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OH 456/30

Full transcript of an interview with

PETER WOOLCOCK

on 30 April 1997

by Rob Linn

Recording available on CD

OH 456/30 **PETER WOOLCOCK**

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TAPE 1 - SIDE A

RURAL HISTORY PROJECT.
Interview with Peter Woolcock at Scotts Creek on 30th April, 1997.
Interviewer: Rob Linn.

Well, Peter, to start at the beginning, you were born pretty close to here I know. When was it?

PW: Born on 19th August, 1932, in the Stirling Hospital.

Tell me about your parents, Peter. Who were they?

PW: Parents were Bessie and Harley Woolcock. My Dad was born at Woodside and he moved to Scotts Creek when he was about four years old, and he lived here for the rest of his life.

So he ran an orchard here?

PW: Yes, he ran an apple orchard. Market garden.

Well, in the market garden, what was he growing? Did you know anything about that at all?

PW: Yes. He grew - he had a lot of success with cauliflowers in the early days. He tells us a story of - I think it was 1928, the year they got their first motor truck - he put all the flats in our garden in cauliflowers, and just - it was only just a chance thing - he thought if he struck it he might make a few shillings out of it. Anyway, as it happened that year, the blight (as they used to call it those days) got into the cauliflowers in the plains - the Adelaide Plains - and just wrecked all the cauliflowers down there, and cauliflowers in the hills, if they could get them, were like diamonds. And these cauliflowers came in, in the winter time, I think they started cutting about June, and he got £1 a dozen for them.

£1 a dozen? In 1928?

PW: £1 a dozen. And he couldn't get enough to supply his customers in the market. In fact, they used to chase him out in the street before he got into the market to see if he had any cauliflowers.

This would have been the East End Market?

PW: The East End Market, yes. And he made a lot of money out of those cauliflowers. Enough to pay for his Chev truck the first year I think. *(Laughter)* He went on growing cauliflowers afterwards but he never had another year like that. He cut every cauliflower. He said that he never lost a cauliflower. And they called them Autumn Giants, and he said that they weighed one or two of them, just for curiosity, and they weighed 28 lb. And he said that you could only carry one out of the bed at a time because if you tried to carry two or three you'd drop them and smash them up, they were so large - 28 lb. He said that was quite a big cauliflower.

Well, how do you remember this area first around here? What are the things that you first recall?

PW: As I grew up?

Mm.

PW: Well, I suppose the orchard is the main thing that I remember, as my Dad knew his - probably classed more of an apple grower than a market gardener those days because he was very proud of his apples. They used to export all the apples overseas. Oh, well, a big percentage of the crop went overseas those times as I was growing up because they didn't get a very big price for them. They were very proud of their apples and to get them nice and clean - it was a good area for apples. They used to get a lovely colour here.

So was that mainly Jonathans?

PW: Jonathans were the main crop. Jonathans and Rome Beauty were the main crops those days. Delicious were just coming in but Dad didn't grow Delicious. He didn't know much about them so he stuck to the Jonathans and Rome Beauty.

Were they packed on the property, Peter?

PW: Yes. The packers used to come on the property and they'd pack them here, and they were carted up to the Mount Lofty Railway Station. They went on the train to Port Adelaide, where they went on the boats. They were actually packed on the property, yes.

So, were they refrigerated at all? Or not?

PW: No. I think they had some refrigeration on the boats those days. They were just getting refrigeration but they weren't refrigerated until they went on the boat.

We've talked a bit about your Father to start off with, Peter. What about your Mother? Tell me about her background.

PW: Well, Mum - actually they were distantly related. My Mother and Father were both Woolcocks. I believe their fathers were cousins. I think that's the way it worked out. And my Mum was born at Moonta of Cornish background. And I think when she was about five years old they moved to Wallaroo Mines, where her father was a miner, and they grew up at Wallaroo Mines and she went to school at Wallaroo Mines, and stopped there. The mines closed down in 1923 and they sold up the home at Wallaroo Mines and moved to Adelaide.

So your Grandfather had been a miner, Peter?

PW: He was a miner, yes. He'd retired. I think he'd retired by that time, when the mines closed, but Grandmother died. She died at Wallaroo Mines. And then the old chap came to Adelaide. He lived with his family. He used to move around. He used to live up here with Mother for a while, and then he'd shift to another daughter. They all had homes and that around Adelaide.

So do you remember him pretty well, Peter?

PW: No. He was dead before I - he was killed in a motor truck in 1929 - before I was born. But my eldest brother can remember him, because Ted was born in 1927.

How many brothers and sisters did you have?

PW: Only had two brothers.

Right. So, it's Ted and -

PW: Ted and John and myself. Ted was born in 1927. He was born exactly a year to the day after Mum and Dad were married, in 1926 - June 26th.

So he gets to celebrate the anniversary?

PW: Yes. *(Laughter)* Always know when it's Mum's and Dad's wedding anniversary - when it comes Ted's birthday.
And John was born in 1929. And I was born in 1932.

Well, Peter, did your Mum have strong Cornish traditions in her?

PW: Yes. She was reared up amongst the Cornish people. She always had a funny old way of speaking. She'd say, 'Now, he've had his dinner. He can get away now'. And Dad used to laugh at her. And then Mum would get wild at Dad, and she'd say, 'I don't speak as funny as your mother. She's Irish'. *(Laughter in voice)* Because Dad's - they were Cornish, too. The Woolcocks were all Cornish, but my Grandfather on the Woolcock side, he married an Irish girl. She came out from Ireland in about 1888 I think. Took six months to get out here. And she was 93 when she died. Still spoke as Irish as the day she came out. Never lost her accent.

Well, what was your Mother's task around the farm and home?

PW: She was just a housewife. She didn't work in the garden very much but she gave us boys a good life. She always looked after us well. Always fed us well. And she was always very concerned if anything went wrong with us or anything. She was a wonderful mother.

And Peter, tell me a bit about the way your Father ran the place - the routine. How many acres would he have had in and how did he look after it?

PW: Well, he started with his father. He was in partnership with his father. That's how he started.

Here? On the property here?

PW: Yes, on this property. He bought this property when he got married. Where we are now, he bought that from the repatriation from the First World War. He got this 20 acres - he paid £400 for the property but it had to be cash. It had a brand new pumping engine on it, house, water tanks, piping, and just had a new stove put in. £400 the lot, which probably was a lot of money those days but doesn't sound much now.
But then he worked the property in with his father then. Like, they worked in partnership for a while, and then he eventually went out on his own. His father - Grandfather - he kept working until about a fortnight before he died. He was nearly 80. He used to run the other part of the orchard over there, the 20 acres that he had. He worked that right up until he - about the last fortnight before he died. He used to be out driving horses.

This is your other Grandfather?

PW: Yes. That was the grandfather here at Scotts Creek. He was Cornish descent, too, but he wasn't a little man like Cornish people. He was about 6'3". He was a big man.

He was the one that married the Irish woman?

PW: That's right. *(Laughter)* And she was short.

So you remember her, too, do you, Peter?

PW: Yes. I remember Grannie well.

Were they a couple of characters?

PW: They were characters, yes. Yes, they lived in the old house on top of the hill there.

The one you used to live in? Do you mean?

PW: Yes. Where we lived in the last - like, until three years we came -

Yes.

PW: We've been down here. Yes, they lived up there. They reared four children up there. Like, the two boys and two girls in my Dad's family. They went to school at Scotts Creek. And Dad tells me how the job every morning before they - they didn't have any water on the property when they were children - and before they went to school, they had to go to a well down the bottom of what is Woolcock Road now - there was a well down there - and bring up the water for the day, before they went to school. Used to have a yoke across their shoulders with buckets. Him and his brother, Frank, used to go down and get the water, then they'd go to school.

So the well, was that just near where the T-junction is now, on the corner?

PW: Mm. Just out on that little flat there where the wood people have taken the property over recently. There's a little well there on that flat.

Was that your Grandfather's land there as well?

PW: No. They had the right to go down and get water but, no, that wasn't their land down there.

Was it actually a water reserve, Peter? Or was it somebody else's

PW: No. It was private property actually. Belonged to people called Wilson. They owned six acres of land there.

