

THE EDWARDS FAMILY

A Family History

by

Dr Robert Edwards AO

Website Edition

Collated from a number of draft documents using AI (Claude & Chat GPT),
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About this memoir

This website edition is based on Robert Edwards' surviving manuscripts for 'The Edwards Family'. The text has been lightly edited to combine successive drafts into a single readable memoir while preserving Robert Edwards' voice, historical interpretation and personal reflections. Editorial changes have been confined to correcting obvious typographical errors, removing duplicated material and drafting artefacts, and improving consistency of formatting. Where later drafts expanded or completed earlier passages, they have been preferred. No attempt has been made to modernise Robert Edwards' style or alter his opinions.

This memoir was written primarily for family, but it is also a valuable record of South Australian social

history. It is presented as a companion volume to Notes on the Cordon Family and in the hope that future generations will value both the family story and the wider history it records.

Introduction

It is hard to recall one's earliest memories as they are swamped by subsequent events and fade with time. I remember being a very active youngster with my early years full of fun and adventure although as time passed there were many challenges to be confronted along the way.

I was blessed with an enquiring mind, boundless energy and a deep sense of curiosity about the world around me. This led to all sorts of youthful escapades as well as a large amount of advice and support from family and friends to help shape the course I was to follow through life. Nevertheless I spent a number of years in the 'wilderness' between great expectations and frustrated ambitions as I made my way to ultimately achieve the career of my choice.

Life in Rural Setting

It was good to be born into a large extended family living and working in a rural environment with lots of space and scope to explore and run free. There also were lots of relations to encourage me as my four grandparents all came from large families that was the custom at the time. There was a plethora of great uncles, aunts, first and second cousins and in my early years three great-grandparents who were very old and very grand. I grew up in the bosom of the immediate family and gained much from a regular association with my numerous relatives, who in the main quest for a new life with new opportunities, had chosen life on the land in South Australia.

The 'Zante Grove' Orchard

My grandfather Frank Henry Edwards was the eldest son in a family of 11 surviving children. He had a 50 acre (20 hectare) orchard property in the Marion district some 6 miles (10km) south of Adelaide. This was at the centre of my early years. There was a horse named Dolly, a cow, some ducks, numerous chooks, a dog, several cats and a canary. Grandfather grew stone fruit, vegetables and almonds, but concentrated mainly on grapes for sale either as fresh fruit or wine production. These were exchanged often with neighbours for other produce as there was little

money to be had in those terrible years of The Great Depression of the 1930s when the family lived under a dark cloud of doubt and uncertainty about the future.

On 8th September in the spring of 1927 my father Friend Henry Edwards Jnr, the only son and eldest child of Frank Henry and Bertha Eliza Edwards, married Margaret Eileen Mavis Cordon, the only daughter of Frank and Lily Cordon of Prospect. The colourful ceremony was held in the parish church of St Cuthberts', where my mother had been confirmed on 17th July 1921. The Edwards and Cordon families came together with friends of the young couple for what was described in the press as 'a society wedding' held in the closing years of the prosperous Roaring '20s.

I will quote the account in full as it introduces members of the two families as well as their many close friends most of whom were to become well known to me.

"Rev Collison officiated. The bridal party was preceded to the altar by a choir of small boys singing the old familiar marriage hymn, 'The Voice That Breathed O'er Eden'.

"The bride, who was given away by her father, wore a gown of shell-pink georgette and worked in large opalescent sequins and trimmed with fine tucks. Her veil of ivory silk net was bordered with Brussels lace. It was worn over the head, cap-fashion, and held in place by a circle of orange blossom buds, with a spray of orange blossom on each side.

"Her train was of shell-pink satin, under-lined with a rucked tulle and trimmed with a double horseshoe of orange blossom. She carried a shower bouquet of pale pink flowers.

"Miss Edna Edwards (eldest sister of the bridegroom) was the only bridesmaid. She was frocked in cyclamen pink georgette, made with a three-tier skirt. She wore a transparent gold lace hat. Trimmed with velvet ribbon, to match her frock.

"Maids of honour were Miss Norma Chapman, who was in pale green georgette, slightly rucked at the waist, with a flat bow on the shoulder; and Miss Dora Edwards, who wore lavender georgette,

trimmed with lace to match her frock. Each wore a hat of transparent gold lace, trimmed with velvet ribbons, to match her frock, and carried a flower bouquet.

"The two train bearers, Misses Gladys Sizer (cousin of the bride) and Fay Edwards (youngest sister of the bridegroom) were frocked alike in powder blue georgette, worn with Dutch caps of gold tissue, trimmed with tiny flowers of pale pink and pale blue. Mr Horace Heading, of Waikerie was best man. The church was decorated with bowls of pink and mauve sweet peas.

"After the ceremony a reception was held at Arcadia Café, King William Street, where the guests were received by Mr and Mrs Cordon, Mr and Mrs Edwards, and the bride and bridegroom. The usual toasts were honoured. Mr Clarence Hinton was master of ceremonies. Miss Alicia Burdon sang 'Annie Laurie' and Miss Edna Edwards gave a recitation. Mr Tom King's orchestra provided the music for dancing.

"The travelling frock of the bride was an amethyst satin with Swiss embroidery on the vest. She wore a soft felt hat trimmed with feathers, and a Canadian fox fur. Mrs Cordon was in a frock of petunia coloured silk, with a coat and hat to match. Mrs Edwards chose a dress of navy blue Brussels lace, relieved with touches of fine pleated scarlet georgette, and a navy blue georgette hat to match.

"List of Guests

"Mr and Mrs Frank Edwards, Mr and Mrs W. H. Nottle, sen., Mr and Mrs S Arthur, Mr and Mrs C Arthur, Mr and Mrs Hinton, Mr and Mrs Sizer, Mr and Mrs Jacobs, Mr and Mrs Angwin, Mr and Mrs A Emmill, Mr and Mrs J. T. Bryant, Mr and Mrs S Edwards, Mr and Mrs L. Hatherby, Mr and Mrs F. Chapman, Mr and Mrs A. Bald, Mr and Mrs W. Mitchell, Mr and Mrs M Sargent, Mr and Mrs J. Duncan, Mr and Mrs T. Edwards, Mr and Mrs H. Pearson, Mr and Mrs K. Cordon, Mr and Mrs Honeybone, Mr and Mrs G. Cordon, Mr and Mrs J. Gill, Mr and Mrs W. Partridge, Mr and Mrs R. Martin.

Mesdames G. Cordon, H. Woolford, Hudd, W. Ward, Farrelly, Wilson, R. McLennan

Misses A. Burdon, I. Cordon, W. McFayden, V. McFaden, F. Edwards, R. Edwards, Z. Emmill, G. Sizer, T. Lunn, O. Edwards, N. Chapman, P. Chapman, M. Fuller, R. Bald, D. Bald, J. Campbell, M. Martin, K. Edwards, N. Sargent, E. Edwards, E. Stanford and D. Edwards.

Messrs Cordon, sen., Gl Brown, H. Headland, J. Gill, A. James, R. Farnum, R. Piggott, S. Pethick, H. Pethick, H. Collins, R. Knill, F. Coulls, R. Heading and F. Maddigan.

The newlyweds moved into a small but comfortable brick bungalow on the 'Oaklands Estate', opposite 'Zante Grove' on the northern outskirts of the District of Marion. Although the house had undergone some alterations over the years it still stands at Number 28 Oaklands Road. It was among the first houses built on the Historic Estate and had been designed and constructed for the newlyweds by Grandfather Cordon. Remarkably, the original plans are preserved among the family papers.

The boundary of Grandfather Edwards' orchard ran along the opposite side of Oaklands Road. He built the homestead and occupied in 1909. By August the house was set well back from the road and made a handsome sight set in the midst of lush vineyards. A narrow walking path extended from Oaklands Road up to the front door of the house. A row of almond trees ran along its boundary to provide shelter for the vines. A double avenue of almond trees also extended at right angles up to the main implement shed which formed part of the homestead complex. This was a splendid sight when the trees were in full bloom.

My one and only sister Barbara was born on the 4th February 1929 at Miss Rowe's Hospital in Wakefield Street, Adelaide. I arrived on the scene in the same hospital on the 7th April in the following year: a bonny boy of 8 pounds 6 ounces and the first grandson in the immediate Edwards clan. We were baptised together in St Cuthbert's Church, Prospect on 13th July 1930. My father signed the register as 'Manager of Zante Grove' his father's property at Marion, where he had worked since leaving primary school at the end of 1919 aged 14 years.

The Great Depression

Bleak times were to face the newlyweds and their relatives as it was the first year of a severe drought in South Australia. To make matters worse the State already had the highest level of unemployment in Australia. Two years later the world economy was devastated by the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange on what became known as 'Black Thursday' 24th October 1929. It was the beginning of the catastrophic Great Depression.

By 1932, two years after my birth and the worst year of the economic disaster, 34% of trade unionists in South Australia were out of work. The following year the census recorded 27.6% of male salary and wage earners and 13.7% of the much smaller female work force were unemployed. In the City of Adelaide 41% of the male work force was unemployed.

The descendants of our forebears James and Sarah Elizabeth Edwards who in 1849 had sought a new life in the then new British Province of South Australia were to be sorely tested. They settled at the reedbeds and developed a market garden.

Pursuit of Family Ambition

Grandfather Frank Edwards began the establishment of his Marion orchard in 1902 with the purchase of a 10 acre (4 hectare) block of land from a man by the name of Percival. This was at a time when one of the original 80 acre (32 hectares) sections of land, No 115 in what was known as District B, was subdivided into 8 'working men's blocks' numbered 1 to 8 commencing at Marion Road. He managed to pay a deposit of 50 pounds in cash for Block 5 and entered into a mortgage of 250 pounds for the balance. At the time Grandfather was working as 'marketing man' for Arthur Quick, the owner of 'Brookside' one of the largest and most productive orchards in the Marion district. His 145 acre (59 hectare) property produced an abundance of luscious stone fruits, table and wine grapes as well as almonds.

I will let Grandfather tell his own story:

"I had no sooner got it (Block 5) than I began to realise how small it was and felt that I must have another block. I tried to arrange with Percival (the owner) to give me a mortgage for 550 pounds

on two blocks but he would not do this. The best he would do was to waive the commission and if I could raise the money elsewhere he would accept 285 pounds cash. I went to an old friend Mr G Walker (Harry's Father) told him the position and asked him if he would find the money. He agreed to do so at 5% on condition that my first planting was done on that particular block (No 4) thus the 2 acres (0.8 hectares) of Doradillos in front of the house were planted in 1904.

Clearing the Land

"I now had 20 acres (8 hectares) of bare land with, I think, 26 large gum trees scattered about. I engaged a man (Bob Spencer) to grub most of these; some I grubbed myself. Spencer gave me one pound per tree. He took all the wood and I paid him 30 shillings per hundred for the posts. I got sufficient posts to fence it all and a large number for trellising later.

"As soon as it was fenced I took horses and cattle in to graze for the first year. There was wonderful feed, dandelions like cartwheels and oats 5 foot (1.5 metre) high. I had to water them from Pethick's well (sunk in 1839 and lined with bricks by the original settler Dr Handasyde Duncan).

Grandfather Marries

"I had married early in the second fruit season I was with Mr Quick (1st December 1904). I had little to offer as none of my ventures had turned out much up to now, but I was fortunate in finding a wife (Bertha Eliza Heading) who had faith in me and was willing to start from the bottom and hope for the best.

"I rented a property of 20 acres (20 hectares) on the Marion Road (Blocks Nos 1 and 2 of the subdivided Section No 115, which he later purchased) with a very old, small four roomed house where we lived for the first two years of our married life and where Friend was born (30th August 1905). Many girls would have refused to live there but we were quite happy."

“About this time Silbert, Sharp & Bishop started business in the fruit and vegetable market and advertised for a manager for their bulk store. I applied amongst 60 others and stated that I required three pounds per week and was accepted for the job. I started there a fortnight before Friend was born and found it very strenuous and very long hours. I mostly rode a bike to work and had to leave home at 6:00 am, knock off at 5:00 pm and with my two places to attend to at night; I had a full-time job. Later I got a motor bike and sometimes drove up with a horse and cart. Then to be nearer my work we shifted out to Kent Town and lived there for some little time. Edna (born 2nd April 1907), Dora (16th June 1908) and Rita (19th July 1909) were born there.”

Grandfather's memoirs continue:

“During this time, I had to let out a lot of my work such as subsoiling, trellising etc. but I always put in the weekends and often moonlight nights. Old Mr Wright was a real friend and helped me a lot. He did a lot of my planting and trellising for me. The job in the market was quite good and I got a rise in wages or a bonus each year. The garden now needed my attention and I felt I must give the job up and get on to the place.

“I had by now paid all my mortgages off and so approached Mr Walker about lending me money to build a house. He agreed to do so at 5%. I could pay off any amount on any quarter day as the house was built. We moved into it (in August 1909) when Rita was one month old.

“I kept on at the store for some time. Employed a constant man Ken Hamilton in the garden and did a lot of work at night and weekends but finally Ken became dissatisfied and left and I had to throw up the job and come home.

Property Extended

“The people who had taken up No 2 block (on Section No 115) and built a two roomed cottage decided to sell it and I was able to purchase this, my father lending me the money. This hemmed in Saunders with No 3 block so that he could not extend. He took up farm land at Karoonda (Aboriginal meaning ‘winter camp’) in the middle of the Murray Mallee Region of South Australia

about 90.098 miles (145km) east of Adelaide. It was founded on wheat farming early in the 20th century with the advent of the railways. The cleared land in the district was also suitable for raising Merino Sheep.

'Karoonda, South Australia' (2019) *Wikipedia*. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karoonda,_South_Australia. (Accessed: 13 November 2015)

"Saunders offered me the block, but Father would not advance the money as he considered the price too high. However, my old boss, Mr HJ Bishop, came to light and advanced the money. I placed No 2 block on the market again and was able to sell to Mr (Robert Rolland) Black at a profit of 200 pounds and an arrangement to plant it and look after it for a term of three years. When my three years were up Mr Black had been transferred to New Zealand (to take up the position of Superintendent of the Eastern Extension Cable Company of Cable Bay) and felt the place was no use to him so I bought it back again (in May 1917) at a very fair price (1,000 pounds) after being paid to plant it and look after it for three years.

"Saunders place turned out to be good. I bought it in January and told Mr Bishop that the crop on it was worth at least 100 pounds but I took 200 pounds off it almost at once and in a very short time I was able to pay Mr Bishop off."

Final Land Purchase

The purchase of Block No 1 fronting on to Marion Road was the last acquisition of land made by Grandfather. It brought 'Zante Grove' up to a total of 50 acres (20 hectares). However, the asking price was high and the soil rather poor. Despite this he was quick to realise the purchase would enhance the value of the overall property. In addition, it had the benefit of a house. Although old it would enable him to work on establishing his orchard property until he could afford to build a permanent homestead (occupied in August 1909).

It is interesting to note that Block No 1 together with Block No 2 had been rented by Grandfather at the time of his marriage on 1st December 1904. The newlyweds took up residence in the old

house on Marion Road and lived there for the first two years of their married life. Their first child was born while they were there and aptly named Friend Henry Edwards after his grandfather of the same name.

What appeared to be a positive initiative soon out to become a burden. At the time Grandfather was back operating on an overdraft and forced to take on a full-time position to meet the outgoings on the property. He was engaged by Silbert, Sharp and Bishop as Manager of its new bulk store in the East End Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market and began commuting daily from Marion to the city. Eventually he was to go on to become Secretary of the Market.

The Move to Kent Town

Undertaking a full-time position and riding a push-bike daily from Marion to the city market as well as working on the development of a large orchard even after speeding up his daily journey to the city by using a horse and cart and later a motor bike proved to be a daunting task. Decisive action was taken after two years by moving to Kent Town to all but eliminate the long daily travel. In the meantime, arrangements were being made to borrow sufficient funds to build 'Zante Grove' homestead ready for occupation in August 1909.

Workman's Accommodation

The old house on Marion Road proved to be a useful asset as a workman's residence. Raymond Edwards the eldest son of Grandfather's brother Pierce Edwards of Pinnaroo, his wife Mary and two children were the last to occupy the house until 'Zante Grove' was sold in March 1950 with a vacant possession on 1st June.

From 1923 to 1930 the Marion Road house became the home of the Henry and Mary Partridge and their family. Nina Partridge was Grandfather's cousin and her husband worked in the vineyard.

Subsequently Nina wrote a 'memory book' detailing some interesting details of the families' time at 'Zante Grove'. The section relating to the Edwards' relationship is included in mainly unedited form as it provides an interesting picture of daily life in rural Marion at the time of the Depression.

The Old House on Marion Road

"Ascot Park – 1923 – 1930 – There was excitement among the young ones on arriving at our 'new' house, on Marion Road, Ascot Park (near where Parkholme Shopping Centre now stands – it is in fact in one corner of the property). The house was one of three in a 50 acre (20 hectares) vineyard and orchard, owned by Mother's cousin, Frank Edwards, or "Uncle Frank", as we called him. Father was going to work in the vineyard and milk the cow. We had half the milk. Wonder of wonders – electric light!!! We had only had kerosene lamps before this. Of course, outside Father used the faithful kero lantern. We had three good-sized bedrooms, large dining room, kitchen and breakfast room. Also, a veranda across the front, and an enclosed one at the back. The house stood well back from Marion Road, behind a solid stone wall with a fancy iron gate. Each side of the gate was a beautiful English lilac bush, which flowered profusely each spring – the perfume was delightful. Then there were 6 or 8 orange trees, a flower garden, and near the north front corner of the house, a large peach tree, and on the south a shadehouse covered in dolichus and other creepers, which made a good playhouse. At the back, to the north, was the cow-shed, with several hay bales for feeding the cows when milked. Sometimes there were more than one. Many wild cats and kittens lived around. At the western end of the cow-shed was the fowl-run and behind there the 'little house', a long way from the house! Then the cow yard and a large barn, where hay and chaff were stored, with a loft running the full length of this up above. This loft was our play-space, where we loved to go, and we were allowed to WRITE on the walls here and we didn't have to keep it tidy. To reach the loft, we had to climb a division in the barn, dash across a stable, and quickly clamber up before the cow came to see who was there. The boys weren't afraid of her, but I was, and really had to be quick!

"When we tired of playing in the loft, often the boys would hop out the window, climb down the sloping iron roof, slide down the drainpipe and race off somewhere else, maybe to climb trees, or

play in the creek, and I always followed, so soon became a real tomboy!! When we played in the creek, we always came home smelling of fennel, which grew wild there.

“Saturday night – bath night! No bathroom, so water was heated on the wood stove in large kettles, saucepans or buckets. A big oval galvanized tub was brought into our bedroom for the bath routine, and when small Haydn and I were in it together, one each end, with Father scrubbing Haydn, and Mother seeing to me!

“Mother doing the washing in tubs by hand with the help of a washboard, and with the copper in the backyard. It often took her the whole day to wash for so many of us, and she was really exhausted afterwards. I remember one day she washed Father’s trousers with his pay in the pocket, and had the one pound notes pegged out on the line to dry – all three of them!! (How would you like to keep a big family on that?) Somehow, with chooks and plenty of fresh milk, and a vegetable garden she managed to cope.

“Sunday nights – Family hymn singing and prayers – a lovely memory, when we all gathered around the organ, and later, the piano, for singing together. Father, who had an excellent tenor voice, led us, and even the youngest joined in. Ione played for us. Then Father would read a passage from the Bible, or the older ones would take a turn to read, after which we’d all kneel for prayers, led by Father. Grandma Partridge would visit us at times and play hymns and other music, much to our delight. One of Haydn and my favourites she played was “The Advance of Colin Campbell”, and she used to play it so hard, that the piano would shake, and we would keep saying “Play harder, grandma!!

“Haydn was four and a half when we came to Ascot Park, and he slept in a cot. I had a cot with the end let down for my feet, as I’d outgrown it. Later, I was very lucky to have a wooden based bed (homemade). As we were short of blankets, Mother had to manufacture covers – usually discarded coats etc, cut and pieced and covered by cretonne or shadow tissue, and they were a very good substitute.

"Fred walked to Sturt to school and used to tell us how they waded across the Sturt Creek to save going so far, and as the creek was very curly at this point, had to wade several times, and often leeches would cling to their legs.

"Most travel then was done by horse drawn vehicles, and Father's uncle Jim, who lived in Mount Malvern, Clarendon, regularly drove to our place with his horse and dray, loaded with wattle bark from the Partridge property. He would stay the night with us, and after breakfast next day, take his load in to the tanners at Hindmarsh. He was quite fond of reciting, and used plenty of expression, but somehow never seemed to get 'wound up' till after we younger ones were in bed, so we rarely heard him. I can remember sneaking out to listen sometimes. His favourite piece used to end each verse with – "Man may work from sun to sun, but woman's work is never done" (with much emphasis on "never").

"When we had a new calf, I often had the job of giving it the milk from a bucket, and was always sad to see the calf go, especially if it was a 'billy' calf, as I knew it would be killed for meat.

"There were many tadpoles in the local creek and ditch, and I used to keep them in a jar of water – was most interested watching them change into frogs, but many times didn't take them out of the water, and they died, so I would bury them under the orange trees. I also would bury any dead birds I found and put flowers on their graves!!

"Having much fun playing among the vines and almond trees – making chains with soursob flowers.

"Soon after coming to Ascot Park, we started going to the little wood and iron Methodist Church in 5th Avenue, which then was many years old, and is still standing. Ione was the organist there for years, and, if the minister didn't arrive, perhaps due to bad weather. Father was usually ready to step into the pulpit and take the service. His father had been a minister, and so he was well schooled in this.

"We often had concerts and Father would sing solos. I clearly remember him singing "The Holy City", also "Off to Philadelphia", and "Riding Down to Bangor". At times there would be community singing evenings, 3d entrance (if you could spare it), 1d for children. We enjoyed these very much.

"My first Sunday School Anniversary [special annual concerts when all the children would assemble on raised, stepped platforms and sing to the congregation] – Edith had lent me her long string of pearls, as I had none. When we got to Sunday School, Mrs Easterbrooks took off my coat hastily, for me to go up on the platform, and Edith's pearls broke and flew all over the Church floor. Naturally, I was upset. Don't know if they were all recovered! Edith wasn't happy either!!

"Remember eating too many figs – and always too many mulberries! Eating a dessert spoonful of marmalade out of a jar of Mother's freshly made batch, when she wasn't looking, and getting a horrible shock to find it was bitter!"

Extract from Nina Partridge's Memory Book Relating to Edward's Property

Grandfather resumes his story: "I was planting each year and seasons and prices became better so that by 1921 I had paid everyone off, owed nothing whatsoever to anyone and had 40 acres (16 hectares) freehold and a good home." (At the time his son would have been 16 and working on the property.)

"Mr G Weston a great friend of mine (owner of the 40 acre (16 hectare) 'Muscatel Vineyards' on part of Section No 110) gave me a severe talking to. He told me I was killing myself and it was not fair to my family and persuaded me to play bowls. I joined up with the Brighton Club and told Mr Weston that I would never work Saturday afternoons anymore and so far I have kept my promise.

"Almost at once I got into debt again as Mr Harris offered to sell Block 1. He asked what I thought was a high price of 1,500 pounds. Most of the land was poor, very little of it planted, but it had a house on it and would bring my property out to the main Marion Road. I decided to buy which I

did but grape prices now fell very low and with this extra expense I was again working on an overdraft.

“Soon after this I had a breakdown in health and was in hospital for some time and doctors told me I was not to think of heavy work anymore. While I was convalescing Mr Brooker, Secretary of the Market, died (11th July 1927) and I applied for and was appointed to the position. For several years I went in from ‘Zante Grove’ every day. Friend managed the place on my behalf.”

Manuscript memoirs of Frank Henry Edwards 1952.

Among Grandfather’s papers is a close-up of him at age 47 with his eldest daughter Edna (then 14 years old) standing in front of an aeroplane fitted out for a 15 minute flight over Adelaide with Harry Butler, the well-known South Australian aviator. It is labelled “Flight with Harry Butler, 21st May 1921”. No doubt this was a special treat to mark the clearing of debt. The plane was an Auro 50K modified to take two passengers on flights over Adelaide. The flight took 15 minutes and charged 5 pounds each. This shows Grandfather’s interest in the many changes taking place.

Grandfather Takes Fulltime Position

Grandfather was Secretary of the Adelaide Fruit and Produce Exchange Company Limited in the East End Market for 23 years. He became very well-known and respected in the industry while his son (Friend Henry Edwards Jnr) later took over a lease on ‘Zante Grove’ until it was sold to the South Australian Housing Trust in March 1950 with vacant possession on 1st June of that year.

My father appears to have had only one option for his working life: to follow family custom and assist on the home property. He was sent to the local Sturt School built on Sturt Road and opened in May 1878 with twelve pupils and where Grandfather had been the first chairman of the School Committee. Father was awarded his qualifying certificate on 22nd November 1919 at the age of 14. Having passed every subject: reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, composition and drawing.

Grandfather and the Wholesale Market

Grandfather became well known and respected for his tight control over what was potentially a disorderly situation with so many producers, shop keepers and agents anxious to transact business as quickly as possible. A siren would sound at 7:00am to signal the movement of produce from growers to retailers and agents. I remember being amazed at the commotion that took place on visits to the market with my father when he was delivering orders for fresh fruit.

In Later Years

I recall grandfather keeping close watch to ensure no-one started deliveries before the siren sounded. If he noticed anyone moving a hand cart of produce early he would quietly grasp the back of their cart and hold on to it. The “culprit” would look startled and apologise. Be this as it may he earned a reputation for fairness as it was in everyone’s interest to adhere to the rules of orderly marketing.

Grandfather had been a wise choice for the cut and thrust of the wholesale fruit and vegetable market. He was honest, fair-minded, conscientious and tough in his day to day oversight of the functioning of the market. These early visits to the market as a youngster became more frequent when I left school and started working full-time on the family property. They also held me in good stead when I took up market gardening on leasing ‘Uncle’ Jim Duncan’s property at Marion and later as Marketing Director for the Apple and Pear Section of the South Australian Fruit Growers and Market Gardeners’ Association Inc. Success came only with an understanding of the law of supply and demand.

Naming the Orchard

Grandfather named his property ‘Zante Grove’ after one of the main varieties of grapes he planted – the *Zante Currant* popular in the fresh fruit market as it ripened early. They were in demand also dried as currants for cooking. He set up a whole production line to process the fresh grapes. It included a large multi-decked drying rack, portable trays and a machine for removing the stems. For a time, it filled a niche market and gave good returns. However, prices collapsed when a Commonwealth export bounty was introduced on dried fruit.

The currant is one of the oldest known raisins. The first written record was in 75AD by Pliny the Elder, who described a tiny, juicy, thick-skinned grape with small bunches.

'Zante currant' (2019) *Wikipedia*. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zante_currant (Accessed: 2000).

Original Settlement on Sturt River

Section No 115 on which Grandfather established his orchard has an interesting history and is typical of the initiatives being taken throughout the Adelaide plains and beyond. He named his property 'Eldon' and was part of the extensive lands of the Kurna Aboriginal people until its occupation in 1839 by Dr Eldon Handasyde Duncan, one of the first settlers to select land for his colonial estate in the fertile soils along the River Sturt. It is interesting to note the origins and efforts of the young Dr Duncan who in many respects typified the individuals of many professions who chose a new life on the land in South Australia. I first became aware of this early pioneer and his family when researching the history of the local parish church St Mary's-on-the-Sturt situated on the Great South Road in the district still known as St Marys. My sister and I attended regularly and were confirmed in this lovely historic church on 11th November 1943.

The new British Province of South Australia had been promoted widely in Britain and many potential emigrants and investors were purchasing land orders entitling them to land in South Australia. The first of these reached Holdfast Bay late in 1836 and the Wakefield experiment in colonisation began in earnest.

By 1839, ships were arriving daily and survey work was underway. Among the early arrivals was a young Scottish doctor with his family and servants, Dr Eldon Handasyde Duncan who had purchased a land order for an 80 acre (32 hectare) section of land. The young Scottish doctor with his family and servants arrived at the old port on board the 'Katherine Stewart Forbes' on 21st March 1839. The damp climate of England was affecting his health so he sought the more congenial climate of Australia with the intention of abandoning his profession and devoting his attention to farming pursuits.

Dr Duncan was quick to select his 80 acre section and was attracted to land on the banks off the River Sturt where there would be ample water and fertile soil at hand. They may well have been surprised to find that the river was not navigable and the local Karuno group of Aboriginals were still occupying the land and carrying on their age old culture dating back to the time when their forbears first reached the Australian continent.

Dr Duncan was well equipped for the task of converting virgin land into profitable farm land.

Plans for a settlement in South Australia or Gulf St Vincent had been under consideration since the discoveries of Flinders, Barker and Sturt. The British Parliament passed "An Act to empower His Majesty to erect South Australia into a British Province or Provinces and to provide for the Colonisation and Government thereof" on 15th August, 1834.

Dr Duncan was quick to exercise his land order and chose 80 acres, Section 115 in District B for the development of his farm.

