the church. The lady next door, she played it, and my mother went with her. It belonged to the town, you know.

A council activity.

Yes.

Were you close in to the Salisbury township?

We were right in the township.

How did you find that, living with people next door and much more crowded than you would have been used to on the farm?

Well, they were elderly people and - - -. No, that didn't worry us - didn't worry us a bit. Had lovely orange trees in the garden - lovely orange trees. Because they did have lovely oranges. I don't know that they still have. I don't think they've got the orange groves there now, like they used to have.

You were saying that you went to work. What did you do when you first came to Salisbury - you yourself?

I went to Muriden's College, to type and that, and then I went to work.

Whose idea had it it been for you to go to Muirden's?

Mine. (laughs)

Was it?

Oh yes. Well, I'd have to do something. You just couldn't be around and have nothing coming in.

What did the course at Muirden's involve?

Typing and English and spelling and shorthand. I think that was about all.

Was it a full time course?

Yes.

How long did it take, do you remember?

About twelve months - twelve to fifteen months. I often wish I'd kept it up.

Did you find that that sort of school differed from the boarding school or country school?

Oh yes, different altogether. The little lady who would give us shorthand, she was marvellous. There are some clever people.

How did you take to that sort of work?

I liked it and I liked the company. I liked the company very much. Of course it was very different. When I was in the office, the manager gave me a cheque, and he said - oh, it was a big cheque - and he said, 'Run down to the bank and cash this please,' he said, 'and be as quick as you can'. I ran. Anybody today would know that I had money. I ran, because I was told to be quick. They wouldn't do it these days, anyway, it wouldn't be safe. You wouldn't be able to. How different. How very different. He was a lovely man.

Where did you first work after you'd left college?

Oh, with that so-called solicitor etcetera - he was the etcetera. Then I got with the Co-op[erative] Building Society and that was nice.

Was the job you had with the solicitor in Adelaide?

Yes. I've got an idea it was in Pirie Street. I'm not sure. I've forgotten now, because everything's changed.

How did you get the job?

I think Muirden's sent me. But, oh he was dreadful, and it was so dirty. I really don't know where he got his money. I think he had plenty without working. He'd have people in for drinks, but there was never ever typing, there was no - there was nothing.

What did you do all day?

Oh, I sat until I - - -. I used to take my knitting, or fancy work. I'd do something. When he was about I'd dust. You've got no idea.

Was he often out of the office?

He was in and out like a yo-yo. Always walked with his hands like that.

What was he doing? Sort of strutting. How long did you stay there?

Not very long. Two or three weeks and I'd had it. Oh, you couldn't put up with that.

Did he pay you?

Oh yes. Well, I mean, that's not good for anyone, to have nothing to do and just sitting there. The day drags and makes you miserable.

How did you get your next job?

I think that must've been through Muirden's. It must've been because - yes, I went there only to relieve. And then Mr Burnell [the manager EF] came to me one day and he said, 'I'm going to inspect a house. Will you come with me?' Well, that was an unheard of thing, to go out with a man, let alone your boss. I went to one of the girls and I said, 'Oh,' I said, 'I don't think that's right'. I suppose she told him afterwards - I don't know. And the dear old thing, he went and he asked me about my family and did I have a father, and I said, 'No'. He said, 'Well, would you like to stay on?' Bless him, he was lovely.

So where was this that you began working?

At the Co-op Building Society and they were in - I think they're still there, in King William Street, aren't they?

Yes.

But, oh, that's all different too now.

What did your duties consist of?

Office work, writing up shares and - - -. One day, a person - a man - came to the counter and I went over and he said that he wanted to take out so many shares. I wrote and I said, 'Who's the commission for?' and it was for himself. I

didn't know who he was, and I said, 'I'm sorry, but no one can collect their own commission,' and one of the girls came over and she said, 'He's one of the directors'. I turned round and I said, 'Well, I don't care. Director or not, if that's the rules of the - - -' and I think they did it as a [test EF]. I never ever felt - - -. I felt a little bit upset about it because I think that to do a thing like that to see if I was honest was not altogether fair, but they did it. They did it themselves. I just said, 'If it's a rule of the company, director or not,' I said, and I left him, I didn't do it - they paid him. But what's the good of having - - - [rules EF]. To me, they were wrong, in encouraging or trying to encourage me, to let him collect his own commission. He could have given it to his wife or to anybody, but not to himself. But he put his own name on it and they paid him the commission, and to me that's wrong.