You said that one of your earliest memories is of the orchard. What else do you remember as a young boy? You've told us a bit about your Mother and Father and grandparents. What else can you remember about this area that struck you?

PW: Probably riding around in the horse and cart. We used to think that was great fun when we were kids. They had the motor truck but most of the work that was done on the property here were the horses. We loved to ride in the old cart. Father would go out with the cart and pick up the apples. They didn't have tractors much those days. Anything to be picked up in the orchard was

done with the spring dray, and we used to love going out with him and picking up the apples with the old spring dray.

Was it a tip dray?

PW: No. It was just an ordinary spring dray. No, there were tip drays about but ours wasn't a tip dray.
We used to think it was great those days to go to Adelaide. Because you only went to Adelaide about twice a year when we were boys. Go down and see Father Christmas at John Martins. That was a great outing. Go down and see the Magic Cave. That was going when I was a little fellow.

Well, how did you get to Adelaide from here?

PW: In the old truck. Used to take about three quarters of an hour to get down.
When you talk about travelling, Rob, I suppose, and interestingly I should have said, was when my Grandfather worked up the property near enough to go to market, because he was mining up until he was about 40 years old until he got the property good enough to get a living off of.

He was mining?

PW: He was a miner.

What? Over Yorke still or where?

PW: No. He was all over the place. He used to mine - he mined quite a lot. In fact, he mined at Kalgoorlie at one stage. He didn't use to come home. It was too far. He mined at Kalgoorlie and then he moved back into the hills. He mined at the Bird-in-Hand Mine.

Near Woodside.

PW: Near Woodside. He mined at Mount Pleasant mine. He used to come home once a week. 35 miles it was, and he'd drive a horse and sulky. He'd come home and he'd go back Sunday afternoon. I think he'd get home about Saturday morning. He'd go back Sunday afternoon. 35 miles in a sulky.

And then I think, when he finished there, he worked on the Happy Valley tunnel. He worked - he did a lot of work at Happy Valley.

The reservoir?

PW: The reservoir. There's a big - you may have seen it - there's a big pipeline at Clarendon. Goes from the Clarendon Weir through the hill there?

Mm.

PW: My Grandfather worked on that. In fact, he was buried alive in there. They got him out. He was buried in that tunnel. And he had mining in his blood I think. He just couldn't leave it alone. He just loved mining, until he came home on the property and then he loved the property then.
But what I was going to say about travelling, they had a pair of horses. They used to go to the East End Market with the goods. It took four hours to get to Adelaide with a market load. If they had a big load, like they used to in the peak of the season, Dad would get out of bed - they'd get up at 12 o'clock to start getting the horses ready, and they'd have something to eat, groom the horses and give them a good feed, and they'd leave about 2 o'clock to go off to the East End Market. And like I said, if they had a big load, Dad would have to get up, too, and they'd put a leader on the front because it was a fair drag, five miles up to Crafers from here. They'd put the leader on to drag the load up to Crafers, and then away Grandfather would go down the hill then and Dad would come back and bring the other horse back, and go to bed.

So what time was that that they headed off?

PW: About 2 o'clock. They'd leave for market and then -

To get down there at six or seven for the first buyers?

PW: You'd get there about 6 o'clock, yes. It'd be dark - pretty well dark - when they got home at night. Four hours trip home. About four miles an hour they reckon. That's about 16 miles.

Was it pretty isolated up here, Peter?

PW: Oh, yes, yes. There wasn't houses around like there is now. I mean, there were houses there but they were only just, like, jotted here and there. Probably more scrub around those days than what there is now.

Where was the district centre, if there was one? Where did you do your shopping or that sort of thing?

PW: Well, they had local general stores around the place those times. One of the general stores - well, main one - was a chap who just died, Hughie Nelson. They had a big general store down there.

At their place?

PW: Yes. Post Office and general store, there used to be.

So that's at Scotts Creek?

PW: Yes.

The other end?

PW: Yes. At Scotts Creek. And there was also a little place down the road here where they used to have - it wasn't a general store but it was opposite the Scotts Creek oval. People called Starling. They ran a shop down there, and you could go down there and get a few odds and ends, you know. We didn't do much shopping up here. When Dad was going to market, he got all his groceries and meat and everything in the East End Market.

Did he? And brought it back?

PW: Yes. The stores were there adjoining the market, and they'd come in and give their orders to the market gardeners and they'd bring the groceries all into the market, put it onto the lorry to come home. So, he didn't have to go and do the shopping. Everything was done those days. A fellow would come around in the morning, took orders, and he brought your groceries back, and you'd pay him when he brought the - left on the lorry. If we wanted to top up, we'd just go to Stirling, but we got most of our supplies in the East End Market.

What about relationships with other communities up here, Peter? Did you have much to do with Ironbank and Cherry Gardens at all? And if so, how?

PW: Not so much those days, Rob, because we were isolated really because, see, these roads weren't in then. They were only old bush tracks. They were surveyed roads but you couldn't travel through with a vehicle. Like, to go to Ironbank, we had to go right up to the Mount Lofty Railway Station and down by Blows Nursery and around that way to get to Ironbank because there was no other road. It was a dead end down the bottom of Scotts Creek. You couldn't get through down there.

When you say dead end, so you couldn't actually get through down to Mackereth's Cottage where it is now?

PW: No. There were people called Matthews, owned a big property - I think, 200 or 300 acres, I'm not sure - and you could, with their permission, go through their property and get through to Cherry Gardens but people didn't like doing that too much. You had to go through their paddocks to get through. And the Council has - on them for years and years to try and buy a piece of land to get the road through but Matthews' didn't want to - they didn't want it. So it wasn't until later years, I think just around the time Matthews' sold out I think, then they hopped in. They had the chance of getting the land to get the road through.

So did Matthews have that place on the corner of Dorset Vale and what's now Matthews Road? Not Mackereths. Opposite Mackereths.

PW: Yes. They had a big piece of land. Came right back up - when you go down Scotts Creek Road and you cross over the creek, going towards Dorset Vale, well, you don't go very far. Their property came nearly up to the creek. On the right hand side. The old house is still there. The old residence is still there.

So they had the river flats up there, too, did they? Would that be their place?

PW: No. It didn't go down that - it went nearly down to Almander Mine.

Oh, yes. That's the one I'm thinking about.

PW: Yes, it did. It covered that big hill on the right hand side, going down. I think there's some houses on top there now.

Yes, that's right.

PW: It's all cut up into blocks. Well, that was all Matthews' property. They owned all those flats.

Did they run that from, what I'd call, Mackereth's Cottage, did they?

PW: Yes.

That little stone cottage on the corner. Is that where they lived?

PW: Matthews, no. They lived in a - you have a job to see their house, Rob. It's down over the bank a little bit, as you go down.

I know which one it is, yes. It's the one well after - about a k down the road.

PW: From the creek.

Mm.

PW: That'd be right.

Yes. That's the one.

PW: Yes.

Well, Peter, OK, so you couldn't get through. There was no really easy transport but you obviously got to know a lot of the different families in the area anyway.

PW: Oh, yes. You knew pretty well everybody who lived in the district those days. There wasn't many in the district you didn't actually know, and knew what vehicle they had. They used to travel on the road and we'd know every car that went along the road. If we saw a strange car we'd say, 'Whose is that?' We'd wonder who was going along the road because we knew every car in the district. *(Laughter in voice)*

You'd know most of the Cherry Gardens people, too?

PW: We only got to know Cherry Gardens in later years. In fact, my first trip to Cherry Gardens, I would have been 12 or 13 years old, before I even went to Cherry Gardens. That's how isolated it was. And we went over there about the last year I was at primary school. We had a big function on the old Cherry Gardens oval, and I remember all these Frith boys there. That was my big recollection of Cherry Gardens, going and seeing all these Frith boys. Our school had a sort of a - I don't know what you'd call it. Sort of a carnival. We competed against one another. Cherry Gardens/Scott Creek schools. And they had pole vaulting and high jumping and - I remember Jim Frith there as a lad of about 14 then. And that was my first actual sight of Cherry Gardens, although I'd lived here all my life. To get there, we had to go right around Bradbury. We went in an old bus, a big old service bus, that had just started working here, and he took us over and we went up this Almander Hill. It was only a dirt road those days. That was the old Cherry Gardens oval on top of the hill. You may have heard of it.