First Church Services

In the course of the quest for information about the early days of St Mary's I chanced upon Dr Duncan's original diary in the Archives Department at the State Library. This fascinating manuscript tells us the first Church of England services in the district were held on his property. The first of these took place on 7th June 1839 not 3 months after his arrival. The entry in the diary states: "Mr Fleming (a lay reader assisting the first Colonial Chaplain Rev CB Howard) performed divine service here at 11 o'clock to all the neighbours who chose to attend." The little flock of worshippers came from throughout the vast but sparsely populated district. Again on 14th July 1839 Dr Duncan recorded "Mr Fleming performed divine service here at 11 o'clock...". It is interesting to note that on the Sundays when no services were held Dr Duncan states: "Read

prayers of the church, finding attention is better kept awake than by reading a sermon. Servants expressed themselves satisfied with the change.”

Homestead Established

One can imagine the services at ‘Eldon’ being held either in the open perhaps under one of the giant red gums on the property or in one of the two pre-fabricated wooden houses known as Manning’s Cottages. These were probably brought out from England on the *Katherine Stewart Forbes* with Dr Duncan and his cargo of essentials needed to establish a mixed farm in a virgin land. The ship berthed at the Old Port on 21st March 1839. The cargo was unloaded and taken to the site on the river by bullock dray. The cottages were erected among the ancient gums growing on the alluvial soils along the River Sturt. Nearby Dr Duncan constructed several rooms of pisé as well as a barn, stock yards, fowl yards and other out buildings. The entire 80 acre (32 hectare) section was surrounded by a bank and ditch as a form of low cost, effective fencing used in Europe. One of the most poignant entries in the diary was made on 17th June 1839 when the young doctor recorded: “Put the plough into the land for the first time”.

Emigrants from different countries tended to cluster together and with all religions encouraged to settle in the new province. Church services were brought together in the same way as

Temporary Church Building

The services at ‘Eldon’ were the catalyst for the construction of a temporary parish church. John Wickham Daw who arrived in South Australia on the Baque “Winchester” (383 tons) on 23rd September 1838 with his wife Ellen Oriana and their family. Daw had land orders worth £1,000 bought by his father at the first South Australian land sale in London. With these he selected 1,000 acres (405 hectares) of land south of Adelaide at what became the district of St Marys. He established his home on Section No 41 in District B on the south east corner of the intersection of the Great South Road and Daws Road. He named the property “Portabella Farm.” One of the first developments on the farm was a rabbit warren!

John W Daw had in mind the creation of the village of St Marys and was quick to support the local efforts to establish a church, rectory and school in the sparsely settled district and donated land for this purpose. After the first generation of the Daw family moved away from home, JW Daw (senior) subdivided the South Road frontage of his property as 'St Mary's Village' and built a smaller house on the corner of Daws Road and South Road. The large homestead and several hundred remaining acres was sold to Benjamin H. Babbage who established a vineyard making his own wine and a 'rosary' collecting cuttings from a wide circle of friends. In 1860 JW Daw moved to Kangaroo Island where he was appointed the first chairman of the Kingscote District Council. Benjamin H. Babbage became a leader in the local church and featured prominently in many aspects of the development of the new British Province of South Australia.

It was customary for settlers arriving in Adelaide to settle together under their different religious groups they were anxious to maintain; St Mary's is such an example of an Anglican cluster.

Register, 11th February 1928, newspaper clippings

Book. SLSA

Benjamin Herschel Babbage was the son of Charles Babbage, the inventor of the mechanical calculating machine, the forerunner of the computer, had already had a significant career as a railway engineer in Europe before he came to South Australia in 1851 as Gold Assayer. He bought the property of JW Daw at St Marys and in 1857 led an expedition to the north of South Australia where he named St Marys Peak – the highest in the Flinders Ranges.

He was the Engineer of the Port Railway, the first line constructed in South Australia (opened 1856) and the first government owned railway in the British Empire.

BH Babbage was one of the five original members appointed by proclamation of 10th May 1853 to form the first District Council in colonial South Australia, that of Mitcham. He was its first Chairman serving until 1855.

Construction of Temporary Church

The original St Mary's church was built of readily available materials, slabs of stringy bark for the main structure with shingles for the roof. It was built on the Daw gifted land at a cost of 70 pounds subscribed by the little congregation that had gathered together for services on Dr Duncan's property on the River Sturt. The Rev CB Howard opened the new but simple edifice on 4th July 1841. It was estimated to accommodate 100 people. A Sunday school opened with 27 children and a day school was established under an 'efficient master'. A regular clergyman attended once a fortnight with laymen taking services morning and afternoon on the intervening Sundays. Alas within 5 years the temporary building was showing signs of serious dilapidation.

Building Falls into Disrepair

The South Australian Almanac did not hesitate to record its views on the condition of the church building at St Mary's when it stated "...there is also a tumble down sort of erection, a veritable disgrace to protestants of any denomination, at Marionville, on the South Road which is dignified with the name St Mary's Church. Whether it will hold together long enough to be noticed in the Almanac for 1847 is questionable." The following year's edition was pleased to note a new structure was in the course of erection at St-Mary's-on-the-Sturt.

John Stephen's South Australian Almanac for 1846.

New Church Building

The local settlers in the Sturt River District once again took the initiative and built a permanent structure which still stands today. On 27th October 1846, Miss Fanny Conway laid the foundation stone (the whereabouts now unknown) for a new stone church (on the present site), and the Rev. James Farrell read the appropriate service of the Church of England to a large gathering. It was opened for worship on 12th September 1847. As with the earlier building it had become a reality through generous gifts of land, stone, timber, cartage, labour and funds by those new arrivals who were themselves struggling to establish viable enterprises in the new Province of South Australia.

The architect for the church was Moses Garlick who was also a fellow passenger on the *Katherine Stewart Forbes* with Dr Duncan and his wife. Another fellow emigrant Alfred Weaver selected Section No 56 on the 'Great South Road' in District B and named the property 'Woodlands' after the family estate in England. He too became a member of the growing congregation.

St Mary's-on-the-Sturt was among the first places of worship to be erected in South Australia. Today it is the second oldest Anglican Church building in the State. The earliest church to have survived is St James's at Blakiston in the Adelaide Hills. It opened on 28th April 1847, a few months before St Mary's. At the time there had been heavy rains at St Mary's forcing the postponement of the opening. As a consequence, it missed the opportunity to have the distinction of becoming the oldest church building to survive in South Australia.

Edwards, R. (1954-55) 'St Mary's-on-the-Sturt'. *Proceedings RGSSA*, 56 pp. 35-46.

Developments on River Sturt

The story of the development of Section No 115 is similar to those of other rich agricultural lands along the picturesque red gum lined River Sturt. These were among the first sections to be selected as the settlement of South Australia under the Wakefield System of Colonisation began to materialise. From virgin land in the good care of the Kurna Aboriginal people since their arrival on the Australian continent it underwent radical transformation to become productive grazing lands, farms, orchards, vineyards, and market gardens. Ultimately the whole region merged with the ever-expanding suburban sprawl of Adelaide.

Farming by Trial and Error

By 1841 many experiments were taking place in raising crops in the new environment where the climate and soils were all but unknown. Those on 'Eldon' were well advanced. Commenting on these trials the official record states "...3 acres (1.2 hectares) of wheat sown in January, a very fine crop: 19 acres (8 hectares), sown in May and June, a very good crop with a little smut. Barley sown in May and June, English seed, a very fair crop, about 20 bushels per acre. Oats, sown in May, an

indifferent crop. Maize planted in August, looking uncommonly well. Potatoes, planted in August, good, but of small size. Lucerne, half an acre, yielded a very good crop.”

Papers Relative to South Australia. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty. Her Majesty's Stationary Office. 1843.

Motivation to Settle in South Australia

Dr Eldon Handasyde Duncan was born in Glasgow, Scotland on 13th November 1811. He received his medical degree in 1831 before reaching the age of 21. After a few years in practice and suffering early signs of deteriorating health he decided to abandon his profession and seek the warmer and more congenial climate of South Australia. Prior to departure the young doctor purchased a land order for an 80 acre (32 hectare) section to be exercised on arrival in distant Adelaide. Within a short time of reaching his destination he selected his section on the River Sturt and began facing up to the challenges of a new life as a novice farmer in a virgin land that had remained untilled since the beginning of time. In addition to the two portable houses, Dr Duncan came fully prepared with ample farming equipment, tools and all the necessities to establish a mixed farm. He also had taken advantage of the provisions of the Immigration Regulations whereby servants and labourers could be selected for free passage at the rate of one person for every 20 pounds expended on the purchase of land.

Pioneer Family Leaves the District

As there was a shortage of medical practitioners in the young colony Dr Duncan was called upon often to attend to the medical needs of his neighbours. The realisation that farming was a hard and somewhat unrewarding occupation led him to abandon his farm on the Sturt and return to his former profession. In 1845 he became a member of the Medical Board of South Australia and in 1849 he was appointed Immigration Agent at Port Adelaide. Later in the same year he began a distinguished career as Health Officer to the Colony.

Dr Duncan continued to play an active role in the establishment of the Anglican Church in South Australia. When he moved to Port Adelaide in 1849 he joined the congregation at St Paul's Church and participated in the construction of a new building to replace the original wooden structure erected on piles. He held many lay positions in the church including a Governor of St Peter's College. Dr Duncan was an exemplary pioneer who made significant contributions to the founding of South Australia and the early settlement of the Marion District.

Loyau, George, E. (1885). *Notable South Australians*. Adelaide: G.E. Loyau.

Remains of Original Homestead

In the 1940s remnants of crockery, several early English coins and one of the two 25 feet deep brick-lined wells dug by Dr Duncan to provide water for 'Eldon' was still to be seen on what was known as Block No 6 adjoining the western boundary of 'Zante Grove'. This 10 acres (4 hectares) of land was purchased by W Pethick & Sons in May 1902 at the same time as Grandfather acquired the adjoining block. He remembered having used the well on the Pethick property when first developing his own land. There were still remnants of the pisé buildings constructed by Dr Duncan in 1839. The remaining two blocks were acquired by Richard Hamilton to further extend his vineyards.

Aboriginal Occupation of the Land

Dr Duncan has left us some brief comments on the local Aboriginals as 'friendly creatures'. One of his favourites was a woman called 'Old Mary' who had a great fondness for the young family who had arrived unannounced on the lands of the Kurna people. Duncan's daughter recalled her father's gallant defence of Old Mary when she was being struck on the head with a waddy as her partner enforced some form of traditional discipline. The area around the Duncan farm was known as *Billyarunga*.

Dr Duncan was one of the first settlers to find Aboriginal burials near the River Sturt. In one instance he refers in his diary to a mound on the property that produced vigorous crops of vegetables. After it had been ploughed several times he identified it as a burial ground. Tragically,

further burials were disturbed as the land along the River Sturt was selected for settlement. In later years I located a significant Aboriginal camping site and collected many ancient stone tools when leasing part of the 'Orange Grove' property at Sturt owned by an unrelated pioneer Duncan family.

James Duncan Snr had prospered after taking up land in the district in the 1860's. In March 1879 he extended his holdings with the acquisition of 59 acres (24 hectares) of Section No 79 on the north-east corner of Marion and Sturt Roads. It was here Duncan Snr developed 'Orange Grove'. It was portion of this property that was eventually managed by Jim Duncan Jnr until it was sold by the family to the South Australian Housing Trust in 1955. At the time of the sale Jim Duncan Jnr purchased an area surrounding the historic homestead and continued to cultivate it until his death in 1977.

Dolling, Alison (1981). *The History of Marion on the Sturt: The Story of a Changing Landscape and its People*. Frewville, South Australia: Peacock Publications.

Original Land Selection

Section No 79 and adjoining Section No 78 were part of the original selection of land made by the South Australian Company. The initiative behind this enterprise came from George Fife Angas who played an important role in developing the plan for a British Colony centred on the eastern side of Gulf St. Vincent first discovered by Matthew Flinders during his epic voyage of discovery along the Southern Coast.

Largest Land Holder

The Company was the largest purchaser of Preliminary Land Orders in London for property in the proposed new Province of South Australia. It was its substantial overall commitment to the project that provided the funds needed to satisfy the substantial guarantees required by the British Government before permitting the colonisation plans to be implemented.

Aboriginal Access Along River Sturt

As the River Sturt emerges from the Mt Lofty Ranges it originally wound its way through the Sturt and Marion districts gathering more water as it meandered on across the Adelaide plains to Morphettville ultimately discharging its waters into the sea at Patawolong (Aboriginal word for 'boggy and bushy stretch with fish'). One of the pronounced features of the River Sturt known as 'Devil's Elbow' was on 'Orange Grove'. Here the course took several sharp bends causing flooding of the lower fertile flats during heavy rains. Today the River is a soulless concrete drain.

The springs prevalent in pre-settlement times made parts of the River semi-permanent except in very dry years when the summer heat reduced it to a series of water-holes fed by fresh water springs. At this time Aboriginals were still frequenting their lands along the River including 'Orange Grove'. Observations of their presence were passed down through the Duncan family and other early settlers although few of these oral accounts were recorded.

Among the recollections of encounters with the Kurna people are descriptions of groups passing along the River to the City where they collected Government rations and blankets and then returned to their camp sites in the upper reaches. As mentioned earlier the interaction between Aboriginals and the first settlers was recorded in some detail by Dr Handasyde Duncan (no relation to the Sturt Duncan's) who had made his home further downstream on Section No 115 where Grandfather Edwards established 'Zante Grove'.

Evidence of Traditional Life on the Sturt

As the virgin grazing lands along the River were turned over to farming and more intensive agriculture numerous burial grounds were inadvertently disturbed. Jim Duncan recalls finding a number of burials on 'Orange Grove' when the land use in a particular part of the property changed from grazing to agriculture in 1925. Descendants of other families along the River had similar experiences.

The River Sturt with its abundance of food supplies provided traditional seasonal camping places for the Kurna people and was used by them as an access route leading from the Adelaide plains up into the hills.

By the time I took up the lease on 'Orange Grove' I was already well acquainted with many aspects of Aboriginal traditional life. In the course of cultivating a vineyard located on higher ground near the River I chanced upon a number of large tools made from pieces of Quartzite. These had been given the type name 'Kartan' by Harold M. Cooper an Honorary at the South Australian Museum specialising in stone tools. He was one of my mentors who generously passed on his lifetime of experience in this field. We worked closely together as colleagues on my later appointment to the position of Curator of Anthropology at the South Australian Museum in 1965. Mr Cooper also spent many years researching the life and explorations of Captain Matthew Flinders who played such a key role in South Australian history. He became an authority on the great navigator and published his research privately.

Stone Tools Uncovered

This camping site was scoured over and over again for several years as annual cultivation of the soil brought more tools to the surface. A total of 76 examples of typical large chopping tools were found together with 82 'struck flakes' discarded from the manufacturing process. Pieces of finely trimmed glass provided evidence of the continued occupation of the site during the period of early European settlement.

Sadly, this once picturesque area was largely destroyed with the re-alignment of the River to form a concrete lined drain and the construction of a nearby housing estate. The collection is preserved in the South Australian Museum. The site and its finds are described in the Journal *Mankind* (Vol. 6, No. 4. 1964).

Aboriginal Camping Site at Coromandel Valley

Further evidence of the traditional use of the River Sturt by the Kaurna people as a seasonal route from the sea coast at Patawolonga to the Adelaide Hills and beyond was found in 1962 upstream from the Sturt District on a ridge near the junction of the Sturt River and Chambers Creek. This camping site overlooks the River at Coromandel Valley on the orchard property then owned by the

late Ken Archibald. His grandfather Mr J. Turner settled on this land in 1848. He remembered Aboriginals camping along the banks of the Sturt which runs through this large property.

Visits to the site over a period of three years yielded a total of 127 stone tools and 83 discarded flakes. Pieces of slate likely to be part of reinform skin scrapers used to prepare skins for clothing were found also together with fragments of red ochre and three crystals most probably used in rituals as was the custom of many groups. This collection also has been described, published and is lodged in the South Australian Museum.

Edwards, Robert. (1966) 'Aboriginal Camp-site on The River Sturt at Coromandel Valley, South Australia'. *Records of the South Australian Museum*, 115 (2).

Reminders of Original Settlers

The Warriparinga Wetlands and Living Kurna Cultural Centre were created at Bedford Park to ensure the traditions of the people who nurtured the land for so long are available to future generations. It is also closely connected with the Tjilbruke Dreaming Trail that follows the path of an important Creator Ancestor along the Southern Coast of South Australia.

Edwards, R. (1971) 'The Kurna People of the Adelaide Plains'. *Education Gazette*, (September), pp 1-3

Edwards, R. (1971) 'The Hero Tjilbruke'. *Origin*, 4(6), p 13

Arrival of Edwards Family

The discharging of the waters of the River Sturt at Patawolong (initially named the Thames by Col. Light) leads to the story of the arrival of the Edwards family in South Australia as it was at an area known as the Reed Beds that James and Sarah Elizabeth Edwards decided to settle in 1850 with their two-year-old son.

The Family Home

Once completed in August 1909 the 'Zante Grove' homestead became the permanent home of my grandparents where they brought up their family of one boy, my father Friend Henry Edwards Jnr (born 30th August 1905) and five beautiful daughters – Edna (born 2nd April 1907), Dora (16th June 1908), Rita (19th July 1909), Olive (3rd August 1913) and Fay (1st January 1921). Grandmother Edwards née Bertha Eliza Heading was one of nine sisters. She inherited the fine qualities of gentleness, kindness and patience from the heading side of the family and in turn passed these traits on to many of her descendants.

The Family Homestead

Grandmother made her own butter, cheese and jam and dried and preserved every imaginable variety of fruit as each came into season. Before the days of ice chests, and later, refrigeration, these were kept in quite spacious underground cellars along with other produce and special family possessions. The cellar in 'Zante Grove' was accessed through the kitchen in the homestead. It was a treat as a youngster to be taken down into this dark underground store room. The experience was made more dramatic as for some unknown reason the light switch was at the bottom of the stairs. I recall descending the steps into the darkness with a degree of trepidation. Once the light went on a rich array of preserves and other childhood delights were revealed in all their splendour.

Almond Blossom District

Marion was much famed for its colourful almond blossom. The trees were planted on most property boundaries to protect the vineyards, orchards and market gardens from the ravages of strong winds. At the height of the season in July and August the district was inundated with visitors anxious to view the blaze of colour that spread throughout the area. 'Zante Grove' was the first property to be encountered when coming south from the city along Marion Road. People arrived on foot, by car and in buses including groups from interstate organised by the South Australian Government Tourist Bureau. Many visitors simply wanted to walk among the trees and have their photographs taken with the dense array of blossoms in the background.

Almond blossom season as a seasonal attraction began to develop in the 1890's and by the 1930's had reached a peak as by then most orchards had matured. By 1955 the bulldozers had moved in and progressively uprooted many of the vineyards and orchards to make way for houses. Willunga then assumed the role of the almond blossom centre of the state, and later was complemented by almond groves planted in the Murray Valley.

One of our fellow orchardists Mr Harold Parsons well known as the Secretary of the Annual Spring Show organised by the Sturt, Marion and Darlington Horticultural and Floricultural Society was an enthusiastic amateur movie photographer. This was a novelty at that time and everyone became intrigued by the movies as the age of picture theatres gathered pace. Harold made a specialty of recording the almond blossom and regularly captured the beauty of this annual feast of colour. My sister and I were called on often to feature as 'props' when he visited us to record the colourful displays on 'Zante Grove'. Many were the evenings when we gathered with neighbours to delight in Harold Parson's latest films especially those in which we had 'starred'.

Ormond, Bernice M. and Ormond, Colin W. *Blossoms and Memories*, an historical review of Marion and Sturt Methodist/Uniting Churches. Printed Privately. 1986

When Robert Edwards married Catherine Allison Raeburn Alexander in St Mary's-on-the-Sturt on 12th July 1952 two years after the sale of 'Zante Grove' the church was full of glorious almond blossom arranged for the occasion by my beloved 'Auntie' Marjorie Duncan. (Note the terms of 'Uncle' and 'Auntie' were often used by close friends).

Oaklands Road Home

The iceman came to our house on Oaklands Road twice a week, the milkman every morning to fill the billy-can hanging on a veranda post out of reach of the cats and the green grocer made weekly visits in a large covered van. The bread came by horse and cart and the newspaper was thrown over the front fence each day. A man selling fresh fish from a basket mounted on front of his push-bike was an occasional but welcome caller as he provided relief from the mutton that was our

usual fare. Another little man appeared now and again on his bicycle and sharpened our knives and scissors for a small charge.

War Time Memories

A man suffering serious shell shock from the First World War often passed by our house on Oaklands Road. This disturbed me and gave rise to feelings of curiosity, sympathy, and concern as he was always muttering to himself and had the appearance of being unstable. After several years he ceased to appear.

Long Hot Summers

The Adelaide summers were usually long, dry and often stifling with huge dust storms sweeping down on the City driven by fierce hot north winds. The atmosphere would be full of dust sometimes blocking out the sun. We made valiant efforts to keep it out of the house by sealing the doors, windows and every crack and crevice. Our efforts were to little avail as the fine particles seeped in and settled over everything. On the worst days we were not allowed to venture outside into the maelstrom.

Respite at the Beach

Relief came to Adelaide in the summer heat waves either from strong gully winds sweeping down from the Adelaide Hills, a sea breeze or a thunderstorm. When the temperature became extreme, my father would take us down to Somerton Beach for a refreshing swim in the sea. The summer days were long, and we could leave after he finished work in the orchard. It was a direct drive to the beach along Oaklands Road across Morphet, Diagonal and Brighton Roads and on to the sea.

The beach was an irresistible attraction throughout the summer months and we met often with relations, the Knill Family, and school friends to spend long days at the seaside. Largs Bay was popular as my father's eldest sister Edna Knill and her family lived there and always made us welcome. Another sister Olive Gregory lived for a number of years at Brighton where we also enjoyed family outings.

On special occasions we drove south along the coast to Moana where the surfing was good, and the car could run along on the hard, sandy shore. I began riding the waves on an old inflated motor tube but soon graduated to my own wooden surf board made especially for me by Grandfather Cordon.

The summer evenings were a treat as we cooled off in the smooth, shimmering waters of St Vincent's Gulf and then watched the glow of the brilliant red sun as it set slowly on the horizon. Porpoises frequented the Gulf and we were always on the lookout to watch them jumping gracefully up in the air and down in to the water again in a steady rhythm. 'Spot the porpoises' became a regular feature of our visits to the beach.

Frequent Bush Fires

Alas the summers also brought much dreaded bush fires. As youngsters we would be shocked at the plumes of smoke and flames rising from the hills especially at night when they appeared to be on fire. The ash would float down from the sky. The devastation wrought by these fires was terrible. Father would drive us through the burnt-out areas to see at first hand the ruins of once lovely homes and the vast areas of forest and orchards that had been reduced to blackened skeletons by the raging flames.

Extensive Destruction

One of the most memorable years was 1939. Drought had set in during September and by early January the paddocks and forests were tinder dry. The temperature soared and remained high continuously for a run of 10 days. The heat went on day and night. On one day it reached 46.1°C establishing a record that continued for many years.

This heat wave culminated in huge bushfires in the Adelaide Hills. They burnt on wide fronts for several days. Much of the remaining native forest in the Mount Lofty Ranges was lost together with 90 houses, orchards and farm lands with their fences, haystacks and stock. The situation was eased when a cool change with thunderstorms came on the night of 14th January. Fortunately, there was no loss of life as the hills were only sparsely occupied at that time.

I well recall another outburst of terrible fires that swept through the Adelaide Hills on Sunday 2nd January 1955 leaving a path of utter destruction. We drove up to see the damage and were confronted with the shocking sight of fire scarred hills, burnt out homes and orchards: blackened gum trees and dead animals along with incinerated cars, trucks and agricultural machinery. Marble Hill the grand Vice-regal summer residence at Norton Summit was reduced to a partly burnt out shell. Everyone marvelled at the lucky escape of the Governor and Sir Robert George and his wife, Lady George who were in the building at the time the fire swept through the surrounding hills.

Emergence of Motor Transport

In those far off days there were few motor vehicles on the roads and little sign of peak hour traffic. The occasional steam roller captured our attention and we would follow along as it trudged down the road puffing steam as it went about its business of assisting the local Marion Council workers to patch holes in the road.

In the early 1930s Father had a powerful stylish Ford V8 tourer while on the property there was a Ford Model T tray top truck, a larger BB Ford truck with a Model A engine and a Fordson tractor later replaced by an International W-12.

In 1946 we had one aged draft horse named 'Dolly' was used to plough between the rows of vines, cutting out the grass and turning it into soil, pull a flat top trolley around the orchard carrying boxes for the harvest and at other times fertiliser. After the vines and trees had been pruned in the winter Dolly would be used to pull a mobile 'burner' made from heavy iron sheets riveted together and mounted on an iron frame with two large wheels. This was used to burn the cuttings. It left a trail of ash which helped fertilise the soil.

Working between the vines with a single furrow plough, cutting out the grass and turning it into the soil. It was a very difficult and demanding operation, especially as 'Dolly' worked at only two speeds, very fast and stop! She also had a special eye for succulent thistles and would make for

some tempting morsel regardless of where it was located. It was always a pleasure to be back on the tractor – the new tractor – the new tractor was a great advance on the lumbering old Fordson. It started on petrol and once warmed up had to be changed over to kerosene. I spent many long days ploughing with this latest model, which now would be an interesting antique.

Horse Era Draws to Close

I was fortunate to have experienced the end of the horse era and the rise of the internal combustion engine which has so shaped our world. Learning to drive without having to venture on public roads came as a bonus at an early age. My father encouraged me to drive and assist on the property. I was soon loading the T Ford with empty boxes and placing them at the head of each row of vines ready for the harvest. When special orders came in from the market for fresh fruit, the truck was loaded up with empty half cases and driven out into the orchard and where the order was prepared for delivery. The only fear was in starting the engine as it had to be cranked by hand. Sometimes it back-fired and could easily break an arm if you were not alert to the danger. I managed to escape with some severe bruising from time to time. Finally, I graduated to the large truck as soon as my feet could reach the foot pedals.

To my surprise I found a record of my early knowledge of driving in the form of a composition 'Driving a Motor Car' written when a student of 14 years at Thebarton Boys Technical School.

"This is the manner in which an 8-cylinder, V-type Ford is driven. Naturally the first thing when driving a car is to start the engine. This is done by unlocking the coincidental lock on the steering column bracket after which the ignition switch lever is turned on. The gear lever should be in its neutral position that is the position when it can be moved from side to side freely. After pulling the choke button out you press the self-starter button making sure to remove your foot as soon as the engine has started. Push the choke button in as far as possible without disturbing the sound of the engine.

"Now having got the engine running smoothly release the hand brake lever. Disengage the clutch by pushing down the clutch pedal. Move the gear lever to low speed position or bottom left.

Gradually release pressure on the clutch pedal allowing it to return to a normal position. At the same time depress the accelerator increasing the engine speed.

“The car has now commenced moving. When the car has reached sufficient speed remove your foot from the accelerator, disengage the clutch and move the gear shift lever to second speed position. Again, engage the clutch. Depress the accelerator pedal increasing the speed of the engine, and the car, to the speed desired.

“We are now gliding smoothly along the road when suddenly we require to stop. In this case we remove our foot from the accelerator, disengage the clutch pedal and depress the brake pedal.

“If required to go backwards the car must first be stopped. With the foot off of the accelerator and the clutch disengaged, move the gear lever to the reverse position. Engage the clutch and depress the accelerator pedal as required. To stop the car while in reverse remove the foot from the accelerator and depress the clutch and brake pedals as required.

“To shift from high to second gear at any speed disengage the clutch and making no hesitation at neutral change the gear from high to second. The clutch is then once more engaged.

“The above is a description of how to drive a car, though it may seem complicated in parts it is really quite simple.”

My English teacher must have been impressed with this effort as he awarded the essay full marks.

The keys often remained in the car ignition when it was parked in the street and the house was often left unlocked when we went out. I was fortunate to grow up in a much more stable social environment than exists today.

Grasping the Motor Revolution

As a teenager working on the land my father took a keen interest in the emergence of the new era of motor transport. He became a great enthusiast as he grew up alongside the remarkable technological developments taking place around him. This led to a passion to be part of the 'new age'. His first acquisition was a Lewis motorcycle purchased in the early 1920s from Vivian Lewis who had established a bicycle importing and manufacturing business in Adelaide in 1893. It became well known and soon extended into regional South Australia. Lewis built the first motorcycle in the state in 1899 and the first motor car in 1900. By 1907 the company was prospering under the name 'Lewis Cycle and Motor Works' with its head office, bicycle showroom and factory in Gawler Place. Motorcycle production continued into the mid-1920s.

