

MOLLY TAYLOR

TAPE 1, SIDE 1

002 Int's parents born in Tumut and Windsor in 1865 and 1857 and were married in Sydney. Neither of them married young - both in their 30s, probably married in the 1890s. Mother had a fair education - school in Tumut up to her teens but father didn't have a very good education but was terrific with figures - nobody could ever baffle him with figures. Father was also a very good shot - in his early ^{days} used to walk about the hills of Hartley and all that area in the Blue Mountains. Father would've gone to a school at Windsor and was a very keen bushman. He was out shooting one day somewhere near Hartley Vale and was sneaking on a lyrebird and the trigger caught in the grass when he was dragging it behind him to go through a fence and he was shot in the face along the cheekbone and blinded his eye on that side. So father only had the one eye for the rest of his life. He put his hat over that side of his face and ran for 3 or 4 miles to get help - they wanted to take his eye out but a minister told him not to let them and he didn't - and had terrific sight in the other eye. It wasn't noticeable except for the scar but he was quite blind in that eye. Grandmother was married 3 times (but no family with the third husband) - second husband was Int's mother's father - Int's mother was the younger of their two children. Mother used to live with her grandma who used to do midwifery work. Int. describes life of some relatives in the Blue Mountains (probably late in 19th century). Mother was about sixteen when her grandmother died and she was without work - mostly sewing on properties - and she wandered about looking for work and that was how she met Int's father - she was sewing for the Macks at Narromine. When she married father the family lived on Darrabong until father had a very bad accident in 1916 and burnt his side, which crippled him for life and he was too old for the war. Then the family came to Sydney to live which was a different life altogether because no-one liked the city. Any opportunity to get out to the bush again was taken. Mother used to take the family to the bush for holidays from school but the children didn't mind the city as much as the parents. Father was overseer at Darrabong when he met Int's mother. Int had three sisters - one sister married and went to Canada and the other two never married and lived at Katoomba until they both died of old age - they were all older - the eldest eight years older than Int., she was 18 months old when the second sister was born and was 2 years and 11 months older than the next one and then there was three years between my sister and myself. The eldest was born at Penrith as well as the second one, and the next one born at Dubbo. At Narromine family was 27 miles from the nearest railway station, 40 miles from the hospital. The MacKinnons (?) were the first to get a car in the area just before WWI - about 1913 - the first others were people that ran taxis, hire care. They had an old Model T Ford which went for years and years. It was blacksoil plains and when that got wet you didn't go anywhere in a motor car so we were a long way from anyone. The first schoolteacher arrived when Int. was five so the sister's education didn't start till then - mother taught the other girls. The teacher stayed for three years and eight months to teach four families - the teacher had to stay with mother because all other accommodation was mostly tin sheds and there was only a quarter of a mile to the school from there.

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204 Flat but pretty country. Had ponies and used to ride, but didn't have a sulky. Lived there till Int. was fourteen (about 1917). Eldest sister sent to school when the teacher left - stayed with relations in Sydney and went to Wesley College at Stanmore. Next sister went to Blacktown, stayed with an aunt and went to school at Parramatta. The next sister went to Elleford (?) College in Ashfield - Gwen went there for two or three years and had the best chance of us all. Int. went to Burwood but never went further than sixth class. The teacher at Narromine had taught them all to spell. Education was scattered in the country - teachers were posted for six months and there were generally twelve months between teachers, that was why the girls were sent away.

257 Father always worked nearly always seven days a week but like to take Sunday off. The minister came once a month and hold service at the homestead. The homestead had gas light and the women and men dressed in full evening dress for dinner every night of their lives. Lived about half a mile from the homestead. The girls used to get the old evening dresses to play dressed-up ladies with. Lots of aborigines came but went to Dandaloo school.

297 There was a poem about Dandaloo:
On western plains where shade is not
Under summer skys of cloudless blue
Where all was dry and all was hot -
There stands the town of Dandaloo.

Int. thinks above poem is Henry Lawson or Banjo Patterson - probably Lawson.

The two sisters that didn't marry - one worked as a private secretary at Arnott's for 40 years, the other worked as a needlewoman in various places - at Farmers for a while, and then at the Children's Hospital.

369 The replacement teacher was told a tale on the mail train by a wool classer that Mr. Marden (Int's father who she was going to stay with) was always with the black people and was disreputable but found the family quite normal. Children encouraged to stay with their own kind - not play with other children outside school. Used to fish in the river. The black woman Janey used to come round with lots of children, smoking a clay pipe, and do washing up. She used to tell the children stories.

Int. like drawing at school. Primers sent to the school and given to the children. Int. hated English history. Had geography and mapping. - drew maps from memory. Got the Qualifying Certificate to go to Highschool. Loved figures - did arithmetic at school.

609 Women didn't cane much - had better discipline than the male teachers. Int. doesn't remember ever being caned - girls were mostly kept in. Father never caned her.