Yes, I have.

PW: That was where they played a lot of cricket, up there.

Did that seem like a different world to you, Peter?

PW: It did. It did. It seemed almost - yes, in another sort of a land. Although it was only over the hill. *(Laughter in voice)*

And that was mainly orchards and dairies there?

PW: Yes. Oh, yes, all this area right through here was all commercial those days.

Well, coming back to Scotts Creek and Scotts Bottom, down the road there, you knew all the people around here. Well, where did you meet them on a regular basis? Church? Is that one place?

PW: Yes. Quite a lot used to go to Church those days. The main thing they'd have at Church - some of them wouldn't go to Church very often but when you

had a Harvest Thanksgiving or something like that, everybody in the district would come. People who hardly ever went to Church. And the Church would be packed. Those days they used to have two Services. Like, if it was a special, they'd have an afternoon Service and an evening Service. We used to like to go down in the evening and see the old kerosene lights lit up in the old Church.

Did they hang from the ceiling?

PW: Yes. I can still see the old lights burning there now. And they used to have some wonderful displays, down at Scotts Creek there, at the Harvest Thanksgiving. Because it wasn't hard to get fruit and vegetables those days because everybody was growing commercial. I always remember, and I'll never forget, parcels of carrots that used to come into that Harvest Thanksgiving were grown in Bradbury. Along those flats there, opposite Bradwood(?) Park. They were all market gardens.
And there was a fellow called Charlie Smith, right opposite Bradwood Park. There were Staceys next door to him, and they used to grow a lot of root vegetables. And they used to send these parsnips and carrots and swedes, and they were magnificent parsnips. I've never seen the like. They would have been two feet long, I reckon. They were terrific. I'd never seen parsnips like it since, I don't think. Because that ground over there is peat, all down through that valley. In Bradbury - that part Bradbury - is all peat, and the root vegetable used to go just straight down. They were magnificent. But the display they used to have in the old Church there, it was - still brings back memories.
And then, we used to love that when we were kids, because when it was Harvest Thanksgiving we'd have the two Services on a Sunday and then on the Monday night we'd have a big concert in the Scotts Creek Hall, and the sale of the vegetables.
And there was no-one around here who grew grapes, so a fellow called Alf Slater used to - he was a big market gardener down next to the school. They used to get Alf to bring up these half cases of grapes - these big Muscatel grapes - and they were sold, too. All the boys used to get around with these bags of grapes - I think they were threepence a bag - throwing grapes at one another. *(Laughter)*

But we used to have a wonderful concert down there. Used to get items from all around the district, and then when the concert was over, they'd start the sale of fruit and vegetables.

TAPE 1 - SIDE B

So Peter, the concerts and the sales were pretty wonderful events?

PW: Yes, something that stuck in your mind. They used to raise a lot of money. They used to sell everything. It was all sold. There'd be very little left over.

When you were describing all the vegetables coming in, you mentioned a lot of different families and people who grew them. Just tell me a bit about the people you can remember down through Scotts Creek and Bradbury and Longwood around here, and what they did. What were they like, Peter?

PW: Well, they were - I suppose what you'd call way backs those days. *(Laughter in voice)* Yes, they didn't worry about dressing up too much those days. You can visualise them more in their old working clothes because they nearly lived in their working clothes those days - their old flannels. You'd see most of them getting around - even the warm weather - when it got a hot day, they'd just take their shirt off and they'd have an old flannel on underneath with the sleeves down to their elbows.
Yes, just reminded me, too, when we were talking about the vegetables. The Jacobs family, that extended right over to Bradbury because I think you've heard about the -

Brian Jacobs.

PW: Well, his father, Arn Jacobs, he had a property over there, too. He was a market gardener and dairy farmer over there. Very genuine old chap. When he got too old, he used to send down onions every year - he used to grow beautiful onions over there - down to the Harvest. And when he got too old, he didn't come to Church any more and brother used to usually go around and

pick up either donations or what they had for the Harvest and that. And Arn would come to light with a £20 note, and he'd say, 'I can't go to Church any more but that might help them along a bit'. That's the way old Arn used to talk, and he'd give a £20 donation because he couldn't come to Church. A very genuine old chap. Lovely old chap. He was actually Athol Morgan's uncle.

That's right. Athol's got a Jacob's connection there as well. I forgot about that. So lots of families are intermarried, too.

PW: They were those days, yes. In fact, through Scotts Creek, we used to say there was only - at one stage there were very few families here that weren't inter-related or linked to one another somehow or other. You go right down through the district and - we weren't related to any of them, I don't think. But the Carthew's across the road, they were related to the Lewis, and the Lewis were related to the Browns, and the Browns were related to the Nelsons, and the Nelsons were related to the Woodlands, and you could go on and on and on.

And were all of them in basically the same occupations? Market gardening, orchards, dairies?

PW: Yes. Yes. Another big industry in those days, when I was a boy, was wood carting. There were loads and loads and loads of, what we used to call, four foot wood and used to be carted out of this district. Used to go down to the brick kilns. There were loads of wood going out all the time.

Brick kilns on the Torrens? Or out Golden Grove?

PW: Oh, mainly around Glen Osmond. I think out to the other side of Adelaide. There was a lot of brick kilns around those days. And, yes, scattered all around. Down where Rowley Park was.

Yes, I know where you mean.

PW: That was all brick kilns down that way. They had no trouble to sell their wood.

So that was cord wood basically?

PW: Yes, cords. I think - what did they say was in a cord of wood? I think it was about two ton.

Yes, that's right.

PW: In a cord.

So the timber getters, where would they work? Back up in the hills here?

PW: Yes, yes. All over Ironbank. The hill across there, that was all - how many times that was cut out when I was a boy, I don't know. It seemed to grow up nearly as fast as they cut it.

This is off Morgan Road, on each side, is it?

PW: Yes, yes. That was all - Alf Slater, I mentioned him earlier, he was a market gardener and he was also a wood carter. How many times he cut wood off the Morgan Road there, I don't know. And Loftia Park, that was all - they were all up there getting wood out of Loftia Park. Used to have teams of horses dragging it out. And during the War they - although motor lorries were well in running then, petrol was so short that Slater's and them used to take the odd load down with a team of horses. Because they had to get their wood down and they didn't have enough petrol. Petrol was so short during the War that they had to go back to the old horses.
One thing I can remember - talking about horses. It takes a while to get these things to come back. When Slater's used to be cutting wood up in Loftia Park, they used to take four or five horses up there to work, dragging the wood out and one thing and another, and when it came knock-off time of a night, we'd hear this jig, jig, jig, jig, jig , jig, jig, jig, and down would come the horses, down the road. Because you'd hear it then, it was only metal roads and you could hear their old feet on the road, and they'd just follow one another. The horses would still have their collars on, and their hames, and their winkers, and they'd go off home one after the other, in single file, down the road. About one and a half miles from here I suppose, down to Slater's. They'd just go home. Just find their way home.

Nobody with them?

PW: No. No, they knew their way home. They'd just jog down the road because they knew they were going home to get a feed. And, yes, the old horses were great memories, those days.

How did they actually cut the timber out, Peter? Did you ever watch them do that?

PW: Yes, well, that was done by piece work. Like, they used to call it piece work, those days. The chaps used to get - I think it was about ten shillings a cord or something they used to get for cutting the wood. What they called piece work. And you'd see cords all over the hills there. They'd get paid - like, as they cut the cords, they'd get paid for them. And then whenever the contractors were ready, they'd go and pick the wood up.

Was it all axe work?

PW: All axe. There was no chain saws those days.