Father later graduated to a much larger and more powerful motorcycle known as the 'Indian'. This was produced from 1901 at the 'Wigwam' factory at Springfield Massachusetts in the United States. The 'Indian' was introduced to the world in 1907 as America's first and most advanced motorcycle of its type. Sales soared and it soon became the world's best-selling motorcycle capturing a 40-plus percent of the market by 1916. In addition to building street bikes to the highest standards attainable at the time the Indian Motorcycle Company produced record breaking models engineered with many advanced features. The 'Indian' is still in production, a testimony to its high quality and popularity.

Upgrade to Sports Car

It was the age of the Roaring 20s with a prosperous economy and every confidence in the future. In keeping with the times, and dating my mother Eileen Cordon, the daughter of a successful builder in Prospect, it was time for Father to launch out and acquire his first car. He chose the Amilcar. A famous French sports racer manufactured from 1921 to 1939. It proved to be the most successful small sports car of its era and renowned as a racing car. There is a photograph in the family of Mother sitting in this very smart two seater, capable of a remarkable 75 mph. It had no doors, pointed-tail body work and a 'racing' radiator.

At about the same age I purchased the first MGTD with disc wheels and coil springs to come to Australia. It took my entire life savings of 99 pounds but was a beautiful car – bright scarlet and in the right conditions could travel at 120 mph.

Home Maintenance

My father became highly experienced in diagnosing problems with motor vehicles of all makes and models. He maintained our little fleet in superb working order as many of the routine and time-consuming tasks on the orchard were dependant on one or other of the vehicles. Matters were complicated by the vagaries of the weather. Ploughing and harvesting were closely related to favourable conditions. The soil could only be turned over with the plough when it contained the right amount of moisture being neither too much nor too little. The trucks could become bogged if the weather turned wet during the harvest. Any delays meant the grapes may rot on the vines. Access to the city market for fresh fruit was also dependent on the truck being available and so the cycle went on.

It was not unusual to have one or other of the vehicles standing over the special servicing pit dug into the floor of the main shed and lined with bricks then finished with a heavy wooden cover. When more serious problems arose, the faulty engine would be hauled out with a block and tackle, taken to pieces and the worn parts replaced, be they gaskets, bearings, rings, pistons or oil pumps.

Of course, I became interested in all these tasks and was anxious to add to my knowledge. It soon became my responsibility to change the oil regularly in all the vehicles and grease them with a special hand gun. I became my father's busy little helper and at times must have driven him to fits of despair.

With local mechanics few and far between and expensive, Father was often called on by the neighbours when they were having mechanical trouble. He always rose to the occasion and never failed to identify problems and rectify them.

Of course, motor vehicles were far simpler in those days with many less parts to fail. However, they were also less reliable and prone to such difficulties as flat batteries, boiling radiators going up steep hills, broken fan belts, overheating, faulty distributors and spark plugs, malfunctioning fuel pumps and burning engine oil not to mention lots of punctures. Replacement vehicles were costly, and money was always tight making regular maintenance a high priority.

Grandfather Talks of Change

The generational change that took place between my father and his father was described by Grandfather in a talk given to the Marion Branch of the South Australian Fruit Growers and Market Gardens Association (he was the first President of the local Marion branch when it was formed in 1919). His address on 19 June 1947 was published in the Association Journal under the title *Time Marches On*.

Grandfather commented: "Perhaps the first and greatest change noticed would be the change over from horse power days to mechanical days. In the old days horses were used entirely for cultivation of gardens and marketing, everything was done with horses, there were no tractors, rota tillers, and the like, no motor trucks or cars, every boy in those days was a horseman, and could ride, drive and control horses before his school days were over, whereas probably if some of you were asked to harness up a pair of horses today you would not know how to go about it. We old chaps, myself included, can drive a motor car so long as it goes, but if it stops we have to wait for a school boy to come along and start it for us. Boys today are mechanically minded just as boys years ago were horse minded."

Marion District Develops

Marion continued to develop and transform itself from agriculture to horticulture. It expanded to become a centre of lush orchards, vineyards, market gardens and almond groves. Adelaide had fresh fruit and vegetable markets from the earliest years of settlement. Ultimately the Central Market and East End Wholesale Market became the main centres of trade for growers in the suburbs and outlying areas. The East End Market centralised the wholesale business when it was born in 1866.

In the main the Adelaide Plains produced the winter fruit and vegetable crops while growers in the Hills assumed this role during the severe dry heat of the South Australian summers. These finely balanced seasonal fluctuations ensured a continual supply of fresh fruit and vegetables for the people of Adelaide from the earliest days of settlement. There were also ready markets for fruit and vegetables in the Eastern States.

Wine Production

Marion was renowned for its luscious grapes of many varieties both for the table and wine making. The first local vineyards date back to 1837 and were established by Richard Hamilton on his property Ewell Vineyards located on both sides of Morphet Road on the outskirts of Glenelg. It was named after his home village of that name in Surrey, England, where he was born in 1792. It grew into a substantial family business.

The Grape Harvest

Grapes grown on 'Zante Grove' exclusively for wine production included Shiraz, Grenache and Doradillo. These were purchased on a regular basis by Hamilton's Winery. It was one of my tasks when working on the property from the age of 15 to deliver grapes to the local wineries on our Ford BB truck. An open moveable steel container with high sides was fitted on the tray to hold the load in place and collect any juice produced during transport. Detachable wooden side boards were fitted to increase the holding capacity. The grapes were harvested into wooden boxes in the vineyard and then emptied into the steel tray. On delivery they were unloaded at the winery with a large pronged fork and thrown into a crusher. The Ford carried about 5 tons of grapes in each load.

Expansion of Local Vineyards

As the demand for grapes was variable and often poor sales were made to a number of other wineries to avoid having to waste any of the crop on which we depended for our livelihood. Among these was Walter Reynell and Sons Limited at Reynella. This property was established by John Reynell who came to South Australia convinced the Wakefield System of colonisation

deserved support and would lead to prosperity. On the spur of the moment while walking along The Strand in London he purchased several land orders for 80 acre (32 hectare) sections of land when he read a sales notice advertising for men and women to build the newly created Province of South Australia.

John Reynell arrived at Port Adelaide on 16th October 1838 and moved to his country property 'Reynella Farm' on 29th July 1840. Here he began the development of what was to become a magnificent holding of 450 acres (182 hectares) with 350 acres (12 hectares) planted in vines and having its own winery. The first huge wine cellar was built on the property in 1845.

The youngest granddaughter of John Reynell, Emily Lucy, served in the UK during the First World War as a nursing aid at St Dunstan's Hospital. In 1916 she met and married Reverend J Ward Walters of Ilfracombe and Tavistock in North Devon. After the war Rev Walters came to Australia with his wife and their 3 children. He was appointed later to the incumbency of St Mary's-on-the-Sturt and Christ Church at Reynella. I was closely associated with him. We met several times at the historic family home. I was always taken by this tastefully furnished comfortable colonial residence. I remember being very intrigued with a large and very impressive antique grandfather clock with a sailing ship mounted in the large dial simulating a vessel sailing on the sea. It had been presented to one of the Reynell forebears who was said to have been a privateer. Apparently, the clock marked a significant victory in which he had taken part and gained a substantial share of the prize money.

We also sold grapes to the Emu Wine Company at Morphett Vale, Penfolds Wines Pty Ltd at Magill and the Auldana Company.

Founding the Wine Industry

It is interesting to note that one of our Edwards forebears Abraham Hopkins Davis made the first large commercial planting of vines in South Australia. He obtained cuttings from the well-known James Busby Collection of no less than 570 different varieties of grapes obtained in France and Spain. He established his vineyard on 'Moore Farm' at the Reed Beds.

The 'Moore Farm' Vineyards and Orchard

Ebenezer Ward visited AH Davis and interviewed him in preparation for his book *Vineyards and Orchards of SA* published in 1861. This includes the following description of the Davis property which brings to life the home of our forebears and the development of horticultural practices at the time.

"There is very little in the immediate vicinity of the road from Adelaide to the Reedbeds to awaken the admiration of a lover of the picturesque. Post and rail fences enclosing grazing and cultivated paddocks, with a few scattered houses of every imaginable material, from stone to mud, comprise almost all that is to be seen for the first few miles. "Lockleys," the estate and the residence of Mr C B Fisher, situated on the right of the road, about 4 miles (6.4km) from Adelaide, presents the first and most welcome relief to the sameness of the plains. Here the majestic-looking trees, both English and Colonial, the tastefully laid out shrubbery, the well-bred stock de-pasturing on the extensive paddocks, and the long range of substantial and roomy stabling, where repose some of the noblest scions of the best blood of the Knowsley and other equally famed studs – all these recall memories of old English sportsmen's homes, and justify the anticipation that the yeomanry of Australia will be entitled to rank with the proudest of those who derive wealth and enjoyment from the broad lands of the old country.

"Beyond Mr Fisher's estate the country has in places a more English appearance – green hedge-rows and rustic cottages enlivening the scene. Near to Mr Davis' the scenery is very pretty, and a beautiful view of the hills is obtainable, whilst the immediate neighbourhood of Moore Farm is much improved by two picturesque bridges over the Torrens, built by private subscription, supplemented by a grant from the Government. These bridges cost about £600 and lead, one to the beach and the other to the Port. Mr Davis' residence is on the left of the road, and on the right is the oldest portion of his house. The fact that the major extent of Mr Davis' vineyard and the orchard has been planted upwards of 20 years, invests it with more than ordinary interest, because it affords evidence of the value the gardens of the colony may attain in their maturity. There is, however less to write about than in places where cultivation and production are still

experiments, because here everything is so matured, and of such even excellence, that one descriptive remark will almost suffice for all. During a recent ramble through the grounds we noted the most prominent objects of interest, but the fact that our opportunities for observation were somewhat curtailed by the burning sun and stinging mosquitoes, must be our apology if some matters of detail escaped our pen.

“The older portion of the vineyard is bounded on the west and south by a stately row of towering aloes; and the north side of the orchard adjoining this vineyard abuts on the River Torrens. Commencing our stroll by the banks of the river the first object which arrested our attention was a magnificent elder tree. Beyond this avenue of Bigareau, Black-heart, and White-heart cherries densely hung with fruit, speak volumes for the richness of the soil. Adjacent to them are a number of fig trees, including the Turkey fig, as well as the common species. Other fruit trees, such as the peach, apricot, plums of various kinds, damson and greengage, are here in large numbers, all in perfect health and presenting indications of prolific yields. To the east of the vineyard there are two extensive plantations of pears, apple, and quince trees, and soft-shell almonds. There are also some splendid mulberry trees, which came into full bearing at the unusually early age of six years. At this portion of the orchard, Mr Davis has had resource to a valuable artificial aid which will in time add largely to the bearing capabilities of the trees. A well has been sunk close to the river 35 feet (11 metres) deep, and in this there is a 20 feet (6 metres) depth of water. A double action pump has been erected, and this worked by one horse will raise 2,000 gallons (7,570 litres) of water per hour. Communicating with the pump, galvanised iron pipes have been laid along the surface of the orchard and the trees and shrubs are irrigated at leisure by means of a hose and hand pipes. This irrigation was not commenced until August 1861, but the beneficial effect of the moisture thus supplied is already apparent on many of the trees. Mr Davis states that in former years in the wet seasons his garden was almost continually flooded several times in the year and it was necessary to devise a means for carrying off the surplus water. But now, owing to the increased area of ploughed land on the hills, even with the same amount of rainfall the floods do not occur. The water which formerly poured down the hillsides and overflowed the banks of the Torrens is absorbed in the higher lying ploughed lands almost as fast as it falls. Nor is this all, the cloud water is also attracted by the ploughed land on the hills, and by comparatively little of this

beneficial atmospheric influence is experienced on the plains near the Reedbeds. There is little doubt that newly turned soil does attract moisture, and it is probably owing to this circumstance that the climate of Australia generally has within the last few years become much more moist than it was wont to be. At the north-eastern extremity of the orchard we were shown the spot where about fourteen years ago, during a more than ordinarily heavy flood, the Torrens burst its banks and forced a new channel for its waters from this point to the Bay. We must not omit to mention one characteristic of Mr Davis' gardening, although we by no means think it as special, and are not sure it is an unwise one. It is that he allows weeds to grow without let or hindrance, for the simple, and, if it can be substantiated, sufficient reason that he considers the cost of removing them exceeds the value of the benefit attained thereby. The principle is, making it an orchard and not a garden. Whether the proposition is good or bad will bear argument. There can be no doubt that with the present price of labour hand-weeding is a too expensive process, and we are not sure whether, where only large trees are growing, the absorption of the goodness of the soil by a heavy crop of weeds is not counterbalanced by the valuable shade their foliage affords. Besides the trees we have already mentioned, we observed in the orchard a cork elm, thriving well, and a date palm (*Phoenix Sylvestris*), which had borne fruit two or three times, although, as this is a female tree, and stands solitary, the fruit is not perfect: the tree is now coming into bloom.

"We come now to the vineyard. The whole extent of the vineyard and orchard is about 25 acres (10 hectares). Of this extent 5 acres (2 hectares) were planted in 1839 and 1840, and the chief portion of the remainder in the intervening years up to 1850: the original portion was gradually added to year by year. In the older portion of the vineyard there are a large number of table vines. Most of these are trellised on wooden frames nearly eight feet high and are about 17 years old. They consist principally of Muscat of Alexandria, and the Chrystal. There is also a collection of various sorts originally obtained by Mr Davis from Sydney. Of the wine grapes in the original vineyard there are Shiraz, Verdelho, Frontignac and Gouais. In the younger portion of the vineyard on the other side of the road the sorts are almost entirely Shiraz and Verdelho. The latter are planted in rows 12 feet by 4, with the view of enabling the space between the rows to be ploughed periodically to keep down the weeds. Mr Davis, however, asserts that he would never again plant any sorts closer than 7 feet by 7, which in his garden, owing to the richness of the soil

and the luxuriant growth of the vines, he computes as equivalent to 6 feet by 4 on the hills. Mr Davis confines his manufacture of wine chiefly to two sorts – Moore Farm Red from Shiraz alone, and the Moore Farm White, from the Verdeilho unmixed. Samples of his Shiraz vintages 1858, '59, '60, and of the Verdeilho vintage of 1858, were selected by the Wine Committee for transmission to the Exhibition of all Nations. Those which we tasted were of excellent quality. The Shiraz vintage of last season is full-bodied fruity wine, and will no doubt be excellent when matured. By Baume's saccharometer the most of the Verdeilho of last season averaged 19 deg, and the Shiraz 18 deg. In the year preceding the Verdeilho averaged 21. The usual average of the Verdeilho is 16 ½ and the Shiraz 15. Mr Davis estimates the average yield of his vineyard at two gallons to every three Shiraz vines, and one gallon of Verdeilho to from two to three vines.

"The whole of the vines were planted in deeply ploughed soil, but no trenching, manuring, or irrigating has been done in the vineyard. The soil is alluvial, and of great depth – in some places there is a rotten limestone subsoil, at about nine feet. Mr Davis has done very little with orange trees, many that he planted have failed, but there are, in the orchard, a number of lemon trees – and a purple guava, a West Indian tree, the fruit of which resembles the strawberry in flavour. And the damson in appearance.

"Mr Davis' orchards are well known for their supply of material for preserves, and a very large proportion of the produce is yearly manufactured into jam."

Emily Davis, the Daughter of AH Davis, married Thomas Stanford at 'Moore Farm' on 19th January 1848. Their daughter Kate married Friend Henry Edwards, aged 23, on 26th May 1870 at the private residence of Thomas Stanford at the Reedbeds.

Of course, my father played an important role in establishing Seaview Wines at McLaren Vale in the 1950s where I spent several years working with him at the winery after the sale of 'Zante Grove'.

The Grape Harvest

Once the grapes had ripened and were ready to harvest there was always an urgency to complete this task as a heavy thunder storm could spell ruin as the grapes would split and develop mould. Such losses when they occurred were financially ruinous. To speed up the process of delivery to the wineries the Ford Model T truck would be pressed into service for the shorter trip to Hamilton's on Morphet Road. It held about 30 cwt of grapes and could line up on the inevitably long queue of vehicles waiting to unload while the larger truck was sent to one of the more distant wineries.

The Pethick Brothers had an early Chevrolet truck of similar size and vintage to our Model T Ford and there was sometimes a race to see who would reach the winery first.

The exact weight of the load was determined by weighing the fully loaded vehicle on arrival and again after the grapes had been delivered. There was an amusing tale the Pethick's had devised a special technique to increase the weight of their loads. They often used a horse and wagon for the delivered. The horse was said to have been trained to pull the load on to the weigh bridge and as soon as the attendant went behind to cover to register the weight to place one of its back feet on the bridge. This would increase the reading. By the time the attendant had reappeared the horse would have moved its foot back onto the ground!

Discovery of Adelaide Plains

The history of Marion can be traced back to the very origins of the discovery exploration and settlement of South Australia. The idea of colonising the region later known as the 'Adelaide Plains' dates to 1802 when Captain Matthew Flinders in HM Brig Investigator examined and charted Kangaroo Island and Spencer and St Vincent's Gulfs.

In the early hours of the morning of 28th March 1802 Flinders was sailing northwards up what he designated 'No 14 Great Inlet' later named 'Gulf St Vincent'. At daylight he noted the high eastern land and named the highest point 'Mount Lofty'. On the following day Flinders sailed the 'Investigator' along the coast nearly parallel to the low sandy shore observing that the tree

covered land from the water to the back hills was not more than 5 or 6 miles (8 or 9km). This was the first official description of the site for the future city of Adelaide.

Flinders noted the backdrop of hills to the east of Gulf St Vincent stretched for 190 miles (300 kilometres) from the southernmost point of the Fleurieu Peninsula at Cape Jervis northwards to near what is now the rural town of Peterborough. His epic voyage of discovery culminated in the circumnavigation of 'New Holland' which he later named Australia.

Cooper, HM. (1953). *The Unknown Coast*. Adelaide: HM Cooper.

Explorations by Charles Sturt

News of Flinders' discoveries on the southern shores of the continent were well known in Sydney where the Governor, Sir Ralph Darling, was actively pushing forward with land exploration to extend knowledge of New South Wales and its potential for further settlement. High priority was being given to the final destination of the waters carried by the fast-moving inland river systems.

In 1827-1828 Captain Charles Sturt began to unravel the puzzle of the inland rivers during an expedition to the Macquarie River and its associated marsh lands. These investigations led to the discovery of the River Darling. The Governor was anxious to build on the new finds and decided to despatch a party led by Charles Sturt to trace the course of the recently discovered Darling River. The small party comprising several convicts and soldiers left Sydney on 3rd November 1829 on what turned out to be an epic journey of six months duration. They made for the upper reaches of the Murrumbidgee River as it provided access to the interior and a plentiful supply of fresh water for the travellers. During December Sturt traced the course of the River.

On 7th January 1830 Sturt decided to launch the whale boat they had carried with them from Sydney and continue the journey by water. As the party embarked on their river voyage into lands unknown to Europeans they soon encountered large groups of Aboriginals who threatened them from the river banks. They continued on their journey and on 14th January the boat was swept suddenly from the rapid and dangerous Murrumbidgee into '*...a noble stream*'. Sturt named this

the River Murray. The expedition reached the mouth of a tributary on the 23rd which Sturt surmised quite correctly was the River Darling. The party explored the stream for some distance to assess the surrounding countryside and then resumed their journey down the newly discovered River Murray.

Sturt Reaches Murray Mouth

On 9th January 1830 they were disappointed to reach an extensive shallow lake which meant the noble stream they had traced for such a long distance lacked a well-defined channel to the sea. Sturt named this vast sheet of water Lake Alexandrina. From this vantage point he had a clear view of the Mt Lofty Ranges in the distance although Mt Barker was confused with the Mt Lofty of Matthew Flinders. Regardless of this the location of the Murray was linked firmly with Gulf St Vincent.

Return Journey to Sydney

The explorers reached the Goolwa area on 12th February where they were forced to make an immediate decision on their future movements. Prior to Sturt's departure from Sydney Governor Darling had agreed to send a vessel to meet him and his party on the south coast. The ship had failed to arrive. Exhausted, harassed by the local Ngarrindjeri people and desperately short of provisions their only recourse was to retrace their steps back upstream and overland to Sydney. They lost no time in getting underway on the awesome task of rowing against the flow of the River for over 1,700 miles (2,736km), 21 miles (34km) each day on an incredible journey in the heat of the Australian summer and early autumn. Sturt finally arrived home in Sydney on 25th May 1830.

Price, A Grenfell (1929). *Founders and Pioneers of South Australia*. Adelaide: Mary Martin Books

Further Survey of St Vincent's Gulf

Upon receipt of Sturt's report of his discoveries Governor Darling gave immediate priority to the further pursuit of the investigation of both the region east of Gulf St Vincent and the mouth of the River Murray. He took advantage of an opportunity provided by the imminent return of Capt

Collet Barker to Sydney following a tour of duty as Commandant of the Garrison at King George's Sound near Albany in Western Australia as it was closing.

Collet Barker Explores Adelaide Plains

Barker was instructed to carry out a land exploration of the eastern side of Gulf St Vincent as the authorities were anxious to know whether the soil in this area was fertile and suitable for settlement. Once this task had been completed he was to proceed to the mouth of the River Murray and clarify the outstanding question of its precise position and suitability for navigation.

Discovery of River Sturt

The ship *Isabella* with Capt Barker on board arrived in South Australian waters in April 1831. Barker first surveyed the area described by Flinders on the east coast of Gulf St Vincent from the sea commencing at Cape Jervis and working his way up to Port Gawler. On 15th April he landed with a small party at the mouth of the Onkaparinga River and set out across country with the objective of reaching Mt Lofty and climbing to its summit to gain a panoramic view of the surrounding region. While en route Barker made a careful examination of the features encountered and the quality of the soils over which he passed. On 18th he came upon a *running stream* and named it *The River Sturt* in honour of his fellow officer. Tragically on 30th April Capt Barker was speared by the Ngarrindjeri while undertaking his examination of the Murray mouth as instructed by Governor Darling.

It was the combination of Matthew Flinders' initial observations in 1802, the discoveries of Charles Sturt during his epic river voyage in 1829 – 1830 and Capt Barker's detailed report on his investigations that influenced the decision to proceed with plans to create a settlement in Southern Australia. The new British Province was to be an experiment in an innovative system of colonisation devised by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and a group of prominent planners and investors in London. The land was to be surveyed and sold in advance of settlement with the moneys derived being devoted to transporting settlers of all classes to the new outpost of empire.

As David Jarman points out in his excellent history of 'Oaklands' "... two important conditions (were) laid down regarding the rules of settlement: first: people of all religions were welcome to settle in the new colony and second: there were to be no convicts sent to the colony. All early settlers had to be people with money who would purchase land and if they required labour they would bring their own servants with them or they would employ working class folk who had assisted passage out from the United Kingdom under the Wakefield System."

Jarman, David. 2014. *The History of Oaklands and its Tragic End*. Printed Elite Printing Studio Pty Ltd, Marion South Australia.

The Surveyor General Arrives in South Australia

The next sighting of the River Sturt was made five years later following the implementation of plans to establish South Australia under an Act of the British Parliament which received Royal assent on 15th August 1834. The first ships carrying officials and free settlers, many with their servants and labourers travelling out under the free passage scheme, arrived at Kangaroo Island in the latter part of 1836. A survey team headed by Col. William Light the Surveyor-General of the new province was among the first arrivals. They proceeded immediately to select the site for the capital and survey the adjacent lands ready for the selection of sections by prospective settlers and investors who had purchased land orders in London and were arriving weekly in the Colony.

Examination of River Sturt

On 9th November 1836 during a preliminary survey of the land south of the capital site the Deputy Surveyor General George Strickland Kingston (Friend Henry Edwards Snr later leased his property 'Marino') located the River Sturt discovered by Capt Barker. He traced its course for three days reaching the gorge near O'Halloran Hill and described the area as having... "an abundance of pasture and numerous kangaroos". No doubt his initial report of this area drew attention to its suitability for settlement and investment and led to the selection of land along the River.

Selection of Land

On 17th May 1838 preliminary purchasers exercised their right of first choice of the sections available. Those holding land orders for 80 acre (32 hectare) sections then chose their land and the other colonists made their selections.

Disputes in Survey Team

Col Light resigned as Surveyor General on 21st June 1838 along with assistant surveyor Boyle Travers Finniss over a dispute with the Colonisation Commissioners. On 3rd July they entered into partnership with several other dissatisfied members of the survey team who also resigned, to form a company named Light, Finniss & Co. An advertisement soon appeared in the press offering to negotiate “...all business connected with the selection and access of land in this colony.”

Steuart, A Francis. (1901). *The Founders of Penang and Adelaide*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company.

Early Allocation of Land

The Sturt River District as it was then called was among the first land to be allocated outside of Adelaide. Two of the early grantees in the Hundred of Noarlunga in District B of the Provincial Survey were Henry Nixon and Boyle Travers Finniss. Finniss and Nixon Streets in Marion were named in their honour. On 24th October 1838 they selected 80 acre (32 hectare) Section No 117 (Land Grant 455) dated 14th March 1839. Light, Finniss & Co, Surveyors and Land Agents had opened an office in Adelaide where they laid out the village of ‘Marion on the Sturt’ and were soon offering 1 acre (0.4 hectare) allotments for sale at 6 pounds.

Dolling, Alison (1981). *The History of Marion on the Sturt: The Story of a Changing Landscape and its People*. Frewville, South Australia: Peacock Publications.

Close Associations

Boyle Travers Finniss was the great-grandfather of a lifelong friend Keith Travers Borrow who fostered my interest in the foundation and settlement of South Australia. We spent much time together and were Joint Secretaries of the Historical Section of the Royal Geographical Society of

Australasia (South Australian Branch). We also held office in the Pioneers' Association of South Australia, were members of the John McDouall Stuart Society and actively pursued the creation of the Charles Sturt Memorial Museum Trust Inc as office holders in the organisation. It undertook the restoration and preservation of the home built by explorer Capt Charles Sturt in 1840 and named 'The Grange'. It continues as a successful house museum in memory of this valiant explorer.

Boyle Travers Finniss was Assistant Surveyor to Col Light during the survey of the City of Adelaide, held many key positions in the State including that of its first Premier. Keith Borrow died on 17th December 2005. I was his next of kin and an executor of the estate. In these capacities I made arrangements for the Borrow Library and Archives to be lodged in the Special Collections Section of the Flinders University Library in accordance with his wishes. A suitable monument was placed on his parents' grave in the North Road Church of England cemetery. A special headstone was also erected to mark his resting place.

Transformation Begins

The fertile lands along the course of the River Sturt were taken up initially for grazing and cropping, followed by fruit growing, market gardens, vineyards and the establishment of wineries and almond groves. The early years were difficult as there was little understanding of either the local soils or seasonal weather conditions. Several years were to elapse before sufficient local knowledge and experience was gained about planting and raising different crops.

Growth of Marion

By 1841 the Village of Marion-on-the-Sturt was growing into an active centre. It boasted two pisé dwelling houses with two others in progress. There were also "...Smith's, Carpenters and Wheel Wright's Shops..." providing an essential service to those who had settled along the Sturt. Brick making was among the first industries established at Marion as the district was found to be a very rich source of suitable clays. As early as 1840 25,000 Marion bricks were being offered for sale. They were used locally and also supplied to Glenelg, Brighton and other nearby districts.

Dolling, Alison (1981). *The History of Marion on the Sturt: The Story of a Changing Landscape and its People*. Frewville, South Australia: Peacock Publications.

A healthy competition existed between some of the growers as they vied to see who could grow the best produce. They also competed to command premium prices by being the first on the market with new seasons produce.

The Marion community was closely knit as many families who settled in the district stayed on for several generations. They were also bound together through a wide network of local and civic activities. These included churches of several denominations, schools, sporting and social clubs as well as annual horticultural shows, ploughing competitions and associations interested in fruit growing, recreations facilities and politics.

Grandfather's Quest for Education

As a member of a large family suffering many setbacks there were few opportunities for Grandfather to receive an education. He comments in his brief memoirs "...now my school days had to start, and I had a very mixed, and I am afraid, poor school time. Attending so many different schools, constantly changing teachers and continually being kept home to help with various jobs. I had not much chance and am afraid was never a very brilliant scholar."

Born at Fulham on 9th August 1874, at a time when the family had transferred to Crystal Brook, Grandfather's first opportunity to take lessons came long after his father had taken up 1,000 acres (405 hectares) of land at Crystal Brook in 1872 when the north of South Australia was being opened up for farming. At that time Frank Henry Edwards had two older sisters, May born at the Reed Beds on 17th February 1871 and Emily also born at the Reed Beds on 1st September 1872.

His first schooling was at a neighbour's house. "Mr Debney had employed a governess Miss Elliott for his children and my sister Em and I were sent along to make up the numbers. This did not last long. I think the Debney's moved away."

Grandfather then attended a private school at Crystal Brook run by a Miss Treleaux. He comments: "It was here I remember some of my first lessons, the alphabet and to spell up to cat, dog etc."

The next attempt at schooling was made after the failure of the Crystal Brook Farm due to the poor years that culminated in the severe drought of 1884.