658 Went to a picnic - was told not to rip her dress - first thing climbed a tree and tore the dress. Knew all day then that she'd get a hiding when she got home and couldn't enjoy the picnic. If anybody fell in the mud, tore a dress or put a hole in a stocking it was me (Int.). Would often bushwalk on Sunday afternoons for miles and miles. Wouldn't associate with the aboriginal children who lived across the river.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1

BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1

001 There was a boardwalk between the kitchen and the rest of the house. The children used to sit on it at night and listen to the wildlife. Int. didn't ride till she was ten - were taught to ride by father after encouragement by a contractor who knew the family - were put on stock horses. Had no saddle only a bridle at first.

041 Int's first position after she left school at sixteen (1919) was working as a nursery governess (after sixth grade). Went to Rocky Creek on the Oaks River - the Oaks was the name of the place, on Rocky Creek between Narrabri and Barraba. Worked there for eight months with seven children the oldest nine years old - teaching the first three and looking after the others. Got a pound a week and her fare paid up there and spent it all. In the whole eight months Int. was there she went to a cricket match on the Horton River one day and went for a ride another day - two outings in eight months. It was even more isolated than Darrabong. Heard about the job through family connections. Had to do mending for the whole family. Used to have wonderful food while there - yearling beef and sweet potatoes - roast dinners every day cooked by staff. Remembers wearing gas masks in about 1919 after the war because of a plague [probably Spanish flu]. Had always been taught to sew, darn and mend.

160 At this first job, Int. virtually worked seven days a week.

190 Used to play rounders and oranges and lemons at school in Darrabong. Rounders a bit like baseball.

216 Also at school in Darrabong used to put ingas and ongas and angas on the ends of words - Int. remembers a girl saying to a boy who was looking at a trap "Danga Ferngus Sanga(?)" - it meant "Down further Sam". Int. did it differently - eg. "Darraga Feragga Sarraga" for the same thing. The children at that school could understand this but adults and children from other schools couldn't.

262 Used to have sports - sack races, egg and spoon races etc.

327 The linen was stolen from the house (Int's mother was deaf) - Int. suspected by black people.

[Interruption]

374 After job in the west Int. worked at Grace Bros. for about eight months in the drapery office for a while and then at Girl's (?) Office - the corset makers - and worked there about a year and then went to Arnott's. Left in 1934 after being there for 13 years.

385 Helped on street stalls during the war - remembers the jubilation at the end of WWI in Martin Place - dancing in the streets. Was a foundation member of the Sydney Bush Walkers and used to meet Friday nights in a scout hall in George Street.
451 Walked from Bell to Kurrajong one day - 32 miles. Walked to places like Wattamolla, Gowrie, Burning Palms, and other places along the coast. Int. walked down the Cox River - from Nelly's Glen down onto the Cox for a weekend.

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491 You would've had some of the first Paddy *Pallin* - made tents?
Well - Paddy hadn't started when I left - Paddy just started after I left going because I couldn't afford to go any more because - see - I was more or less saving up to get married and you just couldn't afford it - you didn't have it on three pounds a week - you didn't make much money...

You must have been in it [Sydney Bush Walkers] for about two or three years because I think Paddy started in the early 1930s did he?

498 Yes - Paddy would've started in the early '30s - you see I left off in about the early '30s - I might've been just walking a bit but not much - I didn't go very much - and you had to keep going otherwise you were out of condition and you couldn't stand the walks. I did enjoy it and I enjoyed the companionship and it was away from...just anything to get away from town was my idea - I never did like it.

What sort of tents did you use - who made the tents then?

I think it was just a little bought tent - I don't think... I never bothered with a tent when I used to share with my friend and she only had a one-man tent but we never went in the extremely cold weather. I went once to Clear Hill - that was coming onto the ...before the war years that's right...I remember going up there with a crowd of us - one of the boys was singing...he was the fifty-mile champion of N.S.W. he was - Australia - he went over to the Olympics and that man died on the Kokoda trail...pretty hard [incomprehensible] Smith, and of course he was terrific - and he had the most beautiful singing voice and sat up there one morning early when we went for a walk and we didn't know that he'd gone and we struck Gordon and we said "Oh come on Gordon sing to us" so he sang to us - I'll never forget that. That voice was absolutely glorious...but that was Clear Hill but it was pretty cold - that night I know I kept the fire going nearly all night because I was nearly perished - otherwise I never used to bother about tents much because we'd go and try not to get into wet weather - have a groundsheet and put it on the ground....

530 You had a sleeping bag?
Not always - you always had an eiderdown which was easy to carry.

Oh - but you had packs?
Yes - always had packs.

A-Frames or something?