No double saws at all, or -

PW: Cross cut. They cut the trees down with a cross cut saw. Spread them with the mall(?) wedges and cut them up with the axe. That was the way they got their wood those days. They'd take a tree that was about 4 feet 3 - about 3 or 4 feet 3. It would take about half a day to get it down but that didn't worry them those days because time wasn't so valuable. Well, it was valuable but as long as they got that tree down, they were happy. Yes, I can still see the old cross cut saws working. In fact, I remember when we went to school all the hill down there, what's Lightburns property now, that was all timber. We used to cut up through there going to school.
And there was no pension those days. Fellows had to fight for survival, to live. There was one chap who used to work for Slater's down there, cutting wood, and he used to come from way over the other side of Bradbury there, and he only had one leg. And he used to sit down - to cut a tree down, he'd sit down and cut the tree, both hands. That's the way he used to get his living. Fellow by the name of Seapole. And, yes, I can still see him down there, sitting down on the ground. He'd cut one side of the tree and then he'd go around the other side and cut it. Cut it on the other side.

Must have known what he was doing.

PW: Yes. They could cut, them fellows. But, you know, he had one leg off and I know he had something wrong with the other leg, too. But I can't think how he used to get to work but he used to get there anyway. And he used to cut wood all day. He'd sit down to cut wood.

Well, before I get talking about your schooling, which might come in a while, just tell me a bit about the other routines in the year that the people around here would follow on their properties. We talked about timber getting. Well, I guess that was in the off periods when your garden or orchard wasn't producing hard, or you weren't pruning, or something.

PW: Yes, yes. I suppose that was probably more winter work, when they were on the timber, yes.

So how did the years run on the property around here? What did you start with, say, in January? What were you looking forward to?

PW: You mean, through the year?

Mm.

PW: We used to always look forward to spring time because that was when we started our pea harvest. We used to grow a lot of peas when I was a boy. In fact, that was one of my first jobs when I left school. I had to go out in the pea field and pick peas, because there was big demand for peas and beans those days. Because when I left school, the War was just finished and manpower was very short. And they couldn't get enough fruit and vegetables to supply for the supply and demand actually. So I came home on the land and we used to plant these peas in the winter time and we used to look forward to seeing them grow and start picking them about November. We used to love getting out and picking these great big long Greenfeast peas.

Greenfeast peas.

PW: There were other sorts of peas but my Dad always stuck to the Greenfeast. They seemed to be the most popular type of pea. And then we'd go on with - of course we'd grow the peas right in through the summer. There

was a great demand for peas those days. You could sell as many as you could take to market. Always seemed a big demand for peas.
And then we'd start on the fruit. Start picking fruit about March. And then that would take us through, right into the winter.
The amazing thing was those days there was very few cold stores about. There were cold stores about but you had to take them way over to Blackwood or way out to Woodside, or somewhere. But you could sell fruit those days without being cold stored. What they used to call shed fruit. And there was - they'd buy it. Just stored in the sheds. We used to have nice sheds on the property. Just stack all boxes up in the shed and we'd pack them when we were ready to pack them. No refrigeration.

No trouble with mice?

PW: Yes. Used to get a bit of trouble with rats. We had to watch them. They used to get into the stacks sometimes and cause a bit of havoc. Yes, we did have trouble with rats and mice.
We used to have some old stone buildings. They were the best to keep apples in. They used to keep cool. We'd go right through, almost to September, with apples just in ordinary storage.

Were you picking them ripe or slightly green?

PW: No, you couldn't pick them over-ripe, Rob, because - particularly Jonathans. They'd be beautiful when you picked them. If you stored them for three or four months, when you came to get them, they'd be all what you call sugar-spot. The sugar used to come out to the skin. The apple was still good but it used to spoil the appearance of it. You could hardly sell them. They used to go almost black on the skin. The apple was still good. If you peeled it, they were just good inside. So we couldn't pick them too ripe, otherwise that would happen. But there was a time when you could just pick them for good storage, and they used to wither a little bit but people didn't worry about that those days. You'd see apples in the shop quite withered. They'd still buy them.

So your main crop, say, was your peas. You'd be going through picking until Christmas just about, would you?

PW: We used to have a break. We'd pick what we called the spring peas. They'd go through nearly to Christmas. Then we'd have a little break, and then we'd start our summer peas. We'd start them in January.

The same variety? Greenfeast?

PW: Same variety, yes. Because they took a lot more water than the spring peas, although we used to have to water the later ones. The spring peas, you'd get away without so much watering.

Now your watering was from a bore by this stage, was it?

PW: Wells. We had wells on the property.

You pumping from them?

PW: Yes. They sunk wells there in the early days.

How deep were they, Peter?

PW: Only about 20 feet deep. They had drives in the bottom of them. In fact, they're still there now.

Drives?

PW: Yes.

To the side?

PW: They had a bore down about 30 feet from the well and they drove in - because they had a little bit of supply in the well but it wasn't enough to keep the pumps going, so they had a bore put down out there, and they drove through underground a six foot drive and met the bore hole and connected the two up. Both the same. In fact, this one here, one still overflows, today. We're still using it now. Still using the water.
Yes, they didn't worry about getting down underground those days. Get down there in the - I remember Dad. He used to be sinking the well down there. He'd get the pump going and keep the old pump going, and he'd be in there slopping around in the mud, working on this drive, and he got the drive right

through to the bore hole. 30 feet long. Yes, they didn't mind what they did in those days as long as they got their water.

Now, Peter, so there we are, we're coming into late summer, if you like. Then you start picking your fruit when your peas are finished or is that going on at the same time?

PW: Yes, well, it did clash a bit. Yes, you still had your vegetables going. In fact, your fruit used to start to drop sometimes before you really got onto it. But, yes, you'd start to pick the apples probably about March.

Did you have to bring labourers in to help you with that or were you doing your own?

PW: Sometimes. Yes, because we had - we didn't have a big orchard. I think we had about 15 acres of orchard here at one time but when they're good trees and good production, that's a lot of apples. And, yes, they'd all want picking together and, yes, they used to have to get in a bit of help to get the crop off, particularly if you had - made audit for export. You had to get them off at a certain time to go on the boat. Then we'd get pickers in to get - you'd have 100 cases or something ordered to go for export and you wouldn't be able to get them off in time.

Now how about tilling the ground, Peter? Preparing for the vegetables and just looking after the orchard with tillage. How did you work that? What sort of equipment did you use?

PW: That was all done by horse and plough. In fact, at one stage they used - they got down to one horse. When I was a little fellow, my Dad had a horse called Peg, and she used to work the whole property here - 15 acres of orchard - with a single furrow plough. This one horse used to do the whole lot.

What? A moldboard?

PW: Moldboard plough. And she was the last surviving horse that travelled on the road. She did many, many trips to Adelaide and she lived until she was about 28 years old and then she finished up breaking her hip up in the paddock. Dad nearly cried when he had to shoot her because she was his favourite horse. I remember it so well.

I was a little fellow, and I'd barely started school, and Dad came home from market this day and he said to brother John, 'Go and get Peg for me. I want to do some ploughing this afternoon'. So John and me went up in the paddock and Peg was sitting down like a horse - they sit down. We didn't think anything of that. It looked funny the way she was sitting there. And John told Peg to get up and she wouldn't get up. He said, 'I think there's something wrong with Peg'. So we came down and told Dad, and he went up and she had her foot down a hole in the ground. She'd screwed around trying to get out this hole and she'd broken her hip. Pulled half(?) her shoulder out.
As it happened that day - Grandfather's brother-in-law was a vet. He'd come over to spend the weekend from Forest Range and he went up and looked at the old horse and he said, 'You'll have to destroy her. She's broken her shoulder. She'll be no more good'. So Dad didn't like to destroy her. He left her there, and the next morning she'd rolled trying to get up. She'd rolled right down in the paddock. So he had to - he didn't have a gun here at the time. Yes, he did. His father had a 12 gauge gun, and he had to go up and shoot her. And it took Dad weeks to get over that because he used to just speak to her and she just knew everything he said to her. She used to plough all the orchard on her own. Just one - she was a draught horse.
So that's the way they used to - then in later times we got a pair of horses then. And we got a double farrow plough. That was a great thing. We went from single farrow to double farrow and that used to plough the orchard a bit quicker. We got a Sunbird. What they called a Sunbird, made by Sunshine Harvester Company, and we used to plough the orchard with this double farrow plough. That was really something. Yes, that's how we used to do all our -

And the irrigation as such, Peter, was it through channels, or did you have hoses? How did you organise -

PW: No,it was all done by - we had mains running all up through the garden. There were two inch mains and just hoses - 3/4" hose - running off of that. That was how we did all our irrigation.