Great-grandfather had purchased his land in 1877(?) under the Crown Lands Consolidation Act. This replaced previous legislation and allowed the maximum area of a selection of 1000 acres (405 hectares) an increase from the previous provisions. Payments could be spread over nine years. If required improvements had been made residents could purchase after five years. Great-grandfather decided to pay cash for a 1,000 acre (405 hectare) block at a time when prices were soaring due to the high demand for land.

Disaster Strikes

In 1880-1883 drought struck. In the north poor rains, attacks of the fungus, red rust and locusts ruined the wheat crops. Winds blew away the cultivated soil. Many settlers had failed to even harvest a paying crop. Farmers in the north reaped so little grain that they had no seed wheat for the next year. Exports dropped by 50 per cent. The poor seasons continued and some farmers including Great-grandfather were forced to walk off their land. Others under new regulations were able to revoke their agreements and reselect in more suitable areas. The drought continued on until 1886 when the Edwards farm lands were lost. It was a devastating set back as the assets accumulated by the family since arrival in Australia were no more.

Return to Fulham

Great-grandfather Friend Henry Edwards Snr, his wife and five young children returned to live at Fulham for 6 months or so running cattle on rented land and constantly selling and buying. It was at Fulham that Grandfather had an opportunity to continue his education. He records "...while here I attended the Fulham School and learnt more in 6 months than I had done at all the rest of my schooling. Miss Williams was my teacher and I seemed to grasp things more quickly and learn quicker than I had previously been able to and made good progress."

Leasing of 'Marino'

In a determined attempt to re-establish himself and his family, Great-grandfather leased a productive grazing property at Marino. He described it as "...400 acres (162 hectares) and on it a good quarry and plenty of lime stone and a large house."

"We attended Brighton Public School from here, about 2.5 miles (4km) walk, but most of the time I rode the pony to school so as to be home in time to get the cows in and help with the milking.

"I attended this school before as a dunce but after six months at Fulham felt very learned and placed myself in a higher class. (My teacher) Mrs Jamieson smiled and asked me if I thought I was good enough for that class. I said I thought so and at any rate I was not put back.

"From now on my schooling was very poor. I was continually kept home to deliver cattle or take cattle to market; to help churn butter or to help kill pigs and to add to this Mr Jamieson died. It was a long time before we got another resident head teacher. I can remember six different teachers we had prior to Mr August Kayson being appointed. Most of these so called teachers knew very little about it so the progress of all scholars was poor.

"After Mr Kayson was appointed things were much better. He was a real German but a good teacher."

Edwards, Frank Henry. *Manuscript Memoirs*, 1952.

Grandfather Attends Grammar School

On 19th June 1888 at the age of 13 years and 7 months Grandfather was awarded his Compulsory Certificate having "...passed a satisfactory examination... and reached the compulsory standard of education." Grandfather continues: "As soon as I was 14 I was taken from school and did all the work about the place for 12 months. Then one morning in the milking shed dad said "...How would you like to go to Caterer's School for a year?" I nearly fell off the milking stool with surprise and

said "...That is just what I would like". He responded "...It is going to be very hard for him; it would cost three guineas a quarter and he would expect me to learn all I possibly could in the time". I promised to do so if allowed to attend regularly. He explained that Perce would now have to do odd jobs and I should have no breaks and so I had my first regular 12 months schooling between the ages of 14 and 15.

"This study was not of as much value to me as it should have been. I was placed in a class that was really only a refresher for me of what I had learnt at Brighton with one or two subjects added such as Latin, Algebra, and English and made it fairly easy for me. I finished head of the class at both half yearly and yearly exams. Had I been able to attend another year and gone into a higher class, it would have been of much more value especially as Book-Keeping would have been included. I was very keen to go for another year, but it was ruled that Perce, who had no desire for it must now go and I must come home to work."

His father had chosen the popular Glenelg Grammar School founded on 1st October 1868 under the name of the Glenelg Academy by Fredrick Caterer at 'Brierly Cottage' in Partridge Street in Glenelg. It was later moved to 'Fairfield House' on the corner of Pier Street. Brierly Cottage was occupied as a branch for part of the school as it had soon outgrown its facilities. A new school was erected on the opposite side of Byron Street. In its day it was a well-known and respected educational institution.

Grandfather Excels

Grandfather kept his promise to his father with a stunning record for the half year ending December 1889. The official report "...of conduct, progress and attendance" for this period has survived. It shows excellent results. He topped his class in grammar, reading and elocution, arithmetic (100 marks) Euclid (the elements) geology and physical geography; he came second in printing and physiology. His lowest position out of 16 subjects was 6th in the class for mapping.

The school principal assessed his conduct as 'very good' and general progress as 'highly satisfactory'. He left Glenelg Grammar at the age of 15 years and 3 months with ambitions to do well in life.

"During the year I attended school I either rode on horseback or travelled by tram from Brighton to Glenelg." The Glenelg – Brighton Tramway had been authorised by an Act of the South Australian Parliament passed in 1877. A private company The Adelaide, Glenelg and Suburban Railway Company operated the service until 1899 when it was acquired by the Government owned South Australian Railways. "By this time our lease expired at Marino and we lived for about 6 months in a house on what was then known as Brighton Plains, now Seacliff, running cattle on the plains by day and yarding them each night."

Kingsborough, L.S. (1967). *The Horse Tramways of Adelaide and its Suburbs 1875-1907*. Adelaide: Libraries Board of South Australia.

The limited education Grandfather received has to be seen in the context of being the eldest son in a family of 11 surviving children and having obligations to assist a hard-pressed father from an early age. Every member of the family was expected to contribute on the different mixed farming and market garden properties especially after the failure of the Crystal Brook venture.

Obviously, Grandfather was an intelligent, determined, tough, hardworking young man. These were the qualities needed for success. He had 13 difficult years ahead of him before achieving the goal of owning his own property. They were years of hard toil and many disappointments.

Grandfather's thirst for knowledge and eagerness to equip himself for the future regardless of the difficulties shows a determination that stood him in good stead throughout his life.

The Local Parish Church

Both families were parishioners at St Mary's-on-the-Sturt. This provided further opportunities to foster the relationship. We also shared an interest in local history. Miss Quick would show me rare

books on the pioneering days of South Australia and was careful to demonstrate the correct way to turn the pages to avoid damage from handling. Our meetings were very stimulating and served to broaden my knowledge and expand my interests. Then there was always a word of advice about my future and the importance of aiming for a university education and becoming a doctor. She was well aware of the uncertainties of earning a living from family shared property. Miss Quick had a positive influence on me as I entered my teens.

Miss Quick stayed on at 'Brookside' until it was sold and later vacated. She then took up residence at 1 Hebert Street, Medindie where sadly she passed away in May 1979.

Crystal Brook Farm Collapses

The Edwards and Quick families may have first become closely acquainted when great-grandfather, Friend Henry Edwards Senior, his wife Kate and nine of their children moved from the Marino Property to another leased mixed farm named 'Hillside' in the Sturt District. Their last two children were born while they were living on the Sturt Property, Adela May on 16 December 1890 and Eric Milton on 16 August 1893 some years earlier the family had fallen on hard times. After over 20 years working on their profitable market garden established at the Reed Beds by Friend Henry's father James Edwards, it became too small and great-grandfather purchased 1,000 acres of farmland at Crystal Brook when all land south of Goyder's Line (on which Crystal Brook is located) was opened up for agriculture between 1869 and 1872. A succession of poor harvests due partly to disease followed by a severe drought in the 1880's brought disaster to his expansion plans and the family was forced to abandon the property taking only the stock which was all but worthless at the time.

Great Grandfather Moves to Kent Town

In 1883 at the height of the crisis brought on by the severe drought in the 1880's Great Grandfather was sent down from Crystal Brook to Kent Town to live with his step Grandfather "Bagshaw". Cousin Agnes Davis kept house for him. As he recalls in his memoirs, "I was there for some time and used to go to Kent Town Church and Sunday School and day school at Miss Galbraith's private school but am afraid I did not learn much there.

"While I was here father came to stay with us and was taken very ill. I remember the Doctor coming and Mrs Debney (a former neighbour at Crystal Brook) would take me to her place at Brighton so after a time my belongings were packed up and Mr McGeorge, Mrs Debney and I set off in a Hansom Cab to catch the Glenelg Train. This was my first and, I think, only ride in a Hansom Cab.

"The train we were to catch at Victoria Square would connect with the last bus from Brighton for that day and Mr McGeorge did everything he could to hurry the Cabby along, continually rattling his stick in the little hole in the roof and calling out "... hurry up Cabby or you will miss our train." The poor horse was going for all he was worth only to arrive at the Station to see the train going down King Wm St, ringing the bell joyfully and us left behind. I don't know where Mr McGeorge went but Mrs Debney and I had to wait for an hour or more for the next train which only took us to Glenelg with no way of getting to Brighton except to walk which we did from the Glenelg Jetty to Great Downing St Brighton along the beach.

"It was pretty late at night when we arrived. Anyhow I was to stay here now with the Debney family and I was very happy all the time except when fighting with George. He was younger than I was but much bigger and stronger and delighted to knock me about. It hurt me more to feel that he was much younger and could knock me about than his punches did.

"I attended the Brighton Public School while here. Mr and Mrs Jamieson and Ada Jamieson were teachers. I was in a very low class and was taught by Mrs Jamieson and was a bit of a dunce.

"After some time mother and father came to visit us. I was told they were coming and went to the corner to meet the bus. I saw a man help mother out of the bus and was very pleased to see her. She said 'aren't you going to speak to your father?' I did not recognise the man helping her as my father. When I saw him last as he went into the hospital, he was a tall thin man with a beard. Now after typhoid he was fat, round faced and clean shaven. It was hard for me to believe it was him."

Droving from Crystal Brook to Fulham (Reed Beds)

Grandfather tells us... “during this time Mother and the rest of the family had come down from Crystal Brook and were living in a rented cottage at Fulham. Everything at the farm had been sold. All that Dad had retained and could call his own, (were) his favourite mare ‘Gipsy’, my pony ‘Lill’ and a cow which my mother had reared called ‘Gentle’” Grandfather continues “...the other members of the family, as they came along, learnt to ride on the same old pony ‘Lill’. Also Mr A Quick’s three girls had her for some time and learnt to ride on her. ‘Lill’ was part of the family at Crystal Brook, the Reed Beds, Marino and lived on for over 30 years.

“Dad had to make a fresh start and there was some agreement between him and Grandpa Stanford which enabled him to buy a certain number of cattle for that purpose. I must have been about 8 years old at the time.”

(Edwards. Frank Henry. Memoirs. 1952.)

Great-grandfather returned to the farm with his eldest son Frank Henry (my grandfather) and together they drove the stock overland to the Reed Beds. This was an epic journey for such a young lad. He relays the experience in his memoirs:

“Dad and I went to Crystal Brook by train, he taking a saddle and bridle with him. We picked up Gipsy and Lill somewhere and went round the district and bought up a number of missed cattle, mostly young dry cows and heifers. I think he bought in all about 40 and we brought them from the Brook to Fulham.

“I think we were about a fortnight travelling and had lots of experiences on the Road. What hurt me most was people where we stopped saying I was such a little fellow to be on the road. I did not feel that I was at all little. One experience we had was the stage between two towns which was too short. We had too much day left to the next town. There were two ways, by taking the short way we calculated we could get there by sundown but we were wrongly directed and took the long way which brought us through scrub and water and we got benighted.

Arrival Home

"After dark it was terribly hard to keep the cattle moving and it was getting very late. We could see lights of the town in the distance, and as pubs closed at 11.00 pm Dad left me in charge and he rode on to make arrangements about yards etc. When he got back to me the cattle were all over the place. I was very little nearer the town than when he left and was fast asleep on the pony. We finally reached home with all our stock. I shall never forget the joy I felt when I recognised some of the country and realised we were at Fulham.

"The Dad had not told me when we would reach home and I had no idea until I saw our little Cottage. My whip began to crack and I was more energetic than I had been throughout the trip. I had named every animal during the trip and if one was missing could tell which it was much quicker than Dad or anyone else.

"I never knew what the arrangement was but after a day or two I had to help yard the cattle and I know that Dad and Grandpa tossed up for the first pick, then they chose a beast alternatively. They were each placed in separate yards, each taking half the herd.

Temporary Respite

"We must have stayed at Fulham 6 or 8 months running our cattle on rented land and selling and buying all the time. While here I attended the Fulham School and learnt more in 6 months than I had done at all the rest of my schooling."

In 1927 great-grandfather reflected on this dismal chapter of his life. "In 1884 I was very ill for a long time and could not put up a fight against the injustice (over the loss of his land) and came away with a wife and five young children to start the world again and it was uphill work for I had less than £50 to start with. I could only rent land and for several years could only just keep my head above water."

Edwards, Friend Henry Snr. Brief Memoirs, 1927

The Move to Marino

On returning to the Reed Beds great-grandfather was back among his extended family and friends of many years standing. The immediate assistance coming from his father-in-law Thomas Stanford to trade in cattle generated sufficient income to cater for his growing family at a time of great financial stress. In the meantime they lived in the rented cottage while exploring the possibilities of leasing a farming property. The children attended the Fulham Primary School. On Sundays Friend Henry, Kate and their family went to the Wesleyan Chapel at Fulham built by pioneer settler John White on a portion of his original 'Fulham Farm'. The two elder daughters May born on 17 February 1871 and Emily Davis on 1 September 1872 had been christened in the little church.

Road Back to Prosperity

Six or so months later when the opportunity came to lease a large 400 acre property at Marino great-grandfather welcomed the prospect of making a fresh start on the road to financial recovery. Many years later his eldest son Frank Henry recorded the move:

"The family and what he (Friend Henry Edwards Snr) had saved from the wreck were moved to Marino. Here he and mother and in fact the whole family worked very hard. He took stock in to graze, dealt extensively in stock: dairy cows principally. He or I usually milked a large number of cows. Reared all the heifer calves, made often up to 60lbs of butter a week, all by hand churn. Kept a large number of poultry, established a big round for dairy produce at Brighton and Glenelg. In a large express buggy with a special top he would dispose of up to 6 or 7 pigs as fresh daily pork besides bacon, cheese, eggs and butter and no end of dressed poultry every week. Whatever pork was left was put into pickle and sold as pickle pork later. He was hated by all the butchers.

"You will see here that mother and I came in for a lot of the work. We between us had all the calves to feed, the poultry to dress and the butter to churn and I had to help with killing and dressing the pigs. He took large contracts for stone from the quarry, employed several men and worked himself in the quarry also grubbed and sold large quantities of limestone for building and burning."

Marino Lease expires

When the lease on Marino expired in 1891 great-grandfather immediately began looking for another property to rent. Eventually 'Hillside' in the Sturt District came up for lease. This grazing property extended from the South Road near Shepherd's Hill to the railway viaduct.

The Hillside Property

Gordon B Ragless, grandson of the well-known pioneer Richard Ragless and a neighbour who had large almond groves and vineyards in Marion recalled his father talking about the Edwards family growing vegetables on the flats in the viaduct gully adjacent to the creek: "I think that they lived in a stone house (still standing) on Shepherd's Hill. I believe they leased the land they used... The house was built by Capt. Cook who was in charge of the 'Eden' our people (the Ragless family) came out in."

Correspondence. Ragless, Gordon Beaumont to Edwards, Robert. 21 June 1999.

Many years later I became familiar with this area as it was on the extreme limits of my youthful adventures to territories far from home with my companions.

Standing for Parliament

While living at 'Hillside' great-grandfather again demonstrated his keen public spirit and sense of service to the community in which he resided. He unsuccessfully contested a seat in Parliament for the District of Sturt. On 20 March 1893 a notice appeared in 'The Advertiser': "To the Electors of Sturt. Having been requested by a large number of my fellow electors to become a candidate at the coming elections, I have much pleasure in announcing myself. F.H. Edwards. 'Hillside', Sturt."

His eldest son Frank Henry comments in his memoirs on the excitement this event created: "It was in the days before organised party politics were in vogue or rather just at a time when Labor first came out as a party. The candidates were Messrs J.G. Jenkins and Stock sitting members both more or less conservative. T. Price and H. Adams representing Labor. H.D. Gell and F.H. Edwards independents. It was a lively election. Many meetings were held in the districts where he was

known but had no hope in the more populous districts such as Unley and Goodwood and was left well in the rear, Jenkins going on top of the pole and T Price being elected as one of the first real Labor men to be elected.”

Edwards, Frank Henry. Memoirs. 1952.

Links with Marion

As the eldest son in a large family and having had experience in helping to run the mixed farm at Marino a great deal of responsibility fell to grandfather and no doubt his mother and the other children. Obviously they were a hard working family committed to attaining a better way of life on a property of their own. It was during this period he was drawn closer into Marion through Arthur Quick of 'Brookside' who owned one of the largest and most successful orchard properties in the district. Eventually this association led grandfather to acquire his first ten acre block of land in 1902 and begin the establishment of 'Zante Grove'.

Grandfather Invests in Property

Frank Henry Edwards tells us about this chapter in his life when he left his father and struck out on his own. He also provides us with insights into the challenges faced in running a mixed farm at the end of the nineteenth century and the tribulations of moving from a long-term commitment to his father on the family property to becoming an independent worker striving to achieve his ambition to have a property of his own.

I will let grandfather tell his own story:

The Milk Round

“I remained at home and we all worked pretty hard with cattle and gardening etc. I did most of the horse work, ploughing etc. Then we bought a milk round and for two years I travelled twice a day to the City 7 miles to deliver milk. We used to rise at 3.00 am each day to milk as I had to be at a certain place at 6.00 am without fail every morning. It was a very cold and dreary drive in winter. I usually got home about 9.00 am, milked again at 2.00 pm, and back to the city for the afternoon

round, arriving home between 6 and 7 o'clock. There was not much money in it and we all got pretty sick of it. Sold our cows, round horses and cart to Mr Hurcombe at Fulham.

"We then devoted most of our time to gardening, pea growing etc. I also did a lot of ploughing for other people. About this time Mr Quick used to visit us a lot and every time he saw me he wanted me to come and work for him. Eventually Dad consented and I went with him. I started at £1 per week with board and lodging which was afterwards increased to £1.10."

Frank Henry Leaves Family Enterprise

As grandfather recorded: "I loved the work and was quite happy. We worked dreadfully long hours, no holidays, no Saturday afternoons and only off each other Sunday. The first fruit season I was there the market man took ill so I was sent to market in his place and did so well that I eventually became the market man and I doubt if anyone ever put in longer hours than I did at that job.

"After about 3 years Mr Quick became so hard and unfair that I left him and for a time did a lot of pruning 'peace work' for various people about the district lastly with Mr Thos Hardy at Bankside. When the pruning was finished he put me on to do some grafting vines for him. As soon as I finished he took me to McLaren Vale where I, in company with two other grafters and three lads to dig out and fill in, grafted about 30 acres of vines.

"Here I received 30/- per week and board and it was the best holiday I had had up to then. I had my 21st birthday here (1895). I boarded with Mr T. Nottage. We would breakfast at 7.00 and when the mill whistle sounded, at half past, we would walk to our work about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile distant. At 10 o'clock we would boil the billy and have lunch, a knock at cricket, work til twelve, have dinner, a real game of cricket, start work about 2 and knock off at 5. Such hours I had never been used to and it agreed with me. I was never so fat before or since."

Development of Bankside

It is of interest that in April 1862 Thomas Hardy of *Bankside Vineyards* Underdale purchased the western portion (24 acres) of Section 83 on Marion Road. This was followed by leasing the eastern

portion (17 acres) in June 1865 from David Bray Berry, a farmer of Saddleworth. Berry had been at Marion from 1857 until 1860 as licensee of the Marion Inn at 2/6 Finniss Street. The property was named *Brookside* (probably by Hardy himself) and part of it was planted with wine grapes. Hardy was responsible for bringing two important names into the Marion District: Quick and Western.

“John Western emigrated from Devonshire, England and worked for Thomas Hardy at *Bankside*. In June 1865 he moved to Marion to manage Thomas Hardy’s property there, a position he held until 1884. Western was succeeded as manager of *Bankside* in May 1884 by Arthur Quick, who had recently married Hardy’s second daughter Caroline Adelaide.”

Dolling, Alison. *The History of Marion on the Sturt*. Adelaide. 1981

Port Pirie Experience

Grandfather continues, “I now worked wherever I could get a job mostly for Mr Matson where Harold Laffer lives now. Then I decided to go to Port Pirie and try my luck at business. At first I rented a room and yard and sheds. Bought a horse and cart and arranged for Mr Winter to send me goods and went round the town and suburbs every day hawking fruit and veg. Later I took a shop and did fairly well but was not very happy batching and struggling. I sold out to a Mr Whitelaw and came back.

Family move to Enfield

Early in 1885, while Grandfather was in Port Pirie the family left the property in Sturt and settled on a larger farm in Enfield. Named “Hope Farm” it was there that the plans for the move to Pinnaroo were developed and launched.

Eric Milton Edwards the twelfth and last child in the family was born at ‘Hillside’, Sturt, on the 16 August 1893 two years prior to the move to Enfield. He has left a unique description of the new property during his childhood.

“My earliest recollections were of Enfield; and we lived on a farm, it was about 120 acres and there was a garden of about 10 acres, I suppose; quite a big almond orchard and there were

peaches and grape vines and pears and apples and various other trees, and there was also an orange grove. It was a very interesting life, living on this farm but we were two miles from the school; Nailsworth was the nearest school, it was a little over two miles I think $2\frac{1}{2}$, all of my brothers and sisters or the latter ones had walked there and I started off with the last two of them, and I found it a long tiring walk and I didn't like school. The walking to school and home was fairly interesting. The traffic was very different from today, in fact there was very little. It was always interesting to catch up with the horse-tram. The horse-tram departed from the old hotel, the Northern hotel, about a mile from school or less, and we used to hurry up so when we could see the driver taking the nose-bag off the horse we knew that the tram was about to start within minutes and we'd hurry up to be there when the tram started. That was one of the interesting things."

"On this farm that father had, it was mostly hay-growing because of the tramways, the tramways people had hundreds of horses, and they all had to be fed and therefore hay-growing anywhere near the city was a profitable business – most of the farming was hay-growing. He also was a great pea-grower, not the commercial variety but garden peas, and we grew them, we used to have about 20 acres or more of them each year. This meant that there was a great deal of pea picking to be done and I always used to get five or six weeks away from school, which I loved, for pea picking. When I went back to school after five or six weeks the teacher never looked very pleased because there were always about ten others in front of me or behind me also had the excuse – pea picking at Edwards's. Such a large area of peas necessitated a lot of pickers and father used to go to market about three times a week with a big dray and cart these peas. A few adults but mostly children and they used to be 6d. a bushel; I only got 4d, being a member of the family. Everybody got 6d, that was the going price of picking peas, that's per bushel. Unless it was a very good crop it took a good while to pick a bushel".

Edwards, Eric Milton tape recording at his home at East Terrace, Gawler. 25th August 1978.

The following notice of the FH Edwards clearing sale appeared in the daily press:

"The Adelaide Advertiser" Thursday 7 February 1895

(source Helen Burkett)

Grandfather Frank Henry Edwards picks up his story

"I arrived home (to Enfield) with about £100 and was persuaded by Dad to take a farm and garden on the North East Road on shares with Mr Nesbit. It turned out bad business. I spent all my money buying horses, ploughs, seed-drill etc and got a very poor crop. Two of my horses died from eating some poisonous weed; my potatoes all got cut with frost and I came out dead broke.

"At this time Mr Matson for whom I had previously worked and who was renting a garden from Mr Laffer, decided to lease the Lady McDonald Hotel and offered me the remaining portion of his lease of the garden for '3 years'. This was a good place and Matson had grown potatoes there for a number of years and had never had any frost and I hoped to do quite well.

Crops Fail

"The first year I planted 2½ tonnes of potatoes which came on splendidly but we had several severe frosts and they were all cut down. I dug and sold less than 1 tonne from the crop. Believing this to be an exception and not likely to happen again I planted the same again the next year. This time the whole crop was ruined with Irish Blight never known in the district before. So far I had only just been able to pay the rent. Had one year to go and did not like the outlook. Had been batching ever since I went to Pirie.

Return to Marion

"Mr Quick knew all about my bad luck and came over to see me and wanted me to come back to him as he could not get a good market man. He offered me £2.10 per week as an inducement. I said I would not come for less than £3 per week with a guarantee of 1 year's work, knowing that this would bring me into another fruit season so that would mean at least eighteen months. Mr Q made an awful fuss as he thought it was an exorbitant wage but agreed.

"I arranged with Sid Read a young fellow who was working for me to carry on with the garden for the remainder of my lease and started again with Mr Quick. I went through the first season and

put in some very long hours. Mr Q was well satisfied but as soon as the fruit finished and there was no marketing, it hurt him terribly to pay me £3 per week. I had to keep it very quiet from the other men. He always paid me with two cheques and I was only to let the other men see one.

“We carried through another fruit season and then it was just as I had expected. He really could not pay such a high wage during winter when there was only work in the garden. I was independent however as by this time I had secured 20 acres of our old home ‘Zante Grove’ and felt that I could do better on my own over there and I left him.

Early Settler on the Sturt

Behind our house on Oaklands Road there was a vast fertile area scattered with giant River Red Gums giving it a park-like appearance. The River Sturt was the main feature at the western end. Beyond that was the 56 acre (23 hectare) Warradale Army Camp bounded on the north side by Oaklands Road and on the west by Morphett Road. This was part of the land taken up in 1844 by Samuel Kearne another devotee of the Wakefield system of colonisation. His original 240 acre (97 hectare) colonial estate comprised 80 acre (32 hectare) Sections No 116 (adjoining No 117 where the village of Marion was established) No 146 and No 147 in District B. Within ten years of his arrival Kearne had increased his holdings to 452 acres (183 hectares).

After an unusually prolonged and troublesome voyage from Liverpool lasting nearly eight months, Samuel Kearne arrived at Holdfast Bay expecting to sail up the River Sturt in his own ship to the land he had selected. His intention was to disembark his family, servants and domestic animals directly on to the banks of the stream together with building materials for a large and very substantial house, farming equipment and household belongings. Quite obviously this was out of the question as the Sturt had never been navigable!

Despite the set-backs to his plans this dogged pioneer persevered. He loaded his belongings into bullock drays and carted them overland to his land on the River Sturt. He was quick to begin construction of a magnificent home designed in England prior to his departure. The ship itself was dismantled and its timbers used in the construction of the house.

The Oaklands Homestead

As a youngster I was fascinated with this lovely colonial mansion standing on the banks of the River Sturt hidden amongst great red gums, large spreading oaks, orange trees and extensive gardens. I would creep in and look with awe at the grandeur of this home. Kearne named his property 'Oaklands' and it became the centre of many social occasions in the district. I remember being intrigued by the ship's bell hanging underneath the veranda of the barn where it served to announce meal times and the arrival of important messages for those working in the fields.

In 1900 'Oaklands' was purchased by Thomas Currie Tait who offered 'The Park' section of the property to the South Australian Government. This picturesque natural area was bounded by Marion Road on the east and Oaklands Road on the south and would have made a wonderful suburban park to retain important natural features of the district. Sadly, the offer was rejected.

Sub-Division of Oaklands Estate

When this large estate was put on the market the vineyards established by Samuel Kearne were acquired by the Hamilton family to add to their holdings. W Pethick and Sons, vigneron and orchardists, purchased the homestead. 'The Park' comprised the remaining 132 acres (53 hectares) of the original Kearne estate. Following the rejection by the Government it was secured by TM Burke Pty Ltd, Estate Agents who subdivided the area into housing allotments under the name 'Oaklands Estate'.

Tragically, the 'Oaklands' Homestead was demolished in 1967 as part of the inevitable but regrettable changes that transformed a lovely rural district into yet another part of suburbia.

The building blocks were slow to sell and initially only a few houses were erected on this vast estate. There was the Smerdon's with a small poultry farm situated at the homestead end. Nearby was the Taylor family. The son Glen Taylor was my age and a friend who shared many adventures. I recall Grandmother Edwards pointing out I was too 'bossy' as the leader of our youthful 'gang'. The comment rather surprised me.

Ben Pethick, one of the sons of William Pethick snr who purchased 'Oaklands' built a handsome modern Tudor style house a few blocks west of our home on Oaklands Road. Later the Kumnick's constructed their own house on one of the intervening blocks. I was intrigued by the whole idea of someone actually building their own home as it was such a prolonged undertaking. There were only two other houses. These were located on the eastern side of the estate.

Running Free

The 'Oaklands Estate' together with our own nearby property became my 'domain' to be enjoyed and exploited at will. I came to know every feature and tree on this extensive 'parklands'. There were several low-lying areas which filled with water during heavy rains. One of my earliest recollections is watching flocks of wild ducks swimming and feeding in the shallow waters. On bright moonlit nights they would sometimes mistake our glasshouses, where we grew early season tomatoes, for water and 'land' on them with disastrous results and the smashing of a great deal of glass. There were some amazing scenes of masses of feathers and broken glass and occasionally very sad and surprised looking ducks. My father was always annoyed by these events as he had to meet the high cost of repairing the damage.