That's something that I'm not familiar with. What was involved in that transaction?

He paid so much for a share.

In the Co-op?

Yes, in those days - I don't know what it's like now. You paid so much and you took out so many shares, and then there was - I've forgotten what the amount was for the commission, but there was so much paid to somebody else who recommended you, you see. Such as if I belonged to the Co-op and I said to you to go and get the shares, and you went in and you said that I was to collect the commission, you see. Not for you to collect your own commission. If I wanted to I could give you the commission, but I would have to collect it. But it was one of the directors. I didn't care. I just said, 'Well, I'm sorry, but if that's the rule of the company, I stick by the rule'.

Do you have any idea why they had that rule?

[queries question]

Why they had the rule that you couldn't collect your own commission?

No I don't know, but it wouldn't be right would it? Do you think that you should collect your own commission? I wouldn't know.

Yes, I can see how that could be used for profiteering.

Well yes. To me, if it was the rule - whatever their reason was - if it was the rule of the company it should remain a rule and we should stick by it. Oh, I just said, 'Director or no director I won't do it, if that's the rule of the company,' and I walked off and left him. It's a wonder they didn't sack me. But I always feel that it was done to catch me - to see if I'd do it. Well, I could

have anybody come in and - - -. I could have you come in and you could put somebody else's name on top and I could collect the commission for you and give it.

It occurs to me that it would in particular have to be a rule in the case of employees.

Well this is what I think.

You could profit from it quite well.

They did get the profits some of them.

How long were you working at the Co-op?

I would say two to three years. Time goes - well, I mean, you forget. Yes, several years anyhow.

Do you remember how much you earned there?

(laughs) The princely sum of two pounds ten [per week EF].

What did you do with your wages?

Banked it and lived on five shillings a week - that was my pocket money.

So you didn't have to hand the money over to your mother.

Oh no, no. No, she never ever asked for any, but I suppose we gave her things. I've forgotten about that. It's a long time ago.

Did you wear a uniform at work?

No, not in those days.

What sort of thing would you wear to work?

Just a nice little frock. One girl always came in late. She was always late, and one morning the train broke down and I had to walk from the Adelaide Gaol - we couldn't get in. Because I was late, look, it was a crime. And I was honest, I told them what had happened - I'd had to walk from the Adelaide Gaol. But this girl came in late every morning.

So was discipline fairly strict at work?

Well, yes, with some. One poor little kid - - -. Now, they used to put their money into a shoe box and put it in the strong room. It was opened - the strong room was opened in the morning. I was never in the strong room, but we were all under suspicion. And there was a poor little kid there working. His father was out of work and he got a job there, and this money was disappearing. He was called upstairs. Had the dear old boss that I [first knew]

been alive, they would never have sacked him, I feel sure. They put him through the paces as to whether he'd taken the money - no. The boss said, 'Take off your shoes,' and he'd planted it all in his shoes. Because his father was out of work. Now, I think, it was their fault - they should never have left the money open in the strong room in the first place, and I think if they had said to him, 'Well, now, you're not to touch the money - you're not to go into the strong room' - there was things they could have done. They got the money back, or most of it, but they sacked him, and I don't like those sort of things.

But he was hard. The son was a very hard - - -. I mean, he would take a house away from the person, but not the father. He would say, 'Oh, we can't do that. We've got to see whether we can help them through'.

Did you see much of that side of the business in your work?

No. No, it's only what you hear.

How did you come to leave the Co-op?

I got married. [hearing aid noise]

When was it that you got married?

1929.

How long had you known your husband-to-be?

Oh, ever since I went to Salisbury, really. He was at the church too - their family were church people. So that'd be, what, five or six years?

What did he do for a living?

When I first met him they were on land, and then his father retired and he was with a warehouse.

Was he a storeman?

No, he was a traveller.

Where did you live when you got married?

Out at Sefton Park.

Were you renting?

No, we had a house - we bought the house.

So that would take us up to about 1930, in the early years of your marriage. Where had you got married?

[queries question]

Where did you get married?

At the Salisbury Methodist church.

Well, I think we've done very well.

You've finished?

Covered a lot of ground today. Thank's very much indeed for sharing your memories with me.

I only hope that they are good - worthwhile.