Would you run channels up and down by where the vegetables were? Or were you watering off sprinklers?

PW: No, it was all done by sprinklers. Used to push the water away up on the hills out of the engines - just pumping engines. They're a 2" pipe. Yes, we did all our watering like that.

So it was all gravity run, was it? Or was it off the -

PW: Force.

Off the pumps?

PW: Force, off the pumps, yes. The pumps used to push it up - we had a dam up on the hill there and we used to push a lot of water into the dam. We'd gravitate from the dam, as long as we'd get the dam full, and then we'd gravitate back in the garden but usually we were using a fair bit of water anyway. There wasn't much going into the dam but, yes, we did use to gravitate if the dam got full.

So that was - your tillage was coming just before winter, was it? Around that time?

PW: Yes. No, we'd usually work the ground up. Start working the ground up about autumn. Like, after you got your first autumn rain. That was for your spring crops. We used to - the orchard, we used to plough all the orchard. And Dad always used to say that you must get your ploughing done before October because he said that you won't plough afterwards. It used to get too hard. So we had to have all our ploughing done by October. That's when your rain stopped. It would be too hard to plough after that.

And did you also spray in the orchard at some point, Peter?

PW: Yes. That was done with a - the horse used to pull a 100 gallon vat around the orchard with an International spraying unit.

A little pump?

PW: Yes, it was a power sprayer. They used to, in the old days, two of them used to spray and they used to carry a barrel around - just a barrel spray. Two of them used to carry - I think that only held about eight gallons or something. Ten gallons. And they'd carry that all through the orchard. In 1929 they bought

their first power sprayer with an International engine on it. That used to go right through the orchard then.

So when you say two of them, you mean two people would have carried a 10 gallon keg?

PW: Yes. One on each handle, and then one would do the pumping and one would do the spraying. Had an old hand pump on it, you see.

Was this for codlin moth? That sort of thing?

PW: Yes. Codlin moth and black spot. Used to get a lot of black spot those days.

So what were they using for a spray? Copper spray of some sort?

PW: Yes. Used to use - start with blue stone. That was one. And then, lime sulphur. They used to use a lot of lime sulphur. And believe it or not, a lot of people won't believe it when I say it, but for codlin moth we sprayed with arsenate of lead. That was the spray used those days. And they say, 'Oh, how didn't it kill you?' Well, we sprayed it for many, many years and it didn't seem to affect us much. But, yes, arsenate of lead was the main codlin spray those days.

Obviously effective.

PW: Yes. *(Laughter)* Well, it was until later years when we had to give it away, Rob, because the codlin moth started to get immune to it. Then we got a spray they called Gusathion. That was a German(?) base spray, and that was new. I think that came in about - somewhere in the early 1960's. Around that time. And that killed the codlin right out. Because they'd been using arsenate of lead for so many years they sort of got a bit immune to it, and they got this new Gusathion and that just wiped the codlin out.

Well, were their any other pests that used to afflict the crops on the orchard? You said black spot and codlin. What about the plants themselves?

PW: Yes, not a pest. What we used to have was red spider. And that's right, they had to spray with red oil. This red spider used to get on there and they nearly killed the trees. Yes, they used to spray in the winter time with that. The spider used to get under the limbs and they'd breed there.

And what about the garden itself? Were there other pests that you used to have to look out for with the peas, or something like that?

PW: Didn't have much trouble with the peas. No, I don't think we had a lot of trouble with pests in the peas. We didn't have to spray - oh, apart from - yes, they came in just about the end - just after the end of the War. What they called red legged earth mite. We hadn't had that here before. Dad had never seen it. And one year - I don't know whether it would have been about 1947 or around that time - Dad said, 'What's wrong with the peas?' They'd just come up nice and green and got up to about 2" high and we didn't know what - couldn't work out - they were all going white and every other colour you could think of but green.
Anyway, he went down to the East End Market and he asked the chap in there at the garden supply store if he knew what would be causing that. He said, 'I think it sounds to me like you've got the red legged earth mite. You want to get some DDT onto them. Anyway, you go and have a look'. And he said, 'You get underneath and flick the leaves up, particularly the dandelions. They breed in the dandelions. You flick the leaves up and you'll see them hopping around'. Anyway, we did. We came home and we lifted up the leaves and you could see them running all over the ground. You could see with the naked eye. Only very tiny but these little red things running all over the ground. So anyway, got this bag of DDT dust and we used to dust them with an old chaff bag. Just go up the rows, and within a week the peas had come back green again. It made the world of difference. They started to grow. These things, they are a sucking insect and they were just sucking everything out of the plants.

Did you ever get them again after that, Peter?

PW: Yes, yes. We used to get them. We knew how to control them then. They'd come in the spring time, because we used to have a lot of dandelions around the edge of the patch. Usually where you've got cattle - where you've had cattle running - you get dandelions.

Yes, that's right.

PW: And they'd be all around the edge of the patch - the dandelion. That's where they used to breed, and they'd get into the pea patch. But we had no trouble once we started dusting them.

Can you ever remember any situations where your Father just about gave up that things weren't looking too good?

PW: Well, it's a funny thing. I didn't know until years afterwards, when I was older, Dad was - he had this property on the market at one stage. He didn't tell us that but he was seriously thinking about going down on the Adelaide Plains market gardening. I don't know why. Something must have upset him in the garden, and he sort of put the place on the market and then he took it off again. I don't know why but he must have been very disillusioned at the time to have done that because he didn't tell me until I was a grown up young man before he told me about it. *(Laughter)*
No, he was a good gardener, my Dad. He always seemed to get around things. He seemed to know how to - he was a very stern man. He seemed to know - he'd make up his mind that he was going to do a thing, he'd do it, and do it properly.

TAPE 2 - SIDE A

RURAL HISTORY PROJECT.
Interview with Peter Woolcock at Scotts Creek on 30th April, 1997.
Interviewer: Rob Linn.

Well, Peter we've been talking about your Father really, and the way he approached his work, and he only seemed to get disillusioned once or twice to your knowledge. Did he expect you to come back on the property? Or was it something that just evolved over the years?

PW: No, it was a funny thing. When I left school I think Dad really wanted me to come on the land but Mother didn't. She wanted me to go onto secondary schooling but that was a little bit difficult those days because there wasn't very much transport and to go to secondary school I would've either had to go to Goodwood Tech, which would've meant finding my way up to the railway station at Mount Lofty and go down by train. Mother wasn't very keen on that because there was a couple of the other boys here that were doing that previously to me and they found out that they were playing up on the train, so Mother didn't think much of that idea. And the only other option would have been to go to Mount Barker. Oakbank Area School was just coming into being at that stage. But anyway, it wasn't very easy to get - there was a bus running around to the Oakbank Area School after I left school but just at the time I left school there wasn't very much transport.
I sort of wanted to come home on the land, too. So I finished up coming home on the land because there was - it was very encouraging those days to come on the land because, as I think I said earlier, that there was a big demand for everything that you could produce those days. Seemed quite exciting to come home on the property.
Another thing that had just started as I left school, the Farmers Union had just started a milk pick up through this district. Up until then we'd only had - a chap used to come through about once a week picking up cream. Had to separate the milk and just send it once a week as cream. Then Farmers Union could see an opening to pick up the fresh milk and they started a milk pick up right

through this part of the hills. And we had quite a few cows here at the time. I used to love milking the cows. That was great.

What? Machine milking?

PW: No. It was hand milking those days. We all hand milked.

Put your cans out on a stand on a daily basis, morning and night?

PW: Yes. We had to build an old stand down there. We started of - we just used to leave the cans on the ground and the milkman said, 'Oh, you must put a stand up because it's pretty hard lifting those heavy cans up tray height from the ground'. So I remember going out with Father over the gully and cutting down a big stringy bark tree and splitting slabs out of it, and making that milk stand. It stood down there for about 30 years I think, and finished up - it got knocked down. I think the Council knocked it down. We weren't using it any more. I think it got in the road there, but it stood there all those years. Only just made out of stringy bark slabs. I can still see Dad making the - he'd cut a tree down, he'd split it with the mall wedges, then he'd get his adze out -

What sort of wedges?