The swampy areas on 'Oaklands Estate' also provided welcome opportunities to launch our homemade boats. These were constructed by simply folding old sheets of corrugated roofing iron over and nailing the ends on to pieces of wood and sealing them with tar. Alas much time and effort was spent on our ship building enterprises with very poor outcomes as the water was usually too shallow even for our primitive water craft.

New opportunities opened up a few years later when I became the proud owner of a rather ancient ladies push bike passed on to me by Auntie Dora Edwards one of Father's sisters. This was bliss as I could ride to school, the Post Office to collect the mail, visit friends and add a competitive note to some of our activities by staging bike races. To enhance the thrill the first such event was staged during the winter in the swampy areas on 'Oaklands Estate'. I would line up with my friends and race at full speed through the shallow swamps to see who could cross the water without

falling off and becoming drenched. I was always in trouble when arriving home drenched and sometimes wounded during these escapades.

Depression Lingers On

I well remember my mother spending almost every night either patching clothes, darning socks or knitting jumpers. In those days nothing was discarded or wasted: every item of clothing was worn until it literally fell to pieces. There was also a regular flow of clothes handed down from family and friends as their children grew out of them. It was not unusual to go off to school with two large patches on the seat of my pants, mended socks and cardboard in my shoes to cover the holes in the soles. This applied to everything as the wasteful 'consumer' society of today was then many years into the future.

Bike Races

The failure of racing our push bikes across water led to shift in these events to a paddock in nearby Ascot Park where there was a long mound of earth left after the first water and drainage pipes were laid in the area. The person who went the fastest over the mound flew higher in the air and landed the greatest distance on the other side and usually went on to win the race. After a number of these events I finally mustered up sufficient courage to make an all-out effort to win. On the fourth round of the race I was well ahead and gaining speed. At the critical moment as my bike hit the mound a piece of fencing wire lying unseen on the ground became entangled in my front wheel with calamitous results. The terrific crash rendered me unfit for some days. It was my last serious bike race.

Ranging the District

As we grew older our bike riding expeditions were extended to many parts of the district. One of our favourite tracks ran up through the steep slopes behind the Flagstaff Hotel at Darlington. There was an additional incentive as the hotel keeper had two lovely daughters who were our friends. It was easy for us to find our way as Marion Road ran straight up to the Flagstaff Hotel apart from a detour through Marion Village to avoid the meandering of the River Sturt.

The excitement of this adventure was to push our bikes up the steepest hills and then come thundering down the narrow walking tracks at breakneck speed. In the end it became too dangerous even for our little band of adventurers as our brakes would burn out and fail. I remember one incident when in desperation after a brake failure I pressed my foot down hard onto the front mud guard. Alas it soon became too hot to bear and the only option was to hold on and ride to the very bottom of the gully and part way up the other side – when possible.

Abundant Wildlife

There were numerous native birds frequenting the natural parklands on 'Oaklands Estate'. These became well known to us. They included several species of parrots, hawks, magpies, Murray magpies, owls, doves and the tawney frogmouths, willy wag tails, swallows, ducks, cranes and a host of others. The numerous hollows in the ancient red gums were always occupied either by opossums, lizards, bats or parrots nesting in the spring. The Magpies were very dangerous when nesting and we sometimes went home with sore heads having been attacked by birds defending their nests by swooping down swiftly from a great height and striking us on the head. We watched the inch ants building up their nests in preparation for rain and often teased the trap-door spiders until they emerged from their funnels in a very angry mood ready to attack any intruders.

The Southern Boobook, the smallest and most common and harmless owl in Australia, was often to be heard in the dead of night making its very distinctive 'mo-poke' call. To me it was very sinister and very frightening. Their call struck terror into my heart and I often insisted on having the bedroom light left on while trying to go to sleep. I must have been only four or five years old at the time but well remember on several occasions one or other of my uncles carrying me out among the red gums at night in futile attempts to overcome my fear by showing me the bird making the terrifying call. Alas they all failed miserably, and it was some years before I became reconciled to the lovely little night owls who made the distinctive call.

I had the same aversion to snakes and always gave them the right of way. They frequented the River and waterways and were particularly aggressive in spring when emerging from hibernation. I

failed to become reconciled to them due to many close encounters along the Sturt, on visits to the River Murray and later when travelling in remote parts of Australia.

Another cause of childhood fear were the small bats which would find their way into our home on Oaklands Road sometimes ending up in our bedrooms. My sister Barbara and I would be quite terrified. I still have visions of my father in the middle of the night with a tennis racket in hand hunting the little creatures out of our rooms. It was more exciting when an opossum fell down the chimney.

Mosquito Plagues

In those days mosquitoes were numerous and a real menace. In the spring and summer, we all slept under nets to avoid being bitten. They bred profusely in the waterholes and the natural swampy areas as well as in rain water tanks that abounded in those days as everyone placed great reliance on their own supply of drinking water. The tanks were large and we had several of them on 'Zante Grove' and one at our Oaklands Road home. Being small it fell to me to be lowered into the tanks when they were emptied out regularly to be cleaned and flushed to remove the dirt and rotting leaves that accumulated on the bottom. I also had the task of maintaining a light film of kerosene on the surface of the water in every tank to prevent the mosquitoes from breeding.

Irrigation System

A small creek ran along the north side of Oaklands Road next to our boundary fence. It flowed on down into the River Sturt emerging near the Oaklands Road Bridge. As soon as the creek flooded after rain my father would block the flow by sliding wooden planks down grooves built into brick retaining walls constructed on both sides of the stream. This would divert the water into the vineyard and irrigate them. It was a huge success in wet seasons as the vines prospered from the additional watering. The main short coming was the unreliability of the system as it was entirely dependent on seasonal rainfall. In an effort to maintain the supply especially in dry years my father had a bore sunk and a Pomona Pump installed. This too had limitations as other growers in the area drew water from the same underground water table. When a number of pumps operated

at the same time the level would drop and eventually the flow would cease until it had time to replenish.

The Creeks Disappear

Playing in the Oaklands Road creek was another of our regular past-times. It was bitterly disappointing when in 1940 the water-course was converted into an underground drain made up of large pipes and concrete form work. Never-the-less we were very intrigued by this massive project and watched the whole operation with great interest. Later the River Sturt itself suffered a similar fate and became an open concrete drain and lost most of its natural character and charm.

One of the challenges of the day for us as youngsters was to walk through the new underground pipe from the Marion Road end to the River. It was nearly a mile (1.6km) long and completely dark for much of the way. As a consequence, it was rather scary and became something of a dare to me and my companions to venture forth on what was an intrepid undertaking especially when a steady stream of water was running in the pipe. It was with a sense of triumph and a great relief whenever our little group of very young explorers reached the outlet and emerged into clear daylight.

It was in this section of the old natural meandering River Sturt that we developed a new form of fun and games by cutting a 'slide' from the top of the river bank down to the water. This was quite an engineering feat and took several weekends to complete. Once the surface had been saturated with water drawn up from the River in buckets it was used as a slippery dip. We would hurtle down the steep slope into the river at a great speed on pieces of old corrugated iron. This was great fun while it lasted although it was pretty hard on our clothes despite stripping down to the bare essentials. The whole operation had to be shut down rather hastily as a result of a tempestuous parent/child dispute.

Boyhood Pranks

Prior to being put underground, the creek running along Oaklands Road provided cover for another of our boyhood pranks. 'Uncle' Jim Duncan of 'Orange Grove' Sturt had given me an old

broken double barrel muzzle loading gun. I was ecstatic at becoming the proud owner of such a weapon and the envy of my friends. Such a rare item warranted a special use. We decided to hide in the creek by the road along with the gun and play war games. I had 'found' some explosive caps among the stores in our shed used by Grandfather to fire muzzle loaders. The two firing pins on the gun were still intact but there were no hammers. We would overcome this by placing the caps on the pins and as a motor vehicle passed hit them with an ordinary hammer making a loud explosion. Most vehicles would stop, the driver jump out and walk around the car examining each tyre, scratch his head and wonder why there was no flat tyre. As an hour or so would sometimes pass between vehicles the novelty soon wore off and we had to come up with another form of amusement.

The Tank Mobile

On one occasion I gained possession of a very large obsolete corrugated iron rain water tank. The bottom had rusted out making it a useful play house. I would invite friends over and we would rock back and forth until the motion took us high up the side of the tank. We soon found that when a number of us walked up the inside together it would roll over the ground. The more of us the better and the faster our unusual 'vehicle' would travel. The ultimate was to go so fast that we would all 'loop the loop' over the top of the tank and then fall in a heap at the bottom. To encounter a large tank rolling rapidly along the tracks through our vineyard was an amazing sight to behold. For a time, it was viewed with amusement and all went well. However, boys will be boys and in our inventive way we decided the tank would travel faster on a hard surface. One Saturday when the road was clear we tried on the bitumen. Our supposition proved correct, but it was a big mistake as the tank mobile was soon on the way to the local rubbish dump on the back of a truck.

Expedition to Brighton

As I became older my confidence increased along with my sense of adventure. Having the added mobility provided by my aunt's old push bike I made a spur of the moment decision one hot summer's day to visit Auntie Olive Gregory who lived in Edwards Street at Brighton. She was one of my father's lovely sisters who had married Alan Gregory an executive at Elders Smith and Co

then one of Adelaide's oldest and most respected companies. We visited them now and then and had many enjoyable times on the beach.

My bosom friend and partner Glen Taylor joined me on the 5 mile (8km) or so journey from our Oaklands Road home to pay a surprise visit to see my auntie. We set out taking it in turns to ride the bike. This was a crazy system as having ridden a few hundred yards we had to wait for our partner to catch up and keep rotating over and over again. In the end we decided to push the bike and walk together. It was a hot day, but we persevered and finally reached our destination only to find nobody at home. This was an unexpected turn of events and set us back a little after our tiring effort. However, we refused to accept defeat and embarked on a search. Eventually more by good luck than good judgement we found my aunt on the beach with her young family. To say the least she was surprised to see us.

Meanwhile 'back on the farm' the alarm had been sounded. It was not unusual for young Bobbie to disappear for lengthy periods, but this was beyond the norm. A search was instigated for the missing boys but without success. A few telephone calls later and all was resolved. I was reprimanded severely but escaped punishment as the main reaction was one of relief at having found us unharmed. After what was considered to be a risky enterprise I have no recollection of the fate of my worthy young comrade. I am ashamed to say I sometimes led him into difficult situations. Never-the-less the friendship was a close and happy one. I often wonder how life has treated him. Hopefully in a productive and kindly fashion.

The same instinctive and keen sense of direction exhibited on this occasion was to serve me well many years later when I travelled vast distances into the remote Central Australian deserts and the dense and rugged terrain of Arnhem Land in Northern Australia on a search for knowledge of Aboriginal art.

Family of Lawn Bowlers

Both sides of the immediate family (Edwards and Cordon) were enthusiastic lawn bowlers indeed Grandfather Frank Edwards established his own rink on 'Zante Grove' equipped with special

lighting for night bowls. He was a popular player and official of the Millswood Bowling Club up until his death on 27th April 1954 at the age of 79. He had held office as a member of the committee, Chairman of Selectors, Green Manager and Coach with characteristic energy and enthusiasm. As a player he had won the Veterans' Handicap in 1945 and 1948 and the Club Handicap in 1949. In his later years he was runner up for the Club Championship and in 1951-52 played off for the Phil Lee Pairs Tournament. Before joining Millswood as a member in 1941 he belonged to the Brighton Club where he had encouraged his father to play. He joined in 1922 on the advice of his friend George Western who was concerned about his health due to stress and over-work. He won many events and was elected to Life Membership.

'Zante Grove' was a popular meeting place where family and friends came together often to either play or watch a game of bowls. Grandfather Edwards also had a billiard table which added to the fun of a visit especially when my aunts were present with their boyfriends. There was Alec Gibson, Alan Gregory, occasionally Roger Knill and later Ron Inverarity.

Stanford Edwards – Bowling Achievements

South Australia Celebrates

I remember one evening in 1936 when several of the young Edwards girls and their partners decided to visit the Centennial Exhibition staged at the Wayville Showgrounds as part of the celebration of 100 years of settlement. Barbara and I were taken along for an evening of wonder and delight to see the displays, ride on the hurdy-gurdy and eat fairy floss all in the company of happy companions out to enjoy themselves. The most impressive attraction for me was the giant modern steam engine built by the South Australian Railways to mark the centenary.

As a memento of the visit I purchased a vase for my mother and had it engraved: "To Mother from Bobbie – Centennial Exhibition". The State was 100 years old; I was six.

Night Bowls at 'Zante Grove'

As a youngster the night bowls under lights at 'Zante Grove' always held a special fascination especially when the party was joined by Great-grandfather Friend Henry Edwards Snr. He was very tall, thin, had a long flowing white beard and looked very ancient. I well remember feeling a little intimidated by him.

He was born on 3rd March 1847 and christened on 7th April 1847 in the Parish of St Alfege Church in Greenwich, England. The baptismal register states: "Friend Henry, son of James and Sarah Elizabeth Edwards (nee Fauchon) of Circus Street, Tailor, Born 3rd March 1847."

St Alfege has a history going back many centuries. A church has stood since 1012 on the traditional site of the martyrdom of St Alfege. In his 6th year as Archbishop of Canterbury Alfege was taken hostage by Viking raiders and murdered. The existing church is the third to be built on the site. It was dedicated in 1718.

Visit to Great-grandfather

Friend Henry Edwards Snr retired to a house in Brighton. He named it 'Marino' after the property he leased on return from the Crystal Brook catastrophe. We called on him from time to time as undoubtedly, he was the head of our large and growing clan. On reflection it is remarkable we were able to meet as he came to Adelaide with his parents as a very young child of two and a half years. The little family had departed from St Katherine Docks on the Thames on 17th September 1849 on board the 384 ton barque 'Brightman' arriving at Port Adelaide on 5th January 1850 after a fine but rather lengthy passage of 110 days from Plymouth.

I well recall my father taking me to see Great-grandfather on a number of occasions. One of our visits stands out. It was my seventh birthday on 7th April 1937. The grand old man welcomed us warmly and then offered me his hand in greeting. I became flustered and extended my left hand instead of the right. Great-grandfather was quick to correct me and point out I had a wart on the top of my right hand which would be a reminder to use this hand whenever greeting people. This was followed by a brief lecture on the laudable custom of hand shaking, a friendly gesture I adopted from that day. Great-grandfather then presented me with a beautiful large brand new

five shilling piece issued to mark the coronation of George VI who was crowned on 12th May 1937 following the abdication of his brother the Duke of Windsor in December of the previous year. I was overwhelmed and very proud of Great-grandfather's generous gift. I still have it as a treasured link with my revered forebear.

Great-grandfather died at his home in The Crescent in Brighton on 24th August 1938 at the age of 91 years. His wife Kate Edwards (nee Stanford) had passed away on 11th November 1927 aged 77 years.

The wart was not to remain my guide to hand shaking for very long as on the advice of Grandmother Edwards I rid myself of this unsightly blemish by rubbing it with a piece of raw steak, making a wish that it would disappear and then hiding the meat in a secret place. I was cautioned that if I were ever to reveal the hiding place the dreaded wart would be certain to return. Of course, to this day it remains a closely kept secret.

Eric Edwards, the youngest of the clan of 11 surviving children, left us one of the few insights into the personality of his father Friend Henry Edwards Snr: "My father was a man to be admired, and a man to be feared. His word was law and he saw to it that it was upheld. He could be very kind, sometimes very strict and almost fierce. I feared him during my boyhood but (grew) to love him during my manhood. He was stern and could be very stern, but I learnt when I was very young that he could also be very tender.

"During my childhood and youth, I thought him very impatient and stern; later in life when I knew of the difficulties and hardships he had come through, I understood him better. He was always very much head of the house but always polite to visitors. As a small boy I was impressed by his politeness (and) the way that he raised his hat to womenfolk as we passed down the road or street in the buggy. One strange thing that I cannot understand, (it) may be an old English custom, but invariably he called his best friends by their surnames rather than their given names. I never understood that, but I knew he had the highest regard for them. He didn't like government servants telling him what to do. I only knew about the Crystal Brook experience by things that

were said by my parents and the senior members of the family. I gathered that they had endured a hard and bitter experience during perhaps the first ten to fifteen years of their marriage.”

Manuscript memoirs of Eric Edwards taped at his residence in Gawler on 25 August 1978.

Household Chores

When I wasn't fully engaged in my own varied activities I busied myself with an endless round of chores. I looked after the horse, the cow and the chooks; tendered to the flower and vegetable gardens and cut the lawns. I often rode my bike to the Ascot Park Post Office to collect the mail as in those days there were no deliveries. My weekly salary for these tasks commenced at one and a half pence and was raised each year by a similar amount. As I became older I helped my father in the orchard assisting him with the irrigation in the winter and relieving on the tractor when ploughing was in full swing in the spring. One task I enjoyed was fending off the foxes, rabbits and birds. At the first sign of ripening fruit be it apricots, peaches, plums, grapes or almonds there would be an invasion of birds mainly introduced species including starlings, sparrows, black birds, noisy minors, pigeons and silver eyes. Native wattle birds migrated down from the hills for their annual feast and the cockatoos made a welter of the almonds. I was allowed to use an old .410 gauge shot gun to either shoot the birds or scare them away depending on the species. I spent many hours on this endless and somewhat 'fruitless' task.

For a time, the need was abated when mechanised Carbide Bird Scarers were invented and put to use. These new devices let off loud explosions at intervals and scared the invaders away. However, they soon became ineffective as the birds learnt to live with them. It also involved keeping up a supply of carbide in the machines otherwise they ceased to function.

There were only two tasks I rebelled against. They were clearing out the septic tanks when they overflowed quite regularly and holding the chooks while my father chopped off their heads in preparation for lunch on Christmas day and Easter Sunday. Unfortunately, my father was not always accurate, and I became ever fearful that one day a poor old chook would move its head suddenly at the wrong moment. This actually happened on one occasion and my reaction was to

let go, and we were engaged in a game of catch the beakless rooster. I found this very unpleasant and would try to avoid being around at the appointed hour.

The Fire Truck

In common with many youngsters of the day I had a fascination with fire engines and often asked my father to stop whenever we passed a fire station. He was very good and usually indulged my fantasies. Not only did we stop at fire stations but he actually took me in to look at the trucks and the uniforms complete with their impressive brass helmets. On several occasions we actually attended demonstrations which were a great thrill.

On one occasion enthusiasm for the fire brigade led to an incident that could well have proved fatal. I had converted an old bench into a fire truck hanging garden hoses on the sides and placing an axe, shovel and all sorts of bits and pieces of old equipment were brought together to give some semblance of reality to my fantasy of becoming a fireman wearing one of those brass helmets. I would sit on top of the "fire truck" and imagine myself speeding along the road with siren sounding blaring out its warning. On arrival at the fire I would quickly put out the flames.

The one piece of equipment I was lacking to complete my fire engine was a ladder. One Sunday morning my wish came true. Grandfather and Grandmother Cordon were expected for a family lunch. This was always a special occasion and my sister Barbara and I would wait anxiously at the side of the road for Grandfather's splendid Dort Tourer to appear on Oaklands Road. We were always pleased to see our grandparents. They would arrive with gifts for everyone and always with a brown paper bag of lollies for each of their two grandchildren. This was a rare and very welcome treat and created great excitement.

On this particular day the Dort appeared in the distance and as it came closer I was ecstatic to see tied to its side a beautiful ladder for my fire truck. Grandfather had remembered my urgent need from a previous visit and in his kindly fashion had fashioned the ideal ladder to fit on my fire engine.

The addition of a ladder intensified my firefighting game. I spent many hours travelling to imaginary fires climbing up and down my ladder now with a real but very old fire hose retrieved from Grandfather Edward's shed on 'Zante Grove'.

One day I found my sister attempting to climb the ladder leaning up against one of the posts holding up the back veranda of our home near to where my fire truck was parked awaiting a call to an emergency. I watched as she tried repeatedly to climb the ladder but without success. I was only too willing to demonstrate how easy it was to master the art of ladder climbing if you were a fireman. With the words "watch me carefully" I quickly climbed to the top of the ladder.

The ladder slipped! I must have had my mouth open as I slid down the veranda post. A large hook used to hang the milk can out of reach of the cats when it was delivered in the morning went into my mouth and came out immediately below my left eye leaving me hanging on the post. I cannot recall the panic that ensued. I do remember hiding under the dining room table in a feeble attempt to avoid being taken to our nearest doctor Dr Donald Steele at Glenelg for some stitches and a much-dreaded tetanus injection. Since that early age I have been very reticent about showing off any of my skills. The scar eventually faded away but the memory lingers on.

Ascot Park Primary School

My school days began in 1936 at the Ascot Park Primary School. It is fortunate that a small jubilee history has been published. This provides many insights into the establishment of the school and some poignant memories of a number of individuals who attended during its early years.

"The story of the Ascot Park School began in 1913 with two local vigneron. Frank Edwards, a family man, lived on Oaklands Road and owned the land bounded by Duncan, Western, Marion and Oaklands Roads. Vic Kappler, a bachelor, lived with his parents and six brothers in 'Bleak House' (a two-storey home a short distance from the school) and owned the vineyards bounded by the present-day school fence, Duncan, Pildappa and Hendrie Streets. Both men were actively concerned with the wellbeing of the district and recommended to the Education Department that, in view of the potential of the growing district, and the land being immediately available, it

purchase the land for the purpose of erecting a school. As a result of their petition, and with the backing of local residents, on the 5th May 1914 the Department purchased 2 acres (0.8 hectares) of land on the corner of Marion Road and the 'Bleak House' lane, which has since been widened and named Duncan Avenue. This land cost two hundred pounds (\$400) or 10 house blocks at \$40 each. What price at today's valuation?

Land and Buildings

"Following the initial purchase of land from George H and JG Ryan, the Government allowed for the cost of the school in estimates for 1918. However, it was not until community consultations were held and a further deputation made to the Government in May 1924 that funds were made available in July of the same year and the building commenced.

"Messrs Warner & Sons were contracted to build the original school building, which consisted of two large classrooms, one being for grades 1, 2, 3, and 4 and the other for grades 5, 6 and 7, a Headmaster's Office and book store and a children's cloakroom. The Ascot Park School was officially opened by the Director of Education (Mr WT McCoy)... on Friday 29th October 1926 when the State of South Australia had been a reality for just 90 years.

Ascot Park School Opened

'The Advertiser' announced the opening of the new school on 14th September with the following coverage: "The new primary school at Ascot Park, which has accommodation for 200 children, was opened yesterday. There were 50 pupils in attendance, 27 boys and 23 girls, but the 200 mark is expected to be reached by Christmas. There had been some misunderstanding among prospective scholars, many of whom were under the impression that they would miss the examinations if they left their old schools, and this phase largely accounted for the comparatively small attendance yesterday. The children of the Ascot Park district have previously attended the schools at Edwardstown, Sturt, Glenelg, Plympton and Black Forest. The new school, which is situated amid most delightful surroundings, has every modern equipment, and will be a boon to the district. The headmaster is Mr J O'Shaughnessy, who has been transferred from Mylor. He has been with the

Education Department since 1885. He is assisted by Miss B Spruhan from St Leonards. The official opening of the school will take place on a date to be fixed.

(1926) 'Ascot Park School Opened', *The Advertiser*, 14 September

"On the 13th September 1926 there were 101 children enrolled and during 1927 the number increased to 156... Towards the later part of that year a teachers' rest room, which did double duty as a sick room, a cloak room and two classrooms, divided by a folding partition, were added to the existing building. These additions were opened early in 1928 by Hon E Anthony, MLC." This was the Ascot Park School as I knew it when enrolled in 1936. "As the need for more classrooms, and larger playing area, became apparent, further land was acquired." By 1960 the school had expanded to 33 classrooms to cater for the district.

"The first Headmaster, Mr Michael O'Shaughnessy, was transferred from the Mylor School and took up his appointment on 13th September 1926. On his retirement on 31st January 1931, his place was taken by Mr AT George, who served in this capacity until his retirement in 1937.

Crowded Classrooms

"Miss Bridget Spruhan was appointed assistant teacher in 1926, but at the beginning of 1927 her place was taken by Miss Ella Parsons, now Mrs G Lord of Seacliff. Back in 1927 she had a staggering 113 children to teach in grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. 'We had to sit the children three to a two-seat desk', she recalls, 'and the desks came right up to the teacher's platform. The veranda was partially closed in to make room.

"The Headmaster took Grades 5, 6 and 7 and taught 80 children.'

"Other teachers were Messrs Bronner, WR Searson and W Cropley, Misses Noble, Rosewall, Golding, the very popular, hardworking Miss GM Riley who taught at the school from 1934 to 1940 and Miss G Bell who was with the school for 12½ years from 1930 to August 1942 and who

endeared herself to all who came in contact with her.” I remember being taught by both Miss Riley and Miss Bell.

A former pupil recorded her memories of the school and the surrounding area for the Jubilee publication. The description is precisely how I remember the district and school as an eager young child.

“When I see the present school yards with dozens of cycles in neat racks, my mind goes back to my school days when there were precisely two cycles leaning on the school wall. They belonged to Patty and Peter Western who used to ride to school each day from Marion.

“Apart from the few who caught the train from Oaklands, the children walked to school along well defined tracks across open paddocks. In the summer their socks would become filled with grass seeds and in the winter their galoshes or rubber boots would slip and slide through mud and puddles. The Marion Road, though a main one, was not bituminised and was riddled with pot holes, but even so it made better walking than the weed covered strip which was the footpath. The creeks running parallel with Sweetmans and Marion Roads would run a banker and the Edwards’ generator would work overtime pumping the water into the irrigation channels of their vineyard. We took for granted the vineyards which came right to the school fence on two sides and the large, unfenced playing field for the boys which was on the third side.

“The monotonous drone that drifted through the school windows as the tractor went slowly back and forth between the vines barely penetrated the consciousness of any of us.

“In those days the district boasted three shops. The largest was opposite Sixth Avenue and owned by Mr and Mrs Francis. It was the general store and Post Office. The second was near the station and run by Miss Brennan. She kept the butter, cool drinks and such like in her cellar. It was also the ticket office. The third shop was opposite the school and was the students’ lunch shop where pies and pasties could be bought for 3d each.

"The school ground between the eastern gate and the gum tree was divided into garden lots which were tended by the senior girls who zealously watered them in the lunch hour, carrying the water from the troughs in half kerosene tins. The vegetable plots were at the bottom of the school yard and were the domain of the boys, but I would not like to state just how much zealous watering was done by them at lunch times!

"Memories galore and with them comes nostalgia. Regret for the gum trees which once lined Oaklands road and the almond trees on the other side 'Zante Grove'. When in full blossom they made an unforgettable picture. Regret for the vines which changed with the changing seasons. Regret for the lilac tree which grew near the gate of the Partridge's old home (facing Marion Road on Block 1)." The Partridge family were relatives on the Davis side of the family who were given accommodation in the Marion Road Cottage on 'Zante Grove' and employment during the depression. Grandfather and Grandmother lived in this cottage when they were first married. It was later the home of Ray (son of Pearce) and Mary Edwards' and their children up until the time of the sale in 1950. "And regret, too, for the little four roomed red brick school which is no more. The years speed by and progress will not be halted."

- A schoolgirl of the twenties.

John Easterbook was the fourth pupil to be enrolled at the school in 1926. He describes the routine that continued in my day:

"The day began with a salute to the flag, which was flown from a special pole donated by two businessmen in the district, Mr Lambert and Mr Walters," John recalls. "Then followed the usual lessons in arithmetic, spelling, history and geography with the children seated at wooden desks with a seat that folded back."

"'Playing the wag' must have been a popular past time in those days because John remembers the Truant Officer, Mr Fisher, visiting the school at least twice a week!"

He also remembers his own high spirits used to earn him a caning three times a week. Mr O'Shaughnessy was a strict disciplinarian!

"Other early enrolments included such names as Broadbridge; Harris; Dunhill; the Boots family; the Cuttings; Mary, Gwen and Jean Briant; Thelma, Alice and Bob Murray; McGuffie; Alsop – Max, Fay and Albert; Joy and Gwladys Briggs; the Sharp, Pethick and White families; eight Southams; the Bertrams – Stan, Frank, Henry, Clara, Estella, Dorothy and Caroline; and the Sweeneys – Jack, Harold, Laurel, Kelvin and Geoff. Within a year or so Lindsay Brooks, Joyce and Pauline Gunn, Stewart and Geraldine Scott, Owen and Dorothy Robinson, the Threadgold and Topley boys and many others joined the ranks.

"The aforementioned Frank Edwards and Vic Kappler were also represented at the school by Fay (daughter) and grandchildren Barbara and Robert Edwards and nieces and nephews Bob, Joan, Joyce, Clem and Laurie Kappler and, in the next generation, Shirley, Marie and Neil Sinclair, Gaye and Annette Kappler and Andrew Collins. Mr M O'Shaughnessy's grandchildren Brian, Maureen and Trevor, and great-grandchild Matthew, also attended the school." (The O'Shaughnessy's were close friends. I met Cath in 1946 on a blind date at the St Patrick's Day ball held in the Palais Royal on North Terrace arranged by Maureen and Trevor.)

The School Bell

"How did the school come to possess its bell? Within a few weeks of the opening day at the school, Mrs M Briggs saw the bell at Dobbies Ltd and purchased it 'for a few pence over six pounds (\$12).' It was hung on the old gum tree (which now stands on the Marion Road footpath next to the crossing lights) and for many years summoned the children to 'fall in' for lessons.

"Arriving late for school meant being made to stand beside the school flag. Most of the wily late comers successfully hid behind the wall of the school building, but the not-so-quick or cunning were marched to the flagpole and made to stand there for punishment.

“The fire monitors whose task it was to light the fire in the open fireplace on the winter mornings? And the tea monitors who made tea for the staff of four teachers every morning recess and lunchtime? For their efforts they were rewarded at the end of the year with a Christmas present – usually slippers.

“The old school creek which flooded in 1931. In 1940 new drainage works were carried out in the area and it was filled in. The creek’s origin was in the foothills, it ran along Sweetman Road under Marion Road and along Oaklands Road to Sturt Creek. This section is now contained in large underground pipes. The branch which ran along the eastern side of Marion Road from Sweetmans Road to Second Avenue crossed under Marion Road at the school gate and petered out in the vicinity of Bray Street. Remember hunting for frogs under the stones in the bottom of the creek?”

Ascot Park Primary School Golden Jubilee. 1926 – 1976 Publisher Ascot Park Primary School. 1976.

The new school was the largest building in the district at that time. However, it came too late for Grandfather’s children except the youngest (Fay Marion) who was five years old when it opened. She attended for a brief period before transferring to the Methodist Ladies College. Grandfather’s two grandchildren Barbara and Robert Edwards began their schooling at Ascot Park in 1935 and 1936 respectively. They both obtained their first seven years education at the new local school before moving on to Unley High School and Thebarton Boys Technical School.

Attending school was a new experience after my early years of freedom. However, I soon settled into the routine and enjoyed the company of an increased network of friends. And there were always the week-ends and holidays to pursue other interests.

Infectious Diseases

Health often became an issue as epidemics were regular occurrences when classes would be denuded of pupils by colds, measles, chicken pox, mumps, scarlet fever, diphtheria and the most dreaded scourge of all – poliomyelitis. The latter engendered a great deal of fear in the community as its crippling affects touched many youngsters often leaving them debilitated for life. There were

several occasions when the risks were considered to be so high the school would close in an attempt to avoid the spread of this horrible sickness. Of course, my sister and I contracted our share of contagious diseases but thankfully not Polio.

Visits by school doctors broke the routine and created great interest as we all lined up for a check-up. They were not feared except when injections were involved. We were all too young to understand very much about illness and death. There were times when free milk was distributed to every child while at other times apples were provided free to all attending the school in an attempt to improve overall health.

South Australian Centenary

I commenced school in 1936, a time for celebration of the Centenary of the State and the occasion for many special events. I still have the medal presented to every pupil in the school. It was my first medal and I wore it with pride. The special lessons and events of that year stimulated my interest in local history which continued to develop initially focussed on our family but soon broadened out to wider fields of interest.

Early Signs of Immigration

In those days my fellow students were almost entirely young Australians with British backgrounds. I well recall the day when Nick Evanov and his sister turned up at our school. They had migrated from Bulgaria with their parents. We had never heard of this country but were quickly to become well informed. The family established a successful market garden specialising in growing tomatoes and later a nursery.

A ripple of curiosity passed through the school when they were introduced to us during a morning assembly. However, it was only a short time before we all became mates and were learning to speak a few words of Bulgarian. I remember being invited to their home on a number of occasions where I met their parents who were always generous and kind.

Another ripple of curiosity passed through the school when a family of Gypsies arrived in caravans and parked near the Ascot Park Railway Station. The children came along to school and were quickly accepted and joined in our different activities. Such events stood out sharply in those days as we lived in a closely-knit community well before the time of mass migration that followed the Second World War.

The ripple of curiosity turned to a wave when a boy from a Reform School joined us as part of a Government trial scheme for the rehabilitation of young offenders. Alas his stay was short lived as he shocked us all with his scandalous behaviour and created mayhem by bullying many of the kids. Matters came to a climax when he tied four boys to the back fence of the school grounds during morning recess. The situation exploded when the missing students failed to return to class. Of course, we knew what had happened, but no one dared to 'dob' in the offender for fear of reprisals.

Trip to Melbourne

In 1937 I entered upon a new adventure when my father and mother decided to drive overland to Melbourne to visit Auntie Del Craigie and her family. She was my grandfather's youngest sister (Adella May Edwards). We knew her well as she visited Adelaide from time to time and was the topic of conversations at family gatherings then a regular part of our lives. Auntie Del married Benjamin Bertie (Jack) Craigie on 4th June 1914 and had two children, Glen and Beth.

My sister Barbara and I were very excited at the prospect of such a long trip especially as it was the year of the Coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. The ceremony took place in Westminster Abbey on 12th May 1937. The King, Prince Albert Duke of York, was the younger brother of Edward VIII who had created a constitutional crisis when he abdicated on 10th December 1936.

In common with most of the community our family took a keen interest in the royal family and our forebears had all emigrated to South Australia from England in response to the Wakefield System of colonisation. At that time the majority in the community had a great sense of loyalty to the 'Old

Country'. Grandma Gordon in particular, followed the events of royalty closely acquiring Coronation cups and other souvenirs. She also saved the supplements from the papers covering special events in the life of the royal family.

We made the trip to Melbourne in our 1930 Ford Tourer then something of an epic journey. We went along the Coorong Road and thence on to Western Victoria. It took three days as the roads were poor and cars slower and less reliable than they are today. At times they became tracks through farmland and large sheep stations. I was very proud to be appointed the official gate keeper as we drove through property after property. Puncture had to be mended on the road-side and Father worked hard to keep the car operating smoothly. The petrol pump, spark plugs, points and radiator all gave trouble and were quite temperamental.

It was exciting to travel such long a long distance and see the vastness of the country. My sister and I played games, sang, watched out for kangaroos, emus, echidnas, snakes and lizards. At other times we simply watched the scenery and slept on the back seat of the Ford Tourer.

Once through the desert the scenery became more interesting. On reaching the Victorian border my father had to report to the local police station and obtain a Victorian driving permit as licences issued in one state were invalid in the others.

As we travelled on into Victoria the scenery became more interesting with many distinctive cone-shaped hills and lakes created by ancient volcanoes. After three days of travel we finally reached Geelong and then on to Melbourne. Barbara and I were quite amazed at the beautiful buildings, wide boulevards lined with trees and wonderful parks. The city was decked out in lavish style to mark the coronation. There were lots of people in the busy streets giving the city an air of excitement. Colourful flags and bunting were everywhere to be seen. South Australia had celebrated its centenary the year before with many special events including the Great Centennial Exhibition. By comparison the scale of Melbourne was much more ambitious and exciting.

It was a new experience to be staying with relations so far away from home. The Craigies lived on the Essendon tram line giving us ready access to the city. We were thrilled with the shops, the beautiful arcades and the visit to the museum. We were over-awed by the impressive buildings as they were so much larger and grander than those in Adelaide. The city had a carriam?-like atmosphere. I searched among the masses of souvenirs of the coronation and returned home with several mementoes of our epic first trip to Victoria.

Little did I know that many years later I would be appointed Director of Museum Victoria and given the task of amalgamating the National Museum of Victoria and the Science Museum of Victoria and develop plans for a new modern institution to meet the future needs of Victorians. I also became a member of the board of the Zoological Gardens and returned to Geelong and undertook a study and make recommendations for the needs of the local cultural organisation.

Preacher Visits School

A preacher by the name of Commander Harvey called at lunch times on occasions to deliver fiery messages about the Gospels. He handed out booklets and stirred many a young pupil into taking an interest in religion. The Edwards family were Methodists and attended St Ann's church built at Marion in 1862 where they were active members. Barbara and I attended Sunday School there for a brief period at an early age. However, the Cordon Family were devout Anglicans and we attended the historic pioneer church of St Mary's-on-the-Sturt largely at the behest of 'Auntie' Marjorie Duncan. The St Mary's churchyard contains the graves of many of the first settlers in the district including the Daw, Watts, Weaver, O'Halloran, Babbage, Boucaut, Mitford, Ragless, Penn, Duncan and many others.

The School Band

My greatest disappointment at Ascot Park School was a failure to become a successful member of the school band which marched and played in great style at special parade and functions. It always practiced on Friday afternoons. One day much to my delight I was finally chosen to join and went along to the next practise session. I marched proudly up and down and looked forward to having a uniform and learning to play the flute or perhaps even one of the drums. Alas my term in the band

was brief as practise coincided with the period set aside for those students who had made spelling errors in their tests undertaken throughout the week and in particular those held on each Friday morning. Extra study was set including writing out fifty times each of the misspelt words. This was the end of a promising career in the school band as I was the master of spelling mistakes and often had the humiliation of having to sit out in front of the class at the teacher's table during spelling tests. This enabled her to give me a hint when I was about to make a mistake. On reflection this has stood me in good stead as my spelling improved and my passion for a role in the band was but a mere passing aberration.

Thebarton Technical School

I started at Thebarton Boys Technical School on Tuesday 2nd February 1943 at the age of 12. At the end of the day I recorded my first impressions in a modest little diary: "Today I started at T.T. I like it alright but we didn't do much work". Two days later "... made some friends at school ...". Another interesting chapter in my life had begun.

Each morning began with a walk across open paddocks to the Ascot Park Railway Station. Here I purchased a ticket from Miss Brennan who ran the shop by the station. In addition to tickets she sold groceries, papers and a whole range of soft drinks and lollies. The drinks and perishable items such as milk, butter, cheese and small goods were kept in her cellar. The sweets were arranged in trays according to their value i.e., there were half- penny trays, penny trays, two penny trays, three penny trays and so on. I had to allow a few extra minutes when I managed to earn some pocket money as it took some time to make the best choice with a budget of a few pence.

My early morning routine was guided by the Willunga Express as it passed through at precisely the same time each day at great speed, belching clouds of smoke and cinders as it went. My regular train followed at 8:05am and stopped at all stations. The Willunga-Adelaide line opened on 20th January 1915 and soon became a feature in the life of the district as it was a cheap form of travel and served the community well.

It was an interesting trip and quite an adventure after simply walking each day over familiar territory to Ascot Park Primary.

Among the regular passengers was a mix of young students on the way to their schools either in the city or at one of the suburbs along the line. Friendships were formed as we became a band of regular travellers sharing common interests and experiences. At times some of us would stand in the spaces at the end of the carriages where we gained a more exhilarating sense of train travel only to be smothered with smoke and cinders.

I left the train each day at Mile End and took either the Torrensville or Henry Beach tram. If my timing was right, I would catch the very sleek 1929 H Class well known as the 'Glenelg Tram' as it also ran regularly on the Henley Beach Line. I would leave the tram a few stops on from the South Road Crossing and connect with Shipster Street leading directly up to Ashley Street and the main building in the school complex. It was rather overwhelming and confusing at first. However, everyone soon relaxed, made new friendships and adjusted to the new situation.

The school was established in 1919 and opened as Thebarton Technical School. It was part of an initiative to provide technical education of a high calibre to support South Australia's emerging industrial base. Charles Fenner guided the policy change as superintendent of technical education from 5th November 1916. The school actually opened in 1924 and became the model for his plans to unify secondary technical education. Fenner encouraged innovation, an example being an individual freedom scheme of learning introduced at Thebarton in 1927.

In 1930 while superintendent of technical education, Charles Fenner established a course in geography at the University of Adelaide, retiring to Honorary Lecturer in charge when he became the Director of Education in 1939.

In retirement, he assisted the South Australian Museum in the study of tektites and became a leading authority on these interesting objects from outer space. He worked tirelessly for the Royal Society of South Australia and the local branch of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia. He

was President in 1931-1932, edited the proceedings for many years and inaugurated the Historical Memorials Committee. He had a deep and abiding interest in Australian History and was a member of the editorial board for the very substantial Centenary History of South Australia. In 1947 the Society awarded him the John Lewis Gold Medal. He was made a life member in 1950.

The Centenary History of South Australia, supplementary to volume XXXVI of the proceeding of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australian Branch (Incorporated). Under the auspices of the Government of South Australia and the Centenary Committee, Adelaide. 1936.

The Societies' meetings provided an excellent forum to meet people with special interests in many fields. It provided me with further stimulus to my deep interest in South Australian history. On one memorable occasion Charles Fenner very gratuitously invited me to his home at Rose Park to discuss the acquisition and restoration of Captain Charles Sturt's home 'The Grange' built in 1840 on the fringe of the reed beds and then located on a market garden and in a rather derelict state. Charles Fenner had worked hard to have Col. William Light's cottage at Thebarton preserved but in the end it was demolished. He was an inspiration to me and supported strongly the idea of establishing a house museum to honour such a distinguished explorer and pioneer of South Australia. (Fenner, Charles. 1926-27 'Thebarton Cottage' The Old Home of Colonel William Light. Reprinted from Royal Geographical Society of Australia, S.A. Branch Proceedings)

(Fenner, Charles and A.G. Paull, Melbourne: Melbourne UP. 1930. Individual Education: Being an account of an experiment in operation at the Thebarton Technical High School, South Australia. [Issued by the Australian Council for Educational Research])

Thebarton Technical High School was a large rambling complex adjacent to the Thebarton Oval with the River Torrens in the background. In my early weeks I was somewhat confronted by the new environment and the large number of students coming together from near and far. I was intrigued to see one of the older students arrive each day in a very smart green sports car. He was the envy of the school as we all relished the idea of coming to school in our own sports car. This

was despite the fact that most of us were too young to hold a driver's licence. It was very close to my heart as I had already been driving vehicles around our orchard property for several years.

I was very impressed to find my new school had its own broadcasting transmitter. I was familiar with private stations through Gordon Ragless, a family friend who pioneered the Blackwood Radio Club in 1923. However, a school with its own station impressed me. Alas the station was short-lived as it was shut down due to wartime restrictions and I missed the opportunity to join the group interested in learning how to operate the equipment. I joined the camera club instead and enjoyed being able to develop one of my interests.

As soon as classes had been established we were introduced to the different subjects on our agenda. The focus was on a practical education and within a week we were learning the ins and outs of wood working, sheet metal working, blacksmithing, and fitting and turning. These were interspersed with geometrical and free hand drawing and lettering. In addition, we undertook a number of general subjects including English, arithmetic, algebra, chemistry and physics. It was a full and varied program. In those days we were 'streamed'. The bright boys did a language, either French or German. The slow learners like me did geography. I marvelled at the clay modelling classes and found them quite fascinating. A surprising aspect of these lessons was the absolute bedlam created whenever the teacher left the room. The whole studio would erupt as the students set about throwing wet modelling clay at one another while our guard on the door warned us of the teacher's imminent return. The class then settled down to continue work on a bust or some other set piece. I was quite familiar with a few nibs attached to a paper tail being hurtled through the classroom at Ascot Park Primary but this was a new dimension in unruly behaviour. It was not surprising they were known as slush classes.

In any event I became quite good at clay modelling and often received full marks for my efforts. The art classes were an enjoyable part of our studies and I was quick to become adept at mechanical drawing and lettering but slow to develop free hand sketching and drawing in perspective quite difficult to master in the time available.

I was encouraged by one of the student art teachers who was to become a much-celebrated Shakespearian actor. His name was Keith Michell. He is remembered for the many roles he played on stage and screen. We spent much of our spare time together in the school library located on the first floor of the main central block practicing his lines for the plays he was to appear in at the Adelaide Repertory Theatre, now the oldest surviving amateur theatre company in the Southern Hemisphere. He left Australia in 1948 to work with the brilliant Old Vic Theatre School. By 1975 a leading drama critic commented on his career as "... one of the most glittering stars in the British Theatre. Michell, it seems is now inextricably woven into the fabric of English artistic life. His first appearance on the London stage was as Charles II in the musical "And So To Bed" in 1951. His most popular early success was in the TV series "Six Wives of Henry VIII".

Keith Michell established a brilliant career in England, married actress Jeanette Sterke in 1957. They had a son and daughter and continue to live a long and productive life.

Participation in sport and physical education had high priority at Theby Tech and we all had to be involved. I was quick to demonstrate the rich pool of sporting genes in our family had not been passed down to me. A number of my classmates were strong AFL supporters and several of my second cousins played for Glenelg. I agreed to join the school team and ended up on the reserve list for the C team. I only played a few games before kicking my first goal. Unfortunately, in my enthusiasm to have the ball under my control I made for the wrong end of the field and kicked the goal for the opposing side! Alas my football career was at an end.

Having abandoned football, I opted for hockey as the sport of my choice. It was less popular and desperately in need of players to make up the team. I did quite well and developed my skills along with the other team members. I also played in the Glenelg B team under the guidance of Uncle Ron Inverarity who married my father's youngest sister Fay Edwards on 3rd July 1943. He worked with his father and brother in a successful family business and was something of a mentor to his teenage nephew. Uncle Ron gave me copies of the popular "Think and Grow Rich" by Dale Carnegie and a "Beginners Guide to Sex". Both books were something of a revelation at the time and opened my eyes to the future.

Fortunately, the rich pool of sporting genes manifested itself in my children and grandchildren many of whom have excelled in AFL, baseball, cricket, volleyball, athletics and lawn bowls. Earlier generations also excelled in sport.

I much admired one of my new-found classmates whose father worked for Coca-Cola in the city. When I was able to muster up a good reason to miss my train home and return to Ascot Park later via the city I would accompany him home and enjoy as much ice-cold coke as I could consume. It was a very special treat especially during the long, hot summer of 1943 when temperatures soared up to 109°F (43°C) during a prolonged heat wave. Coke was very popular but a luxury in our home.

The experience of travelling by train and tram to high school at Thebarton gave me added confidence to find my own way to the city and beyond. By 1943 at age 13 I was allowed to venture out on my own during daylight hours often taking the steam train to the city and then catch the Enfield tram on King William Street and alight at Barker Road, Prospect, where my grandparents had a lovely home. As noted in my diary on Saturdays I would sometimes stay with them and accompany my grandfather to the Saturday afternoon matinees at the Colonel Light Gardens Picture Theatre built by him and owned in partnership with Clarence Hinton. The Enfield tram ran directly along the main North Road through North Adelaide and the city and straight along Goowood Road to Colonel Light Gardens.

“It is at this time, June and July, that it is necessary to relieve the vines of their old ‘sticks’ so as to control their growth. If this is not done the vine will grow far too large, be out of control and not bear as well.

“The vines having been relieve of their burden now rest while if necessary they are fed with fertiliser which is afterwards ploughed into the soul. Ploughing allows easier irrigation and more nitrogen to enter the soil.

"In August and September it is necessary to give the grapevines their first drink. This is done by pumping water from a bore or creed depending mainly upon the climactic conditions.

"The water is then led out into small channels which eventually lead it to the vines.

"The vines have now been pruned, ploughed and watered while they have been peacefully resting. It is in September when the first shoots gradually make their way into a growth some inches long.

"Another watering is now necessary in October to keep the growth coming. Just as the flowers drop a sulphuring is necessary to prevent any fungus diseases forming which might harm the vines.

"After the last watering in December, when the shoots are some considerable length small bunches of berries can be seen gradually forming. These berries are struggling to become the new year's crop. Where growth is too vigorous it is necessary to 'top' the vines to facilitate setting.

"Slowly but surely during January and February the new fruit becomes larger and larger, riper and riper. There is change of colour as the fruit ripens.

"At last after a long struggle and nearly a year's hard work the fruit, large sweet berries, is ready for picking around March and April.

"There is a month of rushing as the grapes are picked to go into homes all over South Australia and into the wineries where rich red port or sparkling champagne is made of them.

"The rush is over; the leaves are gone; the year starts again."

This essay was awarded nine marks out of ten and helped me gain my Intermediate Certificate after three years at high school.

On 26th November 1945 Mr Gant, the Headmaster, wrote a summary of Secondary School Record and made the following observations: "A fine type of lad, intelligent, industrious, courteous and well spoke. We always found Bob to be honest and dependable and his school results have been of a very high order." So ended my formal education.

In 1945 I sat for the Intermediate and also took several leaving subjects. By coincidence, my father finished school in 1919 at the end of the First World War and joined his father on 'Zante Grove' at the age of 14. I left school at the end of the Second World War and joined my father on 'Zante Grove' in 1945 at the age of 15.

The transition from school to fruit grower was an easy one as I had been Father's enthusiastic little helper from an early age. I was well versed in the routine of managing a productive vineyard and orchard. I enjoyed life on the land – ploughing in the springtime with Dolly our draft horse, driving the tractor in shifts with my father to complete the task while the soil was in the right condition and driving the trucks at vintage time to place the empty boxes at the head of the rows of vines ready for the grape pickers.

Stimulation came from my many friends and interests especially history, museums and archaeology. I received 5 shillings a week on turning 16 and was allowed to drive our 1930 Ford V8 Tourer and take it out in the evenings.

At the end of my first year it was decided I could stay on at Theby Tech for another year. Again, at the end of the second year I was allowed another extension. The pressures became too great at the end of the third year and I joined my father again on 'Zante Grove'.

The property had suffered during the war years and every effort was made to improve productivity.

Purchase of a Camera

I was always an admirer of my maiden Auntie Dora Edwards who was often called upon to assist her brother and five sisters as they married and had families. She also accepted the caring role for her father and mother as they aged.

Auntie Dora was the family photographer and we are much the richer for the records she made of the different members of the family when they were young. I yearned to have a camera of my own as photography fascinated me. To this end I began putting money aside from my 'earnings' in a special money box. I kept very quiet about my ambition to have a camera as I suspected it may not be embraced with enthusiasm.

After nearly a year of saving I had put together 12 shillings sufficient to purchase the Kodak Box Brownie I had seen in Kodak's shop in Rundle Street priced at ten shillings and six pence. Wherever there was an opportunity to return home from high school via the city I would check on the camera. This reinforced the urge to possess it.

I raised the matter cautiously on several occasions at the dinner table and received the expected response "... a waste of money in difficult times." This was a natural response for people who had been through worst financial crisis in history.

Despite the discouraging situations I became more and more eager to make this purchase. I rationalised that having earned the money through my own labours I should be allowed to spend it as I wished. One day in a fit of enthusiasm and bravado I went into the city after school and paid my ten shillings and six pence for my Kodak Brownie and two films. I was thrilled and nursed my purchase all the way home. Then came the feelings of guilt and the difficulty of explaining my actions.

The camera went into hiding for some weeks while I attempted to think of a plausible excuse why I went against my parent's wishes. With feelings of remorse I finally admitted my misdemeanour and apologised. In the end my parents accepted the situation as well as my plea to allow me to decide how to spend my savings meagre though they were.

Of course I was not content with simply owning a camera but made a study of photographic techniques and in time built a small dark room and processed my films and made enlargements. My efforts were curtailed somewhat by costs as my capacity to earn pocket money was limited and as I grew older and became involved in an increasing number of commitments I had to impose some restrictions on expenditure. In the meantime I became a very active member of the Camera Club at Theby Tech.

This early entry into the basics of photography stood me in good stead many years later when I was given opportunities to make trips into different parts of Australia to record rock art and Aboriginal technology.

In July 1947 Auntie Dora took me on a wonderful train trip to Melbourne to visit her sister Olive Gregory whose husband Alan had been transferred to Victoria for several years. She was anxious to see how they had settled into their seaside home at Beaumaris 20kms south-east of Melbourne's central business district.

We caught the Overland Express to Melbourne at the Adelaide Railway Station. I was very excited to be going on such a long journey and looked in awe at the magnificent train with its giant engine. We said out farewells to the family, boarded the train and at 7.25pm were on our way.

The train struggled as it wound its way up the steep inclines in the Mt. Lofty Ranges. We passed through several tunnels and over the great viaduct with its deep gully below where Great-grandfather and his family had a mixed farm in the early 1890's. We steamed on passing through Murray Bridge, Bordertown and across the border to Dimboola, Horsham, Ararat, Geelong and arriving in Melbourne at 9.45am.

We had a delightful holiday by the seaside with visits to the city. I was 10 years older than on my first visit in 1937 more fully the grandeur of Melbourne with its wonderful buildings, grand boulevards and parks.

The highlight of the visit was being taken to a matinee performance of the Australian season of 'Annie Get Your Gun' at his Majesty's Theatre with its history dating back to 1886. Dame Nellie Melba made her Australian Opera debut at the theatre in November 1911. J.C. Williamson who own this very lush theatre situated at 219 Exhibition Street had brought this new post-war Broadway musical to Australia. After playing to packed houses in Melbourne it went on tour and attracted enthusiastic audiences throughout Australia. I was very excited with the performance and embarrassed my auntie by making too much noise and kicking the seat in front of me. I was especially pleased as under my seat was a large parcel containing a small aircraft rubber rescue dingy purchased at a local army surplus store. It was to give me and my mates enormous pleasure over the next summer and beyond.

To Melbourne by Plane

I visited Melbourne again. This time it was my first flight by air. In the intervening years I had completed my education at Ascot Park Primary and Therbarton Tech and was working with my father on 'Zante Grove'. The stimulus for the visit was to see the International Harvester Company works at Geelong for a conducted tour of their tractor and farm machinery plants. My close friend Bob Bigg whose family had a local poultry farm, accompanied me on this first flight. We left Adelaide for Essendon Airport on a DC6 armed with a letter of introduction to the Manager. We were warmly welcomed and taken on an exhaustive tour of the factories. There was also time to take in the sights of Melbourne.

Experiences on Holidays

I found amongst my papers a note written in 1944 recording one of my regular excursions to the beach during the hot Adelaide summers.

"I was, like any other school student, very glad when after a year's work we finally broke up for our Christmas holidays. The day I broke up I was looking forward to a good seven weeks of fun and I think I had it too".

"On the hottest days, few as they were, I went with several of my boy fiends and had some very enjoyable days on the beach. We would go down in the morning and spend the day swimming and

playing. We took a small canoe down one day but I'm afraid the sea was a little rough for it. However that did not stop us from having a good time".

"One day one of my boy friends and I were going to a tennis and swimming party at the Grange, however we missed our train. After missing the train we decided to hitch-hike. This we did successfully obtaining a ride on a truck most of the way. When we eventually arrived it was some time before we found the rest of the party, however when we did we had a good time playing tennis and swimming".

"Like all holidays there was a bad side to it such as a trip to the dentist. Apart from this ordeal there was plenty of garden to dig and lawn to mow".

"Apart from these things I did lots of others however it would take far too long to tell about them all. I like everybody else had a good holiday".

Friendly Neighbours

A right of way named Bleak House Lane (now Duncan Avenue) ran between the northern boundary of our property and the school. This led up to the vineyard and orchard of Mr Nickels and his wife who lived in the two-storey homestead named 'Bleak House'. The Nickels' property was a remnant of the original Section No 114 which adjoined our land on Section No 115. It extended from the Marion Road where the Ascot Park School was built almost to the River Sturt. It had been occupied initially by Eustace Reveley Mitford who arrived in South Australia in 1839 to start a new life as a farmer. Mitford named the property 'Woodend' and was assisted in this task by his neighbour Dr Handsayde Duncan who came out in the same ship but appears to have been far better equipped for life on the land in the British Province of South Australia.

Mitford was a satirist and well-known pioneer "...classified by his contemporaries as a gentleman, journalist, explorer, eccentric, a common carrier or more acceptably – a cadet of a noble family related to Lord Redesdale!" In common with others he found farming "...not very prosperous toil" and turned his hand to all kinds of enterprises including driving a bullock team from Adelaide to Burra. As a journalist he was known for the satirical journal he edited during the last two years of his life called 'Pasquin'.

Dolling, Alison (1981). *The History of Marion on the Sturt: The Story of a Changing Landscape and its People*. Frewville, South Australia: Peacock Publications.

In 1902 the original “Woodend” home was acquired by J and G Ryan (produce merchants) and then by Vic Kappler in 1913 and renamed ‘Duck Farm’. The Nickels and Lunn families acquired the remaining property in 1920 and held it until it was sold for subdivision in 1971.

‘Bleak House’ offered an alternative way home from school. Mr and Mrs Nickels were elderly, kind, generous and always had a special treat for me. The temptation was too great as at that age the hunger pains were always present.

Mr Nickels took great pride and pleasure in maintaining his extensive home orchard where fruits of every variety flourished. He would encourage me to sample each one as they came into season. In addition, he would load me up with fresh fruit to take home for the family.

Love of Bird Life

Mr Nickels also kept an eye out for birds nesting in his fruit trees ready to indulge themselves as the fruit ripened. He encouraged my natural collecting instincts by giving me the eggs of all the introduced species i.e. blackbirds, silver eyes, gold finches, noisy miners and others. Mr Nickels encouraged me to observe the native birds in particular a family of willy wagtails which nested in the same place on his property each year. He also encouraged me to watch for the swallows when they arrived to make their nests and bring up their families of young chicks. We would follow the magpies building their large nests in the gum trees and also the murray magpies as they worked hard to construct their nests with mud bound by strands of grass and other fibres. What a delight it was for a young boy to be encouraged in the ways of nature.