PW: Mall wedges.

Don't know them.

PW: Like a big heavy mallet. They used to make them. They'd make them on the property. Like, you wouldn't go and buy it. It was made - like, a big piece of wood, tapered. It would be tapered like that, and it had rings on the end of it so that it wouldn't split. And the more you drove into the wedges, the more it would force that ring on it - the ring couldn't come off. It would probably weigh about 12 or 14 lb I suppose. And that's what they used to drive the wedges into the log with.

So once you'd split your log, your Dad got the adze out, and that was for smoothing it off?

PW: That's right. He could use an adze well because he'd done it from when he was a young fellow. And you'd think the wood had been planed like this

table when he finished. He'd just - with this old adze. The only thing with the adze was that you had to watch out for your shins. They were very sharp. If you hit a knot in the wood or something, it would fly up into your shins. But, yes, Dad could use an adze pretty well. Yes, it'd be almost like done with a plane.

And did you enjoy watching all that, Peter?

PW: Oh, yes. That was a great experience, watching him split these slabs out, because everything was built of slabs those days. They used to get big old - like I said, the old apple sheds and that used to be around the place. As soon as they were going to build a new shed, they'd go and cut a tree down, split slabs -

Were they making their own nails or were they buying them in?

PW: No, they'd buy nails. Everything else was - all the rafters and everything were made out of timber off the property. Didn't cost them much to build a shed.

Bit of galvanised iron on the roof.

PW: Bit of galvanised iron, yes. Galvanised iron roof, and the rest was all off the property. They sat there for years and years and years.

Was that pretty common right through Scotts Creek?

PW: Oh, yes. Most of them used to build their own sheds those days, yes. Yes, they would have been fairly common.

Peter, just before we go a bit more into your working on the property. You attended school in Scotts Creek, did you?

PW: Mm.

Was that from the age of five, was it?

PW: Six. I started school when I was six. I turned six in the August. You couldn't start school then. Or they didn't like you starting until you were six

anyway those days. So I went to school from August, and I'd done a lot of schooling at home because my brothers used to bring work home and they used to - we had an old blackboard at home. They used to teach me how to read and write and that. I could read a book pretty well before I started school. So any rate, when I got - come Christmas time, the school teacher down there, he said to Mother, 'Oh, Peter, he's going pretty well. I'm going to put him straight into Grade 2'. So the next year - I only did that little time in Grade 1. That was in 1938 I started school. In 1939 I went into Grade 2. But I did find it a little bit hard for a while. I soon picked up but it seemed to be a big jump to go straight from that little time in Grade 1 to go into Grade 2.

Was it a one teacher school?

PW: Yes. When I started school at Scotts Creek there was only one teacher and one room. I think there was about 38 to 40 students there when I started school, and one teacher. And then the school advanced a little bit. They got a few more children and they brought in an assistant for a year or so. And then the school dropped off again and they lost her and it went back to one teacher again. Well then, I think when I got to about Grade 7, the Dorset Vale school closed down. That was in 1944.

Where was that school, Peter?

PW: It's not there now. It's knocked down. It was on - used to be what they called McKenzie's property. You can still see where the old school was. If you go down the bottom of Scotts Creek Road near the Dorset Vale - to the bottom of Almanda Hill, you turn left and go back up towards Bradbury, and you wind around and then you start to rise, and you go up quite a steep hill. Just before you go up that steep hill, on the right hand side, you can still see a grove of trees around there.

Yes, I know where it is.

PW: That's where the old school was.

Opposite that little track more or less that goes off -

PW: That's right. There's a track opposite, yes.

So that's where it was. So that closed down.

PW: That closed in 1944. Those children all came up to Scotts Creek and that brought our school up quite a bit. Then they had another teacher. We had another young fellow. Came in to handle the Grade 1, 2 and 3 then. And then, I think the following year after I left school, they got a new - oh, not a new - it was an Army hut out in the yard, and they got another room because the school was growing. Grew a bit more after I left school. Yes, there was only the two teachers when I was at school. Like, when I finished school.

And you would have known everybody at school I guess?

PW: Oh, yes. I knew everybody.

Was it walking to school rain or shine, Peter?

PW: Yes. Everybody walked to school those days. The only ones that got a ride were - when that Dorset Vale School closed, they used to run a bus up through Bradbury to bring those children to school, which wouldn't be allowed these days. It was an old, I think if I remember rightly, about a 1934 Chevrolet. It had been an old greengrocers van. It had no doors or windows in it and there were about 15 children that used to clamour into this old van to come to school. *(Laughter)* How they could breathe in there, I'll never know. But they got to school anyway. Then if children were a certain distance from the school, I think it was more than two miles, the school had the right to travel on this bus if it passed their door. It came down through Bradbury. They could travel on the bus but apart from that everybody walked to school, just apart from the school bus. We had a mile and a quarter. We used to say a mile and a quarter from our place, yes, to school.
And I remember one day - we had two bells that used to ring at school those days. One bell used to ring at 9 o'clock, and that meant you had to get ready to come in out the yard and get ready for school, and the other one went at quarter past 9. That was when you went into school. And I was just cutting across through the paddock here one morning, just at the next door neighbours, and I heard the bell ring and I knew I was late that morning, and I let go and I ran. I ran to school - because we used to cut through all the

properties those days. Didn't have to go on the road very much. I just got there in time before the last bell rang. I ran all the way to school. I never forgot that.

You would've been puffing by the time you got there.

PW: Yes. *(Laughter)* Because we used to cop it if we were late for school. We'd get the cane.

Would you really?

PW: Oh, yes. Get the cane if you were late for school.

Now, were there any memorable occasions at school? You said about going up to Cherry Gardens for a sports carnival. But were there any other times that you can remember clearly?

PW: Yes. I suppose one of the most exciting things I've had, just after I started school. Because I started school in 1938. And we used to have a trip to Glenelg. A big bus used to come up. I think it was one of Bonds, or something. Bonds tours buses used to come up and pick us up and take us to Glenelg, and we used to have a wonderful outing at Glenelg. But that only lasted one or two years because the War came on in 1939 and everything closed up. They couldn't do that any more. So that was the end of that. Yes, that was very outstanding in those days - trips to Glenelg.

Now, did the War have an affect on the community, Peter?

PW: Oh, big effect, Rob, yes. There was no sport. No sport through the War years. Everything shut down. Scotts Creek oval down there just went to rack and ruin. There was just blackberries all over it. Cricket finished in 1938/39 season and then that was the end of it until 1946. And everything just went to rack and ruin.

Did many locals go off into the Forces?

PW: Yes. Quite a lot from here went away. Quite a number.

And did people join together for fundraising as well?

PW: Oh, yes. That was a big thing during the War. We were only laughing about one incident just a couple of nights ago. Carlene, she thought a lot of my Mum. She often - she always laughs about her being Cornish and that but she thought a lot of Mum, Carlene did.
Something came up about the War years when we were talking. I said that I remember when I was going to school, there was a troop of soldiers that - because they used to have to go around and do training those times during the War, they'd just settle somewhere for the night and they'd do their training. On this particular night they landed on the Scotts Creek oval, and threw their tents, and we saw them when we came home from school. We said, 'Hello, what's going on here?' Military trucks all over the place, and soldiers, and wondered what was happening. Found out then that they'd just settle there for the night and do their training. They'd come there in the afternoon.
Well, that night, the local community - they found out that these soldiers were camped there for the night and they got a big dance going for them down at the local hall that night. And these soldiers, they invited them all around to the dance in the local hall. My Mum went down. She used to walk down. Think nothing in those days of going out in the dark and walking down there. She'd walk down of a night, down to anything at the hall.
One of these soldiers, he came and asked Mum for a dance. He saw Mum. Mum was sitting in the hall, and she said, 'No, I can't dance'. She didn't dance because I believe when Mother was young she was brought up strict Methodist at Wallaroo Mines and I think those days they didn't like dancing much. So she never learnt to dance. She used to have a lot of fun when she was young but she didn't dance.
Anyway, this soldier came and said, 'Come on, let's have this dance'. Mother said, 'No. I can't dance'. He said, 'Yes, you can'. He said, 'You come up', and he got up and they were waltzing around this circular waltz around the hall, and Mum said, 'Put me down. Put me down. I'm giddy. I'm giddy. I'm not used to this'. And anyway, the soldier said, 'You said you can't dance. You're a good dancer. I reckon you've danced before'. Mum said, 'No, I haven't danced before'. She was good at anything like that. She was musical. She had sort of rhythm. She apparently got up and danced perfectly.
So, yes, that was the sort of thing they used to do during the War, Rob. Like, Red Cross. There used to be - raising money for the soldiers down at the hall. Different functions, and that. Yes, there was a lot of that sort of thing went on.