Occasionally Mr Nickels would find historic coins while working his land. Some of these dated back to George III and were no doubt lost in the days of Eustace Reveley Mitford who had established the property. Mr Nickels was also a keen stamp collector. It was a special treat to be taken up to the great living room in the grand old house and be shown his very fine collection. His special

interest was the Solomon Islands. He had brought together a complete set of first editions from that country many featuring the distinctive traditional sailing boats.

My journey to and from school followed many different paths as I could cut across our vineyard and call at 'Zante Grove' and see my grandmother or walk along Marion Road and then down Oaklands Road to our home. There were also opportunities to make diversions to meet a friend as Father always worked late so there was little pressure to adhere to very strict deadlines. Despite this, meals were usually served when the family was all present.

Post War Transformation of Marion

The Second World War had quickened the pace of industrial development in South Australia as Adelaide factories turned to war production and new complexes were constructed for the manufacture of munitions and explosives. At Whyalla the Broken Hill Pty. Co Ltd blast furnace came on stream in 1941 followed by a ship building complex.

Under the pressure of war several major public works were undertaken with Commonwealth Government assistance. Among them the duplication of the Overland Telegraph line to Darwin in 1942. The Stuart Highway to Alice Springs and Morgan-Whyalla Pipeline were completed in 1944. Exploration of the Leigh Creek coalfield began in 1942 and led to breaking the monopoly dependence on New South Wales.

The end of the war brought profound changes to South Australia. Several factors contributed to a post-war boom as the State changed from a largely agricultural economy to industrial production. High on the agenda was a pent up demand for new housing which had been almost non-existent during war-time.

The transformation of the Marion District from a quiet attractive rural region into an extension of the Adelaide suburban sprawl began immediately after the end of the War. Australia had launched a massive program of immigration in the belief that having narrowly avoided a Japanese invasion the country must 'populate or perish'. Hundreds of thousands of displaced Europeans came to

settle in Australia. By 1965 more than two million new settlers had arrived with the active assistance of the Federal Government.

Suburban Development

In South Australia the rapid growth in population put further pressure on housing with Marion and other districts surrounding the city becoming targets for extensive sub-divisions. These were mainly areas where market gardens, orchards, and vineyards had flourished since the early years of settlement. The South Australian Housing Trust, the first authority of its kind to be created in Australia had been formed in 1936 – the year of the Centenary of the State – under the government of Thomas Playford. The task of the new agency was to improve living standards and lower costs to attract industrial development to drought prone South Australia.

In the post war years the role of the Housing Trust was greatly expanded and it became an urban developer and virtually created a new metropolitan Adelaide. The Trust expanded into one of the most powerful of the State Government agencies and acted as a total development authority fostering new suburban areas even extending as far as establishing the satellite town of Elizabeth officially proclaimed in 1955. It was the champion of industrial development and population expansion. These roles were only curtailed from the late 1980s.

Marsden, Susan. *Business, Charity and Sentiment: The South Australian Housing Trust 1936-1986*. Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986.

Sale of 'Zante Grove'

Grandfather's property "Zante Grove" was situated on the north east corner of Marion and Oaklands Roads it began with the purchase of a 10 acre block (4ha 468-56m²) in 1902 and was extended in stages as adjoining land and funds became available until it reached an area of 50 acres (20ha 2342-8 m²). It was on the frontline of development being the first orchard encountered before entering Marion when travelling south along Marion Road. Broadly speaking the property was bordered on three sides by large pre-war sub-divisions: Oaklands Estate on the south, Park Holme to the north and Ascot Park to the east. On the west it adjoined Pethick's Vineyard on Oaklands Rd. The many allotments created were slow to sell and relatively few houses

had been constructed on these areas prior to the post war building boom. Acquisition of the Edwards' property by the Housing Trust in March 1950 with its extensive frontages on Marion and Oaklands Roads linked the earlier sub-divisions and created a significant area for urban development.

Grandfather recorded his thoughts on the sale of the family estate in his brief memoirs: "Now the S.A. Housing Trust who was buying up land everywhere for building purposes came along and made a very tempting offer for our 50 acres. Friend and I talked it over and went into the matter thoroughly. We felt that most of the garden is old and going back. If we keep it, it will nearly all have to be replanted, grape prices are not likely to hold and labour is almost impossible to get. Friend's almond cracking business takes so much of his time that it is too much for him to properly attend to that and the garden. We decided to sell, giving possession, on 1st June 1950, of all the land except a block 183' x 175' containing the homestead, sheds etc." This was given to his third eldest daughter Rita and her husband Alec Gibson as their share from the sale.

Grandfather went on to say "...I now hope to live to see the whole place laid out as a suburb with streets with appropriate names in memory of our time and family. As I look back I feel that I have very much to be thankful for. In my single days I had a very hard struggle and found it very hard to get a start but I have been blessed with a good wife and helpmate and we now have enjoyed over 45 years of mutual companionship. We have on the whole enjoyed good health and have a family which has given us very little anxiety or worry of which we are proud. All except Dora are happily married and have their own families. Dora remains single with us and has been a blessing and help to all her sisters and their children. We hope in the future, she will be a great comfort to whichever of us two are left to face the world alone."

Edwards, Frank Henry. Personal Memoirs. 1952.

Winds of Change

When the decision to sell 'Zante Grove' was announced to the family grandfather had no misgivings about the sale of his property acquired and developed over a period of 48 years. It was a very satisfying outcome after his many years of hard toil. He was motivated purely by a desire to

settle his affairs after a long and challenging life and share the fruits of his labours with his only son and five daughters.

My reaction was one of surprise as five years earlier it had been decided I should join my father on the property. The decision to sell came with a degree of disbelief as the first 20 years of my life had revolved around the family property and surrounding district. Overnight there was the prospect of dramatic change and my future again came into sharp focus. I entered into the wilderness with little education, lacking financial resources and bleak prospects of finding suitable employment. My main interest was in museums. Fifteen years were to pass before I achieved the career of my choice, when I was appointed to succeed Norman B. Tindale as the Curator of Anthropology at the South Australian Museum.

Looking back on those days I have come to realise my future had been insecure from the time I left Ascot Park Primary School in 1942, at the age of 12. At the same time in my father's life his only option had been to follow family tradition and work with his father on the home orchard where he had grown up. He attended the Sturt Primary School located a mile or so from 'Zante Grove' on an acre of land near the junction of Sturt and Marion Roads adjacent to land reserved for a District Hall.

The Sturt School opened with 12 pupils in May 1878 and was quick to attract pupils from throughout the Marion and surrounding districts. By coincidence, many years later my eldest son, Andrew Friend Edwards, began his schooling at Sturt Primary. At the time I was leasing 'Uncle' Jim Duncan's market garden property on Sturt Road.

Sturt Primary School. A Centenary History 1878-1978. E. Ted Hasenohr pupil at the school. 1925 – 1931. Adelaide, 1978.

On 22 November 1919 soon after the First World War had come to an end, father was awarded the Qualifying Certificate at the age of 14 having passed his exams in every subject: reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, composition and drawing. Equipped with this very basic education he continued to work at his father's side. This was the natural course of events for many of his school

mates who were also sons and daughters of local orchardists, market gardeners, vigneron, farmers and other owners of commercial enterprises.

Edwards, Friend. Qualifying Certificate. Education Department of South Australia. 1919. Robert Edwards Family Papers.

There was a vague expectation I would follow closely in my father's footsteps and continue the property in family ownership. At the time there was an assumption "Zante Grove" would be passed ultimately down to my father on the basis of an equitable share arrangement with his five sisters. In the fullness of time it would come to me with an accommodation made to my sister. In 1942 there had been no mention of selling the property. However the opportunity for change came much sooner than could have been anticipated and due to circumstances beyond the control of either our family or indeed other property owners in the Marion community.

As Historian, Alison Dolling has demonstrated so ably in her book on the history of Marion similar father/son/daughter relationships existed throughout the district from the earliest days of European settlement by enterprising families along the River Sturt. Many properties changed hands and over time the original larger holdings were sub-divided and most of the former grazing and cropping lands gave way to horticultural pursuits. Generation upon generation carried on the family tradition, however as land prices increased rapidly in the immediate post war years and the general population expanded the pent-up demand created during the war years was unleashed. Rumours of offers to purchase properties came first followed by speculation about land values. Suddenly selling became an attractive option for many owners. The sale of 'Zante Grove' in March 1950 was among the earlier acquisitions by the Housing Trust with others following year by year until the change was complete.

The transformation of Marion into part of suburbia began in earnest at about the same time as 'Zante Grove' was sold. There were different outcomes for each family depending on their circumstances. Some welcomed the opportunity to either leave the district and take up other pursuits or simply retire; others moved to more distant areas to the north and south of Adelaide

and established new orchards and market gardens. Murray Valley War Service Land Settlement schemes also were created as they had following the First World War.

Several neighbours already had decided earning a living from the land was becoming too demanding with its dependence on seasonal conditions, fluctuating markets and ever increasing rates, taxes and labour costs. As a consequence they focussed on extending their children's education to develop new skills using their rural past in Marion as a pathway to a more prosperous future. The gap in production created by the sale of so much fertile land was filled partly by the arrival of large numbers of migrants from Southern Europe. They had a long tradition in the production of high quality fruit and vegetables and were keen to transfer their skills to a new home in South Australia.

Declaration of Second World War

In 1942 when my days at Ascot Park Primary School were coming to an end there were no thoughts of parting with "Zante Grove" as little interest was shown in the sub-division of large estates. This was all in the future as Australia was at war with Germany and Japan. Darwin had been bombed by 242 Japanese aircraft on 19th February 1942 with extensive damage and heavy casualties. Contrary to widespread belief at the time, the attacks proved not to be a precursor to an invasion. However, within a few days of the devastation of Darwin I was watching with fascination as engineers went from bridge to bridge throughout Marion and other districts drilling holes for demolition charges. The objective was to blow up the bridges and other transport infrastructure to slow the advance of any invading force.

National Archives of Australia – *Fact Sheet 195. The Bombing of Darwin*. 2013

I look back and remember well the declaration of the Second World War. As the situation in Europe deteriorated it became the main topic of conversation for many weeks in the lead up to the final announcement. Everyone was aghast at the German bombing of Poland and later brutal land invasion. Finally the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain handed an ultimatum to the German government at 10 am on the morning of Sunday 3 September 1939 with a request for a response by 11am, London time.

This happened to coincide with an invitation to my parents to attend a Saturday evening dinner party at the home of close friends Malcolm and Thelma Sargent and their son, Murray. They lived in a lovely free-stone fronted bungalow set in the rolling hills of Darlington. It faced north with commanding views of the City of Adelaide in the distance. It also had its own tennis court used regularly for social games among local friends. The Sargent property was originally part of the vast Oaklands Estate. Alison Dolling tells us that "...on the 14th December 1906 "Oaklands" was sold at auction for £15,000 to Thomas Currie Tate. The Darlington section went to Ada Sheidow of Clarendon for £8 an acre. In 1919 this section was transferred to Aaron James Sargent and in 1937 to his son Malcolm James Sargent."

"Aaron Sargent and later his son, grew wheat, oats, and field peas and ran sheep on the steeper hillsides of their Darlington farm. During the 1940's they also grew flax". "In 1947 Aaron and Malcolm Sargent were farming a total of 354 acres between them. This was sub-divided and sold over the next twenty years."

Dolling, Alison. *The History of Marion on the Sturt*. Adelaide. 1981.

Pre-Television Age

In the 1930's Saturday nights were times to relax and visit friends and relations. Pleasant dinner parties were arranged with lots of discussions over drinks followed by evenings of "Penny Poker" or some other card game. When children were present my sister Barbara and I would be allowed to stay up and watch before being put into a temporary bed until the party broke up in the early hours of the morning.

News From London

On the night of the announcement of the declaration of war with Germany by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain I was all too well aware of the impending crisis and allowed to stay up and listen to the eagerly awaited broadcast over the BBC. The wireless was kept on throughout the evening to be certain we would capture all the news. In those days radios were large and cumbersome and at an early stage in their development. Often the sound would fade away and become inaudible. A good bang and shake and much tinkering with valves and wires was often needed to bring the program back to life. Finally the grave voice of the Prime Minister came through the heavy static: "This country is at war with Germany" was the beginning of his very

profound announcement. The little group gathered around the set and listened in silence to the 13 minute broadcast from London

Militia Training

Malcolm Sargent and my father along with other boys of their age, had received part-time training at the Army Remount Depot at nearby O'Halloran Hill. After the broadcast 'Uncle' Malcolm went out of the room and returned donned in his uniform and much to everyone's amusement proceeded to march around the room carrying a .303 army rifle.

The Army Remount Depot where they had trained in their youth was developed on land first settled by Major Thomas Shouldam O'Halloran. He was an early pioneer who contributed much to the founding of South Australia after landing at Glenelg in the "Rajahsthan" on 21st November 1839 and later settled with his family where O'Halloran Hill is today. "On 2nd February he was nominated a Justice of the Peace, and in 1840 was gazetted Major-Commandant of the South Australian Militia on 26th February, and on 8th June Commissioner of Police." The property changed hands a number of times until it was compulsorily acquired by the Commonwealth of Australia in 1913 and used by the Australian Army for training troops and raising horses.

Tredrea, Charlie. *Commissioner of Police 1840-1843 Major Thomas Shouldham O'Halloran, CMG*. South Australia Police Historical Society Incorporated. Website first established on 23rd November 2000

Memories of the First world War

'Uncle' Jim Duncan was also present on that fateful evening with his wife 'Auntie' Marjory Duncan who was Malcolm Sargent's sister. (In those days close friends were often adopted as "uncles and aunties"). When only sixteen he had put his age up and volunteered for service in the First World War, he became an Ambulance Driver on the front line in France. The mood of the evening soon changed to one of serious concern.

Memorable Dinner

The dinner earlier in the evening was especially memorable as 'Auntie' Thelma had mistakenly served up the water used to prepare the corned beef instead of the tasty soup she had prepared. I remember thinking it was pretty poor soup! However at that age I was always hungry and everyone was too polite to comment. My 'Auntie' discovered her mistake when she and the other

ladies retired to the kitchen at the end of the evening for the customary chat while washing the dishes. She was terribly embarrassed about the mistake while her guests were highly amused. Needless to say it became a much relayed story at dinner parties. While the ladies were out of the main room I listened to the men talking. They had a far more serious discussion about the implications of another world war.

After the solemn announcement over the BBC the adults settled down to an enjoyable night of Penny Poker, this went on into the early hours of Sunday morning.

Of course for me and my sister it was an opportunity to stay up very late and have fun although we failed to last the distance. I remember being carried out to the car half asleep in the early hours of a chilly morning. The short drive home was in silence, and we soon went back to sleep. On arrival we were carried inside to our bedroom, undressed and tucked in to bed under protective mosquito nets. These were a vital necessity in those days when mosquitoes had numerous places to breed.

Devastating Earthquake

The lovely Sargent home at Darlington was later totally destroyed in South Australia's biggest and most destructive earthquake and the second worst in Australia up to that time. It struck at 3.40am on the night of 1 March 1954. The tremors of five to twenty seconds duration went on for five to six minutes. The earthquake registered 5.25 on the Richter scale with the strongest intensity force 8 at Darlington. I well remember visiting the house a few days later with my father and could not believe my eyes at the sight of the big heap of rubble where once had stood a handsome home. The whole building had simply tumbled down in a matter of seconds.

Home at Port Noarlunga

At the time Cath and I were living in our own home 'Brightman Lodge' at Port Noarlunga (named after the ship my forebears came to Adelaide on in 1849). Our first child Andrew was due in a few weeks. (He arrived safely in the Memorial Hospital in North Adelaide on 31 March.) I remember being alarmed as we awoke to feel the bed shaking, ornaments dropping from the shelves and loud sounds coming from the kitchen as heavier objects fell to the floor. We were fortunate the house was built on sand as this absorbed some of the shock. Subsequently building restrictions were placed on a large area of Darlington and Tonsley Park including the historic home and

vineyards of the Laffer family first established by the Trimmer family in the earliest days of settlement.

Painter, Alison. *1 March 1954 Earthquake*. The Advertiser, 2 March 1954. Professional Historian's Association, [SA] Adelaide.

School War Effort

Following the outbreak of war the Ascot Park School, along with other schools throughout the State, was placed on a war footing with sirens sounding the alert from time to time to practice air raid drill. Each class was divided into small groups and had to evacuate the building in a hasty but orderly manner. They would be dispersed to pre-assigned positions of comparative safety from an enemy air attack and wait until the all-clear sounded before returning to respective classrooms. Some took shelter in the nearest Edwards vineyard. These procedures were rehearsed whenever an alert sounded. I was nominated to act as a 'warden' and had the task of assisting to clear our classroom and then stay on duty to watch over the room in case of fire-bombing with incendiary slow burning weapons.

Aircraft Spotting

Groups of boys came together to study aircraft spotting. We soon became familiar with our own aircraft as well as the different types deployed by the enemy. This equipped us to act as plane spotters should the need arise. Fortunately, the only opportunities we had to use our skills involved friendly aircraft although we did take the situation very seriously and expected to be called upon to use our knowledge. At the time my father instructed me to act quickly in the event of an air attack. I was to load our T-Ford truck with food and bedding and drive the family up into the Adelaide Hills for safety. This was a reflection of the concerns of the community at the time.

Threat of War Comes to Australia

There were rumours of submarine sightings and enemy raiders lurking in our seas. The occasional mine was washed up on the beach and lines of barbed wire and sand bagged trenches appeared along our shores. Schools throughout the state became depots for scrap metal, paper, bones, bottles and clothing, indeed anything of use to the war effort. There was fierce competition to see who could collect the most scrap materials especially aluminium, copper, lead and cast iron as these were highly prized. We scoured the countryside to find suitable materials and went from

door to door seeking discarded items of every kind. We also dug up old rubbish dumps in a never ending quest for bottles and scrap metal and even looked longingly at the saucepans bubbling away on the stove in the hope one would spring a leak and could be donated to our drive to assist the war effort. Ironically had any actually sprung a leak special metal patches were available to quickly mend the hole to ensure the saucepan continued to serve us as long as possible.

The SPF (Schools Patriotic Fund of South Australia) was part of the general mobilisation of school children for fundraising and scrap collection at a time of urgent need. It is ironic that the Director of the fund from 1940-1946 was an outstanding educationist of German ancestry by the name of Adelaide Laetitia Miethke (1881-1962). Schools were the focal point of the program. They adopted the initiatives being taken and acted as collection centres for materials gathered by youngsters on a state wide basis. Our contributions were weighed and points allocated in accordance with a set scale of values. This varied depending on the usefulness of the different materials.

Awards for Collecting

Further stimulus was given to the scheme by an award system with points allocated to a range of materials by weight. Medals, bars and wings were presented when specific quotas were reached. In addition to generating a sense of competition there was a genuine patriotic fervour as we were well aware of what was going on in Europe and later the Pacific. We could imagine the pots and pans, copper sheeting, cast iron, wire and lead pipes we collected being turned into fighter aircraft, warships, submarines and tanks.

I was among the most enthusiastic collector but failed to match those in the upper echelon who had tremendous drive and exercised great ingenuity in collecting useful 'junk'. It was a time of great pride when the whole school assembled and the headmaster presented the latest batch of awards. I still treasure my medal, bars and wings and recall with pleasure what was, at the time, a special contribution to the war effort made by the schoolchildren of Australia.

Miethke, Adelaide L. *Six Years with the SPF, Story of the Schools Patriotic Fund of South Australia, Jan 1940-Jan 1946. Adelaide: The Fund 1946*

Edgar, Suzanne and Jones, Helen. *Miethke, Adelaide Laetitia 1881-1962. Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 10, MUP, 1986*

Impact of War

All this was happening in 1940-1942 when I entered double digits and was fitted out with my first pair of long trousers – moving from 9 years of age to ten and then eleven and twelve. The war years continued as I became a teenager and completed three good years at Thebarton Boys' Technical School. This was a period when my horizons were being expanded and I was gaining further knowledge of the world at large.

As the war developed we dug our own air raid shelter and stocked it with food and water. Air raid warnings became a regular event and there was a total blackout monitored closely by special air raid wardens. After the outbreak of hostilities I too went on a war footing, indeed, war became an all-consuming pre-occupation that lasted until it ended in 1945 when I left high school with some reluctance and started full-time work on the family orchard.

School Excursions

Today school excursions are wide ranging and have become an important part of every curriculum. During war-time the focus had been on the progress of the war and the need to communicate the special needs of the country as it worked its way towards a return to times of peace and prosperity.

Japanese Attack on Sydney Harbour

The threat to Australia heightened dramatically when on the night of Sunday 31 May 1942 a little over three months after the bombing of Darwin, three Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour bent on destroying allied shipping. One was caught up in an anti-torpedo net and the crew blew up their boat and themselves rather than surrender. The other two attacked allied warships in the Harbour. One escaped and its remains were found only in 2006 off Sydney's Northern Beaches. The third submarine was destroyed by depth charges and its crew committed suicide. The hulls of the two sunken boats were raised and a composite submarine put together for the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Tour to Raise Money for War Bonds

This was a special opportunity for a travelling exhibition. The central section was mounted on a truck and sent to Canberra via a 2,500 mile (4000 kilometres) tour to sell war bonds and raise money for the war effort. It travelled from Sydney through Canberra down to Melbourne and

across to Adelaide making stops in major towns en route. As the war was part of the curriculum at Thebarton Boys' Technical School we were taken on a special school excursion to see this fascinating relic of the Japanese naval attack on Australia's largest city. The tour ended finally at the War Memorial in Canberra on 23rd April 1943. Many years later one submarine was restored completely and now features in an impressive permanent display as a poignant reminder of those grave days in Australian history.

War Trophies Go On Show

One of the highlights of our infrequent excursions wartime was a visit to an exhibition of captured weapons from the German and Italian campaigns in North Africa. They went on display in the Adelaide Town Hall and we were all excited to make our visit on the opening day although this did lead to something of a temporary crisis. As you can imagine the exhibition was a paradise for teenage boys who had followed closely the passage of the war since its declaration in 1939. However we had no sooner arrived back in our class room when the police arrived and searched us along with our lockers. We were completely mystified. In the end it turned out many of the smaller weapons had been stolen among them pistols, hand grenades and knives. Of course our school was cleared of any involvement although the incident did create some excitement.

Industry Turned to War Production

War production was high on the list of excursions and visits were made to several of the factories geared up for defence production. One example of special interest was the British Steel Mills which was very impressive. However, the excursion that created the most excitement was a visit to two British submarines making a call to Adelaide shortly after the end of the war. It was written up in great detail in the press as follows:

SUBMARINE HERE TODAY Public Inspection At Week-End

The British submarine Trump is due to berth at No. 1 berth (Queen's Wharf). Port Adelaide, between 9 and 10am, today. The second submarine, HMS Taciturn, is expected to arrive between 9 and 10am tomorrow. Public inspections have been arranged from 2pm until probably 6pm each day while the vessels are at Port Adelaide. The tentative programme for inspections is: - Today and

tomorrow, the Trump: Monday, the Taciturn; Tuesday and Wednesday, Trump and Taciturn. Thursday and Friday of next week have been reserved for official visits only. It is expected that schoolchildren and other organised parties will inspect the submarines in the mornings. Interested parties should apply immediately in writing to the Naval Officer in Charge at Port Adelaide. The Trump, which left Whyalla yesterday, will remain at No. 1 berth until Friday. The Taciturn will leave next Saturday. The Deputy Director of Navigation and Lighthouses (Capt. F. R. Miller) has declared No. 1 berth open to the public from today until next Saturday. However, visitors will not be permitted to enter the berth until the submarines are tied up alongside. No. 1 berth, or Queen's Wharf is the first berth east of the Birkenhead Bridge. The public will enter due west of the wharf gate at the terminus of Commercial road and at a gate at the end of the berth near the Birkenhead Bridge. Port Adelaide police will control traffic arrangements. Motorists are advised that North parade, which faces No. 1 berth, takes only one-way traffic, and that parking of motor cars along the parade is Prohibited. Appeal To Public A naval spokesman yesterday appealed to the public not to take any souvenirs from the submarines. Gadgets, which might look unimportant, might be vital and costly parts of the warships, and their removal might easily jeopardise the lives of men in the crews. The public should also refrain from collecting pieces of clothing belonging to the ships' companies, as such clothing was often irreplaceable. A feature of the visit will be a march through Port Adelaide and Adelaide on Tuesday by about 90 officers and men from the two submarines. The men will march from Queen's Wharf to the Commercial road railway station at Port Adelaide at 11am on Tuesday, and from the Adelaide railway station to the Adelaide Town Hall at noon. The SA L of C Area Band Lord Mayor (Ald. J. McLeay), and this will be followed by a luncheon by the Navy League at 1pm. His Excellency the Governor (Sir Willoughby Norrie) will be present at both these functions.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 – 1954), Saturday 22 September 1945, page 9

On return to school from excursions was usual to rite a composition on the visit. The visit to the British submarines was no exception. The following essay records the experience "We left school early one morning to go down to Port Adelaide to see the two British submarines the "Trump" and "Taciturn". After arriving we had to queue up before we could go onboard them. There were crowds of people there and more arriving all the time.

“From the surface these submarines are long, narrow steel structures with a deck and conning tower situated about the centre of the ship. Mounted on this conning tower is a four inch heavy gun with two machine guns, used as protection from aircraft, mounted behind it. Many navigation instruments can also be seen on this tower. There is a ladder-way leading down into the heart of the submarine from here. Two other entrances may also be seen; one in the front and one in the rear. The torpedo tubes are also visible in front and back, six being in front and three at the rear.

“We made our entrance into this strange human made fish from the front, going down a narrow stairway into an electrically lighted room or narrow passage way. The first impression one obtains is of the lack of good clean air, after being used to plenty of open spaces with plenty of fresh air one felt rather stifled. As we moved on through this wonderland of innumerable dials, taps, pipes and gauges it made you, owing to lack of room, feel rather secluded, in fact, rather afraid.

“We saw everything, torpedo tubes, engines, periscopes, range finders, guns, cabins, dining rooms, kitchens in fact everything that could be seen. It was a marvellous ship every cubic inch of space which could be used was used and as I have said, from end to end it is just one mass of pipes, dials, taps or if you prefer ‘gadgets’.

“It was an interesting and educational trip and one which I would not have missed for worlds.”

English Exercise Book. Class 3A. Room 4. Robert Edwards Family Papers.

Peaceful Interludes

Perhaps the most memorable excursions were occasional visits to hear recitals by the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra at the Adelaide Town Hall. The conductor was quite brilliant as he introduced his youthful audience to classical music and demonstrated the way members of the orchestra work together to present particular pieces of music. He invited each of the musicians to take it in turns to play their individual instruments to enable us to identify the sounds throughout a recital. I found it quite fascinating and engendered an appreciation for classical music which has stayed with me throughout my life.

Reinstatement of Army Camp

During my years at Ascot Park Primary much of the focus was on the Second World War as it affected the whole community. My wartime activities took a great stride forward when an army camp was re-established at Warradale on a site used in the First World War. It was part of the original "Oaklands" property so well known to me as a youngster. The camp fronted on to Oaklands Road and was situated to the south west of the River Sturt crossing. It was bordered by the River on the east and Morphett Road on the west. The 56 acres (22.67ha²) was covered with young red gums and continues to be used by the army. In 1940 the site was occupied by the 9th Infantry Brigade as a mobilisation centre and brigade camp. On 10 February 1942 it was taken over under national security regulations. The nearby Oaklands Park area opposite "Zante Grove" was a vast open "paddock" of rich land with a scatter of great ancient red gums. These were part of the original vegetation along the River Sturt. This was my personal domain where I ran loose with my friends. We knew every tree and were able to climb most of them. This vast area became the training ground for new recruits. They would march forth from the camp to the "park" in the morning where they formed into smaller groups for intensive instruction.

Intensive Training

Initially the training embraced mainly rifle drill and bayonet charges. It was then extended to the assembly and operation of Vickers and Lewis machine guns and light artillery pieces. In addition to sitting in on training sessions I developed a lucrative business as a local poultry farmer, by the name of Smerdon took advantage of the influx of soldiers by establishing a mobile canteen to cater for the troops during morning and afternoon smokos. He filled his car and a large trailer with drinks, ice creams, chocolates, cigarettes and snacks and drove from group to group attending to their needs. I followed behind collecting the empty bottles and sold them back to Mr Smerdon making a small fortune. This was simply a side line as I was determined to learn as much as the recruits and sat in with them at every opportunity. Of course the change to earn spending money was most welcome as funds were needed for visits to the pictures and to indulge my many interests including photography.