Was there a great community spirit, Peter?

PW: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. That's one thing about war, it brings everybody together. It's a thing - unless you go through it, you wouldn't sort of realise what an experience it is to go through a big war like that. It made a very close knit community.

So even as a young boy you sensed that?

PW: Oh, yes. Yes, it's a thing that you'll never forget - the War years. It almost seemed as though the War was here in our country because everything was so limited. You couldn't buy things or anything. Everything was rationed. Even to go and get a bag of sugar, you could only get a certain amount. You had to take your coupons down. And even tea was rationed. Everything was rationed. Petrol, you couldn't hardly - petrol was all rationed.

So it did affect you directly, really?

PW: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Was there still a very large demand for the produce?

PW: Oh, yes. But the worst part about it as far as Father was - he didn't go to the War because he was - well, Dad had bad feet anyway. He was a little bit crippled. Well, not crippled but his feet weren't that good and he was getting on. I think Dad was about - well in his forties I think when the War started. So he didn't have to go to War. But he went on market gardening right through the War. But there was a ceiling price. You couldn't make much money during the War because they brought a ceiling price on all fruit and vegetables. Even when it was very scarce, he could only get a certain price for it, which was very low.

So the government was setting it, in other words, at that point?

PW: Yes. Yes.

Well, Peter, how was it just after the War? You know, you were coming back on the property then. Was the property - really began to work well, did it?

PW: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. We were developing more and more land. Because there were us three boys all home on the garden at the time. My two brothers. We all had plenty of work to do. They cleared paddocks and that up the top that hadn't been used before. And yes, we opened up new paddocks after I came home.

So the 40's and 50's were pretty good years, were they?

PW: They were very good years, yes. 50's, even up into the 60's until - what killed our part of the industry here was that big transport came in and they started transporting stuff from other parts of Australia. Because years ago they couldn't - if you had a scarce article of vegetables, they couldn't get it from anywhere else because there was no transport to bring it here. But in later years they started getting these big semi-trailers and fast transport, and they'd get a scarce line on the market and within a day or so they'd have it over from Victoria or somewhere. And that was partly why I finished up going out of the industry because it was getting harder and harder on a small property like this.

Yes. Was the locality itself beginning to change as well, Peter? Was it beginning to be less isolated because of this transport move?

PW: Oh, yes, yes. You could see the properties in the hills gradually going out one after the other sort of thing, as things were changing. Like I said, this area was all fruit and vegetables. Like, up until probably the late 1950's or early 60's. And then you could see this one's going out, that one's going out, that one's going out, and they were gradually - you could see them just gradually moving out.

Was that a pretty sad thing to see?

PW: It was sad, yes. To think of all the production that used to go on in this area and then to see it sort of just fold up.

And one thing I wanted to ask you, Peter, did you see yourself as very different from city people in a sense?

PW: Yes. We were those days. In fact, we were known as country bumpkins. Although we were only 15 miles from Adelaide those days, it seemed like we were way out, because transport was different then. You didn't have any freeway or anything like that. Just a windy old track to Adelaide. Yes, you did seem a way out in the scrub.
I always remember when we were young we used to go to the Adelaide Show. Always liked going down to the Royal Adelaide Show. And you could always pick out the country people when you went to the Show. You'd see the way they had their hair cut or the coat they had on, or something, and say, 'They come from the hills. They come from the bush'. Yes, country people were different those days. You could pick them, yes.

Right. So, Peter, the thing that finally decided you to give the property up was this - I guess the lack of return on what you're producing because of this stuff coming in from interstate.

PW: Yes.

And you just found that you couldn't compete on the smaller acreages I suppose.

PW: That's right.

So what were people faced with up here? Go bust or get out, basically?

PW: Yes. Gradually, one by one, you could see them getting work elsewhere. They were going off the properties. People down the road - that was something we couldn't believe. Lewis' used to have a big apple orchard further down - about a mile down from us. And when we heard that Lewis' were selling up and getting out of apples, we couldn't believe it. The writing was on the wall then when Lewis' started to get out of it. That seemed to be the start of it. And from then on, this one was going and getting a job somewhere else. A lot of them were still living here. They didn't want to leave the district but they were going away getting work elsewhere.

So like you did. You work with the Council.

PW: Yes. I was lucky. I could get a job handy. And it was a toss up whether I - I could carry on on the garden. I wasn't - like, I wasn't really broke or anything like that but it was getting harder and harder to make a living. For the amount of hours I was putting into the work, almost daylight till dark, it just wasn't worth it.

Well, Peter, what struck me from all the things you've told me tonight, and with your Father and Grandfather, too, there's a very strong attachment to the soil. Was that something that you found hard to give away?

PW: Yes, it was very hard. When I started working at the Council, although I went sort of on much the same type of work as I was doing at home - I went to the Parks and Gardens at the Council, which was more or less - but it was weeks and weeks - I used to think, 'Should I be here? It's not right. I shouldn't be here'. And yet I thought, 'No'. Financially, I had the children to think of. They were all to be educated and some of them were just going into high school. There was a lot of expense. And I thought, 'No'. I had regular income. That means a lot to me. But yes, it did seem very hard. I just felt like I should've been home in that garden, for quite a while.

Was that time of change, or the way of change, something that you've - well, it sounds to me that you've never really gotten over it, Peter. It was a huge change to your life.

PW: Yes. Yes. I'd still love to be back in the garden now. If there was money in it I'd still love to be back in the garden, growing vegetables - fruit and vegetables.

Well, the land's still there.

PW: Yes, that's right. *(Laughter)*

And something else, Peter. It struck me from talking to you at other times that there were lots of old identities through the district that you got quite a regard for, and they had certain ways about them. They were quite unusual at times. Can you remember any of those people and the type of things they got up to, and your memories of them?

PW: I suppose one of the most comical of our neighbours was a chap called Sid Carthew who used to lived on that property over on the hill there. Carthew,

that's another Cornish name. And he was a funny old chap. We used to love to go over there. We used to take his paper over actually. We used to bring the paper up from the Post Office and we used to deliver his Advertiser. Often we'd go up there - it would be almost dark some nights we'd get over there and he'd be still milking his cow. I can still see him now with his old leather cap on, his head pushed into the cow, and he'd be there squirting away in the bucket. I think half the milk would be missing the bucket anyway. We used to laugh because we were very fussy here. We'd have to strip every cow out, you know. Strip every bit of milk out of the cow. And old Sid - we could still hear the milk squirting in the bucket and he'd get - he had a funny old stool he used to sit on - and he'd get up and he'd say, 'That'll do you, Jerry', and he'd throw the old stool back in the corner, and the cow was only half milked. *(Laughter)* So that was the way old Sid - he was a character. We used to laugh and laugh about old Sid Carthew.

TAPE 2 - SIDE B

So this was Sid Carthew you were talking about?

PW: Yes. Yes, there were about ten children reared in that - there's still the chimney and the remains of the house on top of the hill there. There was about ten - I think there was about eight or ten children in that family. All reared up there. And in fact, going into history just a little bit further, they're related to the Mackereths(?). Sid Carthew's mother was a Miss Mackereth(?). Used to live in that old cottage down the bottom there. Old Steven Carthew - Sid Carthew's father - married Miss Mackereth(?). So there's -

There's a relation there.

PW: There's relationship there, yes. Yes, old Sid, he was a character. We used to like watching him over there driving his horse. And he used to have a hay paddock up the top there, three acres was his hay paddock, and old Sid, he'd never think of cutting his hay until nearly Christmas time. We'd have our hay all cut and in the stack, and we'd see Sid bringing his old grass mower out

with his big old horse - big old draught horse he used to have - and it'd be only straw. *(Laughter)* And he'd come and cut his hay. He'd get it in but I don't know how the cows - couldn't have got much goodness out of it. He was always late doing everything. He used to -

Probably with ten children he was a bit held up, Peter.

PW: *(Laughter)* Oh, yes.
Another old character was a chap who lived next door. Fellow by the name of Bert Budarick. It's a German name. And they came down here from Murray Bridge and took the property over here in about 1945, I think. They came down here with an old Studebaker buckboard. And the cow feed was pretty - it was a very dry year just around the time they came there and they didn't have any water there. They didn't have anything to pump out of, and he was always scratching around for a bit of green feed for his cows. They had quite a mob of cows there.
So he went and saw the chap that used to be a market gardener across - a fellow called Laurie Chapman, had the market garden across the gully there. Used to have a lot of reeds, used to grow up along the creek. He went and asked him could he come and get some of these reeds for cow feed. So he said, yes, he could come and get the reeds. So he used to go over there with his old Studebaker buckboard and load it up. He used to cut it with a scythe and load it up. And the old cows got to know, up here on the hill, they knew the sound of that old Studebaker over there when he'd get his load and he'd roar the thing up to go up the hill to get out of the creek, and the old cows would start singing out. They'd be staring over there. They knew where he was coming from and they knew he was coming down the road.
He'd come around there with an old pitchfork stuck up in the load, and he'd get a run up along the road there and race up here, get up as far as he could in top gear. Because those old things they'd go about - still keep going about five mile an hour in top gear. And he'd get nearly up the top of the hill there with this load on, with this old pitchfork stuck out, and the old thing would be going *(couldn't type sound of motor)*, and then the cows would go mad. By the time he got up to the gate there, the cows would just go mad. But the thing we used to laugh about was how the cows knew the sound of that old bus when he used to start roaring it, when he was way over -

They'd be singing out for it.

PW: About half a mile away. They could see him over there getting their green feed. He was an old character, old Budarick.

Well, there's some interesting old places in the district that they used to live in, these people?

PW: Oh, yes. There were only - more or less hovels I suppose you'd call them nowadays. Wasn't very many people that had a flash house those days. There was no electric light for one thing. We didn't get the electric light through until about 1953, I think it was. Up until then there was - everything was very primitive. Things seem to have gone ahead quite a bit after, you know, power came through. But, yes, we never had any power here when we were young. It was all just kerosene lights. And no refrigerator. Oh, we did have a kerosene refrigerator.

Did you?

PW: Just not very long before the power came along.

So did somebody come around and offer the power to you or did you ask for an easement, or what was the story with that?

PW: No. I think ETSA - was it called ETSA in those days?

Yes.

PW: I can't think how far back it went. One time it was known as the Adelaide Electric Supply Company.

Yes. Until '46.

PW: Anyway, I think they came around. They were intending to put power through the hills I think. I think they might have come around and got Dad to sign something to say whether he wanted the power or not. Because everybody wanted the power on, they all signed it.

A big difference?

PW: Oh, it was wonderful when that power came on. Yes, it was a great thing. We had it not far away. See, Stirling had it on up there. Even into Heathfield. Past Heathfield, they had the power. These outer places here, there was no power.

Peter, do you remember a time that the natural world started to get a bit hard to take? Fires and extreme cold, those sort of things. Were you troubled by them down here?

PW: Fires, yes. We've had our share of fires. Bushfires, you mean?

Yes, I do mean.

PW: Yes. We've had quite a number of fires through here. Burnt out two or three times. 1939 was the first fire that I can remember. I was only a little tacker. That didn't actually burn us out that time. It went above us. It went up through Longwood, across there.
That particular day of the 1939 bushfire, my Dad had teed up to take a cow to market that day, that particular day. And it was 117 in the shade. That was the hottest day on record. I think it still holds the record.
The cow market those days used to be at Thebarton. Mother said, 'You're taking the cow down. I'll take the boys down to the zoo'. That was John and me. Ted was away up the river at his aunty's place. It was Christmas holidays - school holidays. So we went down, Dad with this cow down to the market and Mum took us to the zoo. And we couldn't understand why nothing wanted to shift in the zoo. It was all laying flat out on the floor and we were saying to Mum - we didn't feel the heat that much, we were only kids - 'Nothing will get up'. And she said, 'Oh, it's pretty hot'. *(Laughter in voice)*
Anyway, so coming home, we met Dad. And to make it worse, Dad with the old truck, he had a ton of bone manure he had to bring home that day too. He had that ordered from the market for the garden. We got out to Glen Osmond, coming home, and a policeman stopped us there, and he said, 'You can't go any further'. And Dad said, 'I want to get home'. And he said, 'You can't. There's fires all raging up around the Devil's Elbow, and mounting up. This is closed. You can't go this way'. So Dad thought, 'Well, how am I going to get home? I've got to get home'. Because he didn't know if his place was burnt out or what was going on up here, because this fire had raged through.

So while he was wondering what to do, his cousin came along. Chap had a property at Mylor, and he had a Buick buckboard, and he said, 'You follow me, Harley. I know a way to get home. We'll go up the Belair Road'. So away they went. And when he got down the road a little way - and of course he only had a Buick buckboard and he didn't have very much on it, he was too fast for Dad and Dad lost him. They were supposed to have turned up the Fullarton Road. That's where they should have turned but Dad kept going. He finished up down on the Unley Road. And he didn't know where he was.

Those days there used to be Rayners(?) milk factory. Used to be on the Unley Road. And they gave us some drinks and told us where to go. So Dad turned around and he came back and he started climbing up the Belair Road, eventually, when he found his way.

And then the old thing started to boil, because the old motors used to boil those days. Didn't think anything of it. It didn't hurt anything. They'd fill them up with water and away he'd go a bit further. The old thing boiled all the way home. When we eventually got home, Dad said, 'I'll get you all a drink'. So he went to the tanks here to get some water out of the tank and the water was nearly boiling. He went up the top - there's a big old underground tank at the top house there because they hadn't actually *(couldn't decipher)* and he got some water out of the underground tank and brought us a drink down. But that's how hot it was. The water was nearly boiling in the tanks there. Just the iron tanks. That was my first experience of that - and that bushfire went right out through Echunga. And we went out there a few days later. Dad had a brother who lived at Mount Barker at that stage, and we nearly cried. We saw all these houses out there, all burnt down. Echunga was just flattened. There was burnt houses everywhere.

And then, of course, our next experience with fire was 1955. What they call Black Sunday. And that burnt all our top - the sheds we had up the top. Those big old slab sheds that I was talking about. Were apple sheds. They all got burnt down. And it burnt all around the edge of our property. But it didn't get right into the property that time because we had everything scarified pretty well - cultivated - and the garden was going pretty well then. The fire didn't get into the property very much but it did a lot of damage around the outside. But we were out fighting that thing all day. Right into the night. And then we never had a had one then until 1980, which really burnt us out.

The worst.

PW: The worst fire that ever I saw in my life. All it left was the two houses. That's all we had left. Took all our sheds, and got right in. Burnt everything. All our old trucks went. Tractors. Tools. We lost everything. It was probably our worst experience with fire. I'll never forget that one.

Well, Peter going from fires and just sort of to tie everything together. If you look back all over the years with Scotts Creek, what's always been special about living here, for you?

PW: Oh, I think it's always been a great community. It's always been a reasonably tight - like we were saying - tight knit community. Everybody's always ready to help you around the place. I suppose just the lay of the hills around the place, just seemed to attract us. We just seem to love this part of the country. Just to think we just go up over the hills a bit and down to Adelaide. So, almost close to Adelaide, and yet just so quiet and homely out here. Yes, it's always seemed very special to us.

Good. Thank you very much, Peter, for talking tonight.

PW: It was a pleasure, Rob.