Harvesting Charcoal

On one occasion my income was further supplemented when lightning struck one of the largest of the old red gums during a violent thunder storm. The dead core of the tree had ignited and burst into flames forming a large 'chimney' through which the flames roared driven by the heated air. It fell to the ground and by chance the fire was doused by a heavy thunderstorm leaving a huge hollow tree trunk. It was large enough to allow me and my boyhood companion, Glen Taylor, to stand upright and wack through the trunk. We spent days scraping the thick layer of charcoal from the inner surface. This was sold to Mr Smerdon to feed to his poultry. Between us we made a handsome profit. The only down-side was two unhappy mothers who had to wash our clothes.

Army Mascot

I was soon adopted by the recruits complete with a uniform embellished with three stripes indicating the rank of sergeant, regimental colour patches, a steel helmet, gas mask, rifle (wooden made by Grandfather Cordon.) It became normal for me to march along at the end of a long line of troops heading for the training ground in the Park and later returning to camp. On some days they went on long route marches covering many miles and would arrive back late in the day in a state of complete and utter exhaustion.

Troops Sent Abroad

Suddenly the troops were gone. We learnt much later they were in North Africa battling against the German and Italian forces and gaining the title "Rats of Tobruk". In the meantime another batch of recruits had taken their place and begun their training. The Australians fought their battles in the deserts of North Africa and then without warning, they returned to Warradale Camp. It was exciting to watch as they came home in an endless convoy of war weary camouflaged vehicles plucked straight out of the desert onto ships and home to Australia, and still covered in dust and looking as though they had endured many recent battles. Several family members and local boys were among the troops returning to Australia and I was full of curiosity to learn about their experiences. They gave me a number of mementos from the Libyan campaign including an Italian hand grenade. This was added to the growing collection of war souvenirs in my 'museum'. Not all of those who left returned and the atmosphere was sometimes tense as by this time the Japanese had over-run much of the Pacific. Everyone was given special leave to relax and where possible meet with family and friends. It was not long before the army vehicles again drove out of

Warrandale Camp along Oaklands Road in another endless procession; this time headed for New Guinea: I did not see them again but admired their contribution to the war in the Pacific.

Sad Losses

I also had suffered a personal sadness with the loss of my beautiful black cocker spaniel as he was run over by an army vehicle. He was badly behaved and had the habit of chasing vehicles and attempting to bite their tyres. This was a risky business as my much loved dog found out to its cost. He was quickly replaced by a 'look-a-like' who soon met the same sad fate. Since then I have avoided having a dog as a pet.

Dangerous War Games

At times there were rather dangerous sides to our activities as live ammunition was occasionally found lying around seemingly abandoned. I well remember one occasion when my young friends assisted me to extract the projectiles from a number of rounds of machine gun ammunition to obtain the thin pieces of cordite within the casing. This occupied us for several weeks. The finale was lining the small pieces of cordite end to end for several yards and then putting a match to it and simply watching it burn with considerable speed! We were young and fearless in those days.

Mock Battles – Australians versus Germans

Our youthful mock battles were planned with military precision based on the war movies we attended at every opportunity. The most memorable and realistic skirmish was between an 'Australian Force' staving off an attack on their gun emplacement by a group of 'Germans.' On reflection the whole situation had the potential to end in tragedy.

Our 'band of recruits' who met from time to time to share in all sorts of fun and games laboured over many weekends to set the scene for the battle. A strategic site was chosen on our orchard property to take advantage of a tumbled down brick structure originally used by Grandfather for scouring pigs during the desperate days of the depression in the 1930's. This was sited a short distance from the large machinery shed set in the midst of rows of almond trees and vines to provide cover for the attacking force. The collapsed masonry was re-constructed with old bricks

using mud as mortar. A disused chip bath heater was built into the structure as it was cannon shaped and a realistic simulation of a large artillery piece.

The Battle Begins

After much effort the scene was set and a date agreed upon for the action to take place. It was to be on a quiet Saturday afternoon in winter when we all gathered to discuss tactics for the actual operation. Our two small forces then took up their positions. The attacking force disappeared among the trees and vines while the defenders went to their positions in the gun emplacement. The cannon was loaded with shredded newspapers and strips of old motor car tubes smothered with sump oil to create lots of smoke during the battle. Of course being one of the main ring leaders I took charge of the cannon. A piece of newspaper was twisted tightly to form a wick and inserted into the firing chamber through a small hole where the heater was lit when in service.

The Enemy Advances

The enemy began to advance towards the target making certain to keep out of sight at every opportunity. The time had come: I lit the wick and took up my position in the ranks of the defenders. Nothing happened: The wick simply burnt down and went out. Repeated attempts were made to fire the cannon but to no avail. It appeared the emplacement would be overrun without so much as a shot being fired in its defence.

Under Attack

As depicted in the movies desperate situations call for prompt innovative action. A solution had to be found quickly as the 'Germans' were moving into range. On the spur of the moment I remembered grandfather had a quantity of blasting powder in the nearby shed. This was left over from the days when he cleared his land of large and very beautiful red gums. I crept quickly to the shed without being seen by the approaching force and returned with a tin of the precious powder. The door of the heater was opened, the explosive poured in and the door secured. Yet another paper wick was lit, and I took up what proved to be a very vulnerable position alongside the cannon.

The explosion was awesome and could have been heard a mile away: the cats ran for their lives and disappeared, the dog barked furiously, the chooks screeched, and the horse let out several cries and then there was total silence.

The walls and roof of our little fortress had been blown apart, the cannon shaped bath heater had flown up in the air and fallen from the heavens transformed into a flat sheet of metal. The defenders were a sorry sight as they were covered in dust and debris and their clothing and hair badly singed. Miraculously despite our wounded appearance and the shock of the explosion, we suffered only minor, but none the less, painful burns, lost eyebrows and some of our hair. Having been crouching alongside the cannon to focus it on the target I took the main impact. Fortunately I was wearing my army steel helmet and heavy winter clothing.

Retreat from the Scene

The attacking 'Germans' beat a hasty retreat from the battle field. They were anxious to make certain they were home before someone arrived on the scene to investigate the explosion. Nobody appeared: The silence continued. The small band of discouraged defenders tidied up the remains of their sad little fort and made their way to an area of swampy ground out of sight in a remote part of the vineyard. Here we hid while we cleaned up, rested and disposed of the worst of our damaged clothing. At dusk we returned to our respective homes mumbling something about rubbish flaring up at Rodney's place when kerosene was used to help incinerate a pile of damp garden clippings. The missing clothes, burns, lack of eyebrows and singed hair were accepted as a normal outcome of a day's adventure by a band of young boys.

After this episode our special army unit returned to military drill, long route marches and watching war films at the picture theatre when we could afford it. My attention was focused on Spitfires and their remarkable role in the Battle of Britain.

War on home front

My father was 34 when the war broke out and considered too old to join the armed forces. In any event he was in a classified industry, essential to the war effort. However he was quick to join the Volunteer Emergency Fire Service Brigade (EFS) established in Adelaide and equipped by the

Government. This took him to our nearest fire station located at Glenelg for regular training sessions to hone his skills in handling fire equipment with great speed. The training was intensive with groups from different districts often competing. I noted in my brief diary an entry on Saturday 5 May 1943 "...we all went to Glenelg and watched with great pride as my father marched in a special parade." From time to time we also attended local open days staged to demonstrate our readiness for air attacks and the fires they created. The Emergency Fire Service was a man's world and the volunteers worked well together. There was also a social side to these activities with a few cold beers at the end of training sessions to smooth the way.

Fascination with Fire Engines

In common with many youngsters I had a fascination for fire engines and prior to the war often insisted my father stop whenever we passed a fire station. He was very obliging and usually indulged my fantasies. Not only did we stop at fire stations but he actually took me inside to look at the trucks and uniforms complete with their impressive brass helmets. If only I could have a helmet of my own! On several occasions I had the thrill of actually attending public demonstrations of firefighting.

Risky Games

On one occasion my enthusiasm led to an incident that could well have proved fatal. I had converted an old wooden bench kept under the back veranda into a fire truck with garden hoses hanging on the sides and an axe, shovel and all sorts of bits and pieces of old equipment brought together to give some semblance of reality to my fantasy of being a fireman wearing one of those wonderful brass helmets. I would sit on top of the "fire truck" and imagine myself speeding along the road with siren blaring out its warning. On arrival at the fire I would quickly put out the flames. The one piece of equipment I lacked to complete my fire engine was a ladder. One Sunday morning my wish came true. Grandfather and grandmother Cordon were expected for a family Sunday lunch. This was always a special occasion and my sister Barbara and I would wait anxiously on the side of Oaklands Road for grandfather's splendid Dort Tourer to appear. We were always excited to see our grandparents. They would arrive with gifts for everyone and always a brown paper bag of mixed lollies for each of their two grandchildren. This was a rare and very welcome treat and created great excitement.

On this particular day the Dort appeared in the distance. As it came closer I was ecstatic to see tied on its side a beautiful ladder for my fire truck. Grandfather had remembered my urgent need from a previous visit and in his kindly way had fashioned the ideal ladder to fit on my fire engine. The addition of a ladder intensified my firefighting games. I spent many hours travelling to imaginary fires climbing up and down my ladder with a real but very old fire hose retrieved from grandfather Edwards' shed on "Zante Grove".

Serious Accident

One day I found my sister trying to climb the ladder which was leaning against one of the posts supporting the back veranda of our home close to where my fire truck was parked awaiting an emergency call. I watched as Barbara made repeated attempts to climb the ladder without success. I was only too willing to demonstrate how easy it was to master the art of ladder climbing if you were a fireman. I quickly climbed to the top rung stating as I went "watch me carefully". The ladder slipped! As I slid down the veranda post a large hook conveniently placed for the billy-can to hang out of reach of the cats. This went into my mouth and came out immediately below my left eye leaving me hanging on the post. I cannot recall the panic that must have ensued. I do remember hiding under the dining room table in a feeble attempt to avoid being taken to our nearest doctor (Donald Steele at Glenelg) for some stitches and a much dreaded tetanus injection. Since that early age I have been very reticent about showing off any of my skills. The scar eventually faded away but the memory lingers on.

Support for the War Effort

Mother was elected President of the local Red Cross branch. She was a very active organiser and fundraiser and set an example by making an endless array of fancy items from off-cuts supplied by the rag trade and other donors. These were sold at fetes and on stalls mounted at local events.

Focus on First Aid

A first aid course was established to prepare for victims of air raids. I well recall being called upon frequently to play the role of a casualty while willing volunteers practiced their skills. I would simulate a broken leg, an arm or an injured back. On other occasions it would be a broken jaw, shattered hand, fractured ribs or deep flesh wounds. The options were wide ranging and

contributed to the thorough preparations being taken in the event of air raids as the Japanese tightened their grip on Asia and the Pacific reaching as far as Papua New Guinea.

Introduction of Rationing

Our windows were blacked out and vehicle head lights masked. Petrol rationing was first enforced on 1 October 1940 and gas producer units made their appearance in ever increasing numbers to play their important part in helping to maintain the transport system. Falling imports and reduced labour for local production brought rationing of clothing by coupons from 25th June 1942. This was followed by drapery and furnishings one year later. Ration coupons became a familiar sight from mid-1942 when certain items of food were rationed progressively including tea, sugar, butter, meat and eggs. It was not until 1950 that rationing was lifted.

Community Dances

Local dances were held every Saturday night in the District Hall next to the Council Chambers on Sturt Road to raise funds. The Red Cross and Comforts Fund took it in turns to host these events on alternate weeks. They were very popular and brought the community closer together and engendered a keen sense of patriotism. Everyone who attended was acting in some voluntary capacity to assist the war effort. Young men and women who had either recently joined the services or were home on leave came along in their uniforms and were always extended a rousing welcome and given a good time.

Introduction to Dancing

My sister and I were taken along each week by our parents. Initially we were shy and simply looked on with interest and a sense of excitement at being able to have an enjoyable late night out which always ended with a sumptuous home-made supper provided by the organisers for the evening. At first we were reluctant to join in the dancing. However it was not long before we were taken in hand by the locals and after a clumsy start and falling over from time to time on the slippery floor, we danced along happily with our friends and neighbours. The Saturday night dance became an event to look forward to as we grew up and became adept at dancing.

Dancing was an enjoyable part of our teens and provided opportunities to form many close friendships. Indeed, I first met my wife, Catherine Alexander on a blind date to the annual St. Patrick's Day Ball held at the Palais Royal on North Terrace. It had a high priority in my life so much so that in 1943 I wrote the following short school composition on the subject:

"Dancing, I think, is one of the best forms of relaxation any person could ask for. It provides good exercise, a large amount of fun and a good amount of mixing up with both sexes which is of great value especially for growing youths. These younger members of the community need some place where they can mix together in a friendly atmosphere and be kept out of mischief at the same time.

"Besides this I have found dancing to be very popular, not so much those who cannot but to those who can. Those who cannot and have not danced find it rather a silly pastime but once you can dance as far as I can see, you will not want to stop. Not only the teenage and people in their twenties enjoy dancing, but I think some of the real 'old' ones do too.

"There are two main classes into which dances may be divided, namely old and new style. The modern class has in it such dances as the Modern Waltz, Quickstep, Slow Foxtrot and other such dances. The old style consists of many other dances both waltzes, tangos and others. According to taste some people enjoy old, while others would much prefer the modern style of dancing.

"Dancing is generally held in a large hall with plenty of floor space. The floor should not only be large, but very smooth and slightly slippery.

"One of Adelaide's best dance halls I consider to be the Palais Royal. It is a large hall with tables all-round the dancing floor and a large orchestra on the stage.

"This form of relaxation is generally popular in the winter time or between the months about April to December. Learning to dance is generally the hardest part and it can only be acquired like most things, by unending practice."

Decisions on future

In the midst of grave concerns about the wartime threats and commitments to the war effort my parents had to decide whether their son would join his father on 'Zante Grove' at a time when labour was almost impossible to obtain and very costly or be sent on to high school to further his education. It was the first major decision which had a long-term influence on my life.

As 1942 came to a close my future became a topic of conversation for both sides of the family. Even close family friends expressed an interest. In general the Edwards clan were inclined to have me uphold the family tradition on the land while the Cordon side was hoping their beloved grandson would continue his education.

Miss Olive Quick of 'Brookside' Marion was one of our friends who took an interest in my future. I visited her from time to time in her lovely historic home hidden away among vineyards, trees and gardens at the end of Quick's Lane. She was gracious and always made me feel welcome. On arrival I would be escorted into the living room where either tea or soft drink would be served together with cakes and biscuits. These occasions were anticipated with relish by a young and growing boy.

Move to Everard Park

In 1937 Grandfather Edwards decided to build a new house in Orchard Avenue, Everard Park to be closer to the City and the East End Market where he was the secretary. I remember my first visit to the new, comparatively small but modern and very convenient house. It was impressive and the whole family was delighted to have the grandparents settled in comfort.

The visit coincided with my 7th birthday and Grandfather presented me with a large and very impressive stamp album. When inspecting the back porch, he offered me a drink in a glass from a set he had purchased for the new home. When I had nearly finished the drink he 'accidentally' knocked the glass out of my hand. There was a terrible moment of guilt that I had dropped one of the precious new glasses and smashed it. Grandfather laughed at my alarm and picked up the unbroken glass. He dropped it on the concrete floor again and then hastened to explain to my astonishment that it was made of unbreakable glass. Times were certainly changing.

Four of my aunts had married and only Auntie Dora remained with my grandparents in their later years. Auntie Dora later moved to St Leonards to be closer to her eldest and youngest sisters Edna and Fay.

Everard Park became a staging post on my journeys to the City. A new and very splendid art deco style picture theatre named The Roxy was built close by. This too became an added attraction as on Saturdays I could join my friends and ride our push bikes the considerable distance from Marion to see a particularly good film. On special occasions I arranged to 'donkey' all the way to the theatre (and back).

It was at Everard Park I was presented with the Edwards' Family Bible on my 17th Birthday, 7th April 1947. I was delighted to be endowed with such an important family treasure and I felt very proud. By this time, I had become the family historian and was often taken on visits to different relatives to discuss the origin of their particular 'branch'. This left me with the responsibility to write an account of the Edwards Clan from the earliest times. Many photographs and some family documents were passed on to me. However, no one seemed to have a deep knowledge of the pre-Australian part of the story. Subsequently there have been a number of attempts to unlock the past. These are detailed later.

The Seaview Winery

The sale of "Zante Grove" in 1950 created a dilemma for my father who was only 45 years old at the time and in his prime. He had been working on the home property all his life and managed it for over 20 years as a highly skilled vigneron and orchardist. The sale left him with little choice for a career change. His almond cracking business had supplemented the family income but offered little as an independent long-term enterprise. The solution came when he was approached by William Benjamin Chaffey to enter into partnership in the newly conceived Benalan Winery at McLaren Vale.

Ben Chaffey was the grandson of W.B. Chaffey, one of the well-known Chaffey brothers who pioneered Irrigation Schemes on the River Murray in South Australia and Victoria. He had completed his education at Geelong Grammar School and Roseworthy College, gained valuable experience in a number of wineries in the Barossa, Renmark and Mildura before joining the staff of the Emu Wine Company at Morphett Vale. He enlisted in the RAAF in 1940 and was away from Emu until the end of 1945.

In 1948 Chaffey entered into partnership with Alan Ferguson who was also a former member of the RAAF and acquired the historic "Hope Vineyards" at McLaren Vale for 16,000 pounds. The small winery and nearby Thomas Hardy's Tintara (where grandfather had enjoyed seasonal work pruning and grafting vines when he was only 21) were the first wineries to be established in the district. However the Hope property had suffered from many decades of serious neglect necessitating a significant investment to bring it back to a productive and profitable enterprise.

Early Partnership Fails

The partnership between Chaffey and Ferguson had hardly begun when in 1950 Alan Ferguson decided to withdraw his money from the project to invest elsewhere. This placed Ben Chaffey in a difficult position as it created an urgent need for new finance. My father invested his share of the moneys from the sale of 'Zante Grove' in Benalan and accepted the roles of financier, partner and experienced vigneron with Ben Chaffey as partner, manager and expert wine-maker. The two partners held one management share each until Chaffey persuaded father to forgo his share. This led to my departure from Seaview. Benalan Winery was developed under the new partnership of Edwards and Chaffey and aptly renamed Seaview Winery in 1951.

As the excellent history of Seaview records, at the time of the partnership crisis Ben Chaffey became totally committed to continuing with the venture and was fortunate in being able to interest Friend Henry Edwards in supporting the project: "As a grape grower in the Marion district, now a southern suburb of Adelaide, Friend Edwards had previously sold grapes to Ben Chaffey at Emu Wines in Morphett Vale. In the Marion district he was coming under pressure from housing development and was forced to sell the vineyards there and it suited him to reinvest in a similar enterprise in McLaren Vale."

Investment in Seaview Wines

“Friend Edwards was brought up in vineyards and he was no stranger to toil. He quickly assessed the vineyard and in 1954 began a replanting programme. Consequently there are no vines on Seaview planted before 1954. Shocked by the effect of soil erosion over the years, Edwards and Chaffey called in advisers from the South Australian Department of Agriculture and with their assistance drew up a farm plan by which all the new plantings would be planted on surveyed contour lines with formed check banks at predetermined intervals to hold back any flash floods. The check banks also had the effect of holding winter rainfall on the slopes and forcing it into the subsoil where it would be locked up til the vines tapped it with their summer growth.” They could see no prospect of harvesting surface water, apart from the use of contours to prevent it from running to waste. Contouring alone was not sufficient to avoid moisture stress, particularly in newly-planted vines. It was apparent that some summer irrigation was the key to success, so to satisfy this need, a search was made for underground water. Success came with the discovery of a good flow of some 6,000 gallons per hour from a bore 250 feet deep in the creek just south of the house. With a salt content of more than 100 grains per gallon (950 EC units) of total dissolved solids, the salinity was rather high but by avoiding any foliage splash, they were able to achieve spectacular results from its use...”.

In 1965 the year I was appointed Curator of Anthropology at the South Australian Museum, Ben Chaffey purchased father’s share in the business and five years later sold the winery to the Allied Vintners Group for a sum believed by the press of the day to be in the vicinity of \$2 million. Ben Chaffey left Seaview in 1972. He died on Tuesday 26 August 2008 at the age of 93.

Boehm, E. W. *Deep In My Vineyard*. Published by E.W. Boehm, Seaview Winery, McLaren Vale, 1987. Gillingham Printers Pty Ltd. Adelaide.

The vineyards are still flourishing today and produce profitable crops of popular wine grape varieties under the ‘Rosemount Estate’ brand.

Health Crisis

The sale of “Zante Grove” came at a time when I had been unwell and losing weight over many months. The doctors carried out a number of tests. Each time declaring me fit and putting the complaint down to “nervous dyspepsia”. My health continued to deteriorate until finally it led to a serious situation.

As consideration of my future continued to go unresolved I had set out with father, mother and Catherine Alexander who I was to marry two years later, for a holiday at Mt. Gambier with my sister and her husband John Herde. It was the summer Christmas holiday season of 1950.

My brother-in-law was a local Mt. Gambier boy. He was mobilized for service in the Royal Australian Navy Reserve on 4 December 1944. It was always a special occasion when he visited “Zante Grove” on leave from his ship neatly dressed in his uniform. On being discharged from the navy he undertook a rehabilitation course in ladies hair dressing and built up a highly successful business in the South East of South Australia.

On the evening of 31 December we had a small dinner party with a number of fresh crayfish high on the menu provided by one of their many friends who was a professional fisherman. I awoke during the night with severe stomach pains and put it down to the evening’s dinner. The pain intensified during the night and in the morning the doctor was called. His diagnosis was uncertain “... it is probably a stomach upset ... it would be wise to return home to Adelaide in case something more serious develops.”

The doctor had no sooner left and I was overcome with excruciating pain. By this time he was out on his regular country rounds and could not be contacted until late in the afternoon. Eventually he arrived and took one look at me and diagnosed appendicitis. I was rushed to the local hospital with a certain sense of relief as urgent action was being taken to remedy the unbearable pain I had suffered throughout a long and horrible day.

The drive to the hospital overlooking the Blue Lake on the back seat of the car was a journey to hell as every movement along the way amplified the pain. Everyone was alarmed and deeply concerned. It was New Year’s Eve and my last recollection as I lay on the operating table was overhearing the nurses expressing their concern about being late for their New Year’s Eve parties!

Long Convalescence

Regaining consciousness after the operation was a salutary experience for a 20 year old country boy as for the first time I came face to face with the seriously ill, victims of fatal accidents and the

very aged and sick. I had no sooner registered these observations when a grave faced doctor was leaning over me explaining his state of shock when he operated and found I had peritonitis “... any further delay would have been fatal” he said.

I became much worse each day until regular injections of penicillin began to take effect and the slow recovery stage began. My four weeks in hospital was a sad experience. On one evening three young boys were brought in following a frightful collision. They were in a terrible state. On another occasion the victims of a freak accident arrived with shocking injuries. They had been in their truck driving along one of the access tracks in a local pine forest when they suddenly struck a rut in the road. The metal cover over the battery, in those days located under the floor boards, flew off while at the same moment a tin of blasting powder fell from the seat and landed on the battery. There must have been an enormous explosion. Sadly several of those who shared my hospital ward did not recover.

Return to Adelaide

The family went back to Adelaide and I stayed on in the hospital. It was a month and many penicillin injections later before I was allowed to limp home to face up to my future. I had slept a great deal of the time and worried about the uncertainties that lay ahead. In between dozing I read a fascinating book on the archaeology of the North American Indians. I was still committed to a position in a museum with a special interest in the Australian Aborigines. However at that moment I began to waver about the quest to fulfil my ambition.

Search for Employment

The ongoing mystery of my ill health and decline had been resolved. The next step was to regain strength and settle the predicament of my future. I returned home to “Zante Grove” and ultimately had to postpone my childhood dream of working in a museum and was persuaded to join my father at Seaview Winery where I could regain my strength while pondering the future. Ideas and suggestions had come and gone without any decision being taken. Allan Lunn who inherited the Nickel’s property adjoining part of our North-Western boundary and a close family friend happened to be a leading electrician in a large and successful Adelaide firm. He suggested an apprenticeship with the aim of becoming an electrical engineer. The idea had no appeal but in my mild mannered way I went along with the proposal by visiting the workshop, meeting the people involved and discussing prospects in the electrical trade. I remained unconvinced and

several weeks went by before I gained sufficient courage to end the matter with an emphatic “No”. This led to the obvious question “...well what appeals to you?” I had mentioned working in a museum on a number of occasions. Unsurprisingly this was not taken seriously as a potential career. It was a youthful fantasy quite out of reach and beyond the realms of possibility.

Rejection of Employment

As a last resort I responded positively to a suggestion from the father of one of my close friends who was a senior state public servant. He advised me to apply for one of several cadetships being advertised by the State Department of Agriculture as the experience gained on “Zante Grove” could be taken into account. This is all I had to offer when it came to job seeking. An application was lodged and an interview arranged. This again led to total rejection “... you lack the qualifications we need in applicants for one of these positions ... if you were appointed and failed it would reflect badly on others.” This must surely have been the shortest interview on record. I felt humiliated and depressed and resolved there and then never to put myself in such a position again. I have kept to my word throughout my working life.

The whole upheaval resulting from the sale of “Zante Grove” had been settled by Grandfather in a fair and equitable manner. However, my father felt responsible for my future as I had received no benefit from the sale. He was keen for me to join him at Seaview. However I was reluctant to go along with his plans in view of the outcome at “Zante Grove” and especially as there would be a partner involved.

Outcome of Property Sale

Having seen my future disappear under the blades of bulldozers as they ripped up our 50 acre vineyard and orchard I was questioning what direction to take. It was a period of great uncertainty and confusion when I was ill-equipped to take decisions. Like Churchill at one stage of his life he commented “...I now entered many years in the wilderness.” Having followed my father’s example and left school at 15 to work with him on the family property I lacked the qualifications needed to obtain a respectable position. My only ambition had been to work in a museum. This interest in natural history, archaeology and the Aboriginal Heritage fostered initially by my grandmother Lily Cordon was always regarded as an interesting hobby but dismissed as a possible career.

Marriage at St Mary's-on-the-Sturt

It was a busy time and life moved on as I regained strength. And besides I was in love and had a wedding to plan. Thoughts of continuing to pursue another career were set aside. Another 15 years were to pass before my childhood ambition of working in a museum was achieved.

Move to Port Noarlunga

In the meantime Cath and I purchased an early style bungalow at Port Noarlunga for 3,000 pounds to be within easy reach of the winery at McLaren Vale. My father generously guaranteed the bank loan and we set about converting an old house into a family home. We proudly called it "Brightman Lodge" after the ship in which my forebears James and Sarah Elizabeth Edwards and their two year old son Friend Henry Edwards arrived in South Australia on 5 January 1850.

Almond Blossom Wedding

On 12 July 1952 Robert Edwards and Catherine Allison Raeburn Alexander were married by the Rev'd Peter Hodge in their historic parish church St Mary's-on-the-Sturt. It was a mid-winter marriage and the church was decorated with glorious almond blossom arranged for the occasion by my dear 'Auntie' Marjorie Duncan. It was a wonderful winter's day when the extended family and our friends filled the church to celebrate the wedding.

Touring in Flinders Ranges

Alas the relaxed and enjoyable honeymoon at Port Lincoln so long in the planning turned to disappointment. As Cath and I set out northwards in our very smart red MG TD I came down with a heavy cold brought on by exhaustion. We reached Murray Town near Wirrabara in the southern Flinders Ranges 146 miles (235 km) from Adelaide and could go no further. We stopped at the farm of one on my Grandmother Cordon's brothers, Uncle Perce Nottle and his wife Fanny. I knew them well from the wonderful times I had spent with them during school holidays.

They welcomed us with open arms. I was bed ridden for several days and in the circumstances we then decided to abandon our trip to Port Lincoln and spend the time enjoying life on the farm, visiting relatives and places of interest in the Flinders Ranges. Trips were made down the Port Germein-Murray Town Road through the spectacular gorge to the coast. There were visits to

Bundaleer and Wirrabara forests. We watched life on the farm as they worked the land still using one of the last teams of horses. It was a time to relax and enjoy the first days of our married life away from the changes taking place in our lives.

Work begins at Seaview Winery

One of the first tasks at Seaview Winery was to assist in building a new front section to the historic century old winery. There were limited funds so a builder was engaged to undertake the task. Together we cut up huge blocks of Mt. Gambier stone by hand and gradually transformed the old building with the addition of a handsome new façade and an extension housing a large office, laboratory, space for wine vats and generous working areas.

Developing of Market

One of the first markets developed by Edwards and Chaffey was with the Italian community in the cane fields of North Queensland. Orders would come in for varying quantities of dry red and white wines as well as Vermouth, Muscat and Ports. Large bulk sales were also made to wineries with established brands.

Cath and I settled into community life at Port Noarlunga making friends with our neighbours and joining the local Institute. We made regular visits to family and friends in Adelaide and continued to attend services at St. Mary's whenever possible.

I continued to pursue my keen interest in museums and archaeology and attended meetings of the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Society and the Anthropological Society of South Australia. Membership of these societies provided stimulation and opportunities to meet with many scholars several of whom became my mentors.