A-frames were just coming in - some of them had them. We walked with quite a few of the Mallem Trail people and they of course never had women in their club - but some of their wives when they came on the bushwalks went with them - and they had a lot of that sort of equipment. But that Mt. Comar area - they did a bit of that and around Mt. Wilson and across-country - and that was beautiful - that country - but now it's all roads see? The last time I went there I drove over the top of where we'd walked - we walked along blazed trails and had to mark the gum trees then to know where you were going

548 But it's nice to have done it and...

Did you walk out to Kanangra Walls?
No - I never did Kanangra Walls - I would've loved to have done that but I was not free to do those sort of things - did I tell you that I had an ill father and - you know - and we didn't go away from home too far. So that I never did that and of course later on I never got time - too many other things to do - but I always kept in touch with the club and was very very sorry I didn't go back to that 50th Anniversary but I couldn't make it. But several of the bushwalkers still come you know...

Come here? Which ones?
Well there's John Noble - he's one -

John Noble's a journalist isn't he?
No - he was an engineer. Mel McGregor was another one but they were both in it after I came out - nearly all my mates have passed on that were in it when I was there.

571 But you knew *Miles Dunphy*?
I knew Miles Dunphy - and I remember when Milo was born and they christened him 'Milo Kanangra'.

Well - he's fifty now I think so that must've been...?
Yes - it's a long while ago.

1932?
Oh - he'd be more than fifty - don't tell me he was more than fifty on the air here with the A.B.C.? He was born before then - Milo - he'd be over fifty.

He was fifty very recently - maybe he's fifty-one or something.
I can remember when he was born - I thought it was while I was still in the club - I can't remember clearly on that but I remember us all laughing about that name because there used to be a boat on the harbour called the Kanangra.

One of the ferries was it?
Yes - one of the ferries (laughs).

The Manly ferry?
He was called after Miles of course and then after Kanangra walk 'cause they did love that area so much and went walking there-when there was Frank Duncan and his wife - I don't know - I've never seen them for years - they used to come and visit Kurrajong Caves and I haven't seen them for a long while but there's not many of the old ones that I knew still alive just memories.

598 With the Arnott's Biscuit Factory - where was that in Sydney?
Homebush.

Homebush? And how did you get that job or how did you find out about it?

Well my sister - I told you - she only worked at the one place ever - she went there from College and then the manager said to her one day "Have you got another sister Gwen?" and she said "Yes I have" and he said "Does she want a job?" and she said "Oh - I could ask her" and he said "Well there's a job here if she wants it" - so that's where I went and that's

610 where I stayed until I was married. I was there for thirteen years. [1921 - 1934]

You didn't have an interview for the job?
No.

It was just on the recommendation of your sister? Yes.
I was very happy there - I enjoyed it a lot.

What did you do there?
I did clerical work.

Right - you were a sort of an accountant were you?
No - I did wage s books and I used to check country trucks for a while and they used to send the empty returns back from the country - I used to loathe the Broken Hill trucks coming in because they were full of dust and dirt and you had to check them off the line you know and they pushed the ramp off the chute and you just did it...It was just to check the men. They'd go up and they'd buy some of the biscuits...empty tins and I'm afraid some of them were cheating a little bit - they'd take them round to the next fella and sell them and put them in again - and of course when they found out they didn't like that and they said they didn't believe in it and they costed, checked it and I don't know what they didn't do and I usen't to like that job very much - it was very dusty, very dirty. But they wanted you to go onto it and do it and it was a horrible job - hated doing it, and I hated checking anybody else and they tried to make out that you were wrong but I mean that was all worked out alright in the end. Then I was on wage s books for many years.

639 How many people were employed there?
Oh - thousands there.

Thousands there was there?
Oh yes - there were thousands there - I don't know how many there are there now - but there were sixteen ovens in the part that we were in and there were twenty-two all told I think when I left there so I wouldn't know how many more they got on. See - and they all had a big staff of men - yeh, they did everything for themselves - they had their own printing and they pasted all their own tins and they had everything very up-to-date. It was a very very big concern. Very interesting - I'd like to go back and see it again.

It'd be very different now I think - modernised?
I suppose it would be. I've often thought I'd like go along and make myself known as say I want see over here please - 'cause they'd show you over.

Oh - they'd be glad to have you I should think.
And they had a very nice recreation area and they had their own tennis courts and all that sort of thing towards the end you know - when I was leaving all these little things were coming in - before that they didn't bother - and they filled all sorts of places in and they had a lovely playing area - it was quite a big concern. One of these days I'll go and look. Go and look at it - it's still in the same place - still in George St. Homebush - they haven't moved it (laughs) - It'd be a big job to move it I think.

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674 Did you ever get to the stage where someone was working under you?
No - I worked with people. No - I never wanted those positions. I went to their show with them for years and years and years - for the thirteen years I was there I worked at the shows - and the exhibitions and things that they had - they always used to put up.

Royal Easter Show?
Yes - at the showground.

They'd compete - they'd....?
Never any competition - we were never allowed to make one noise - you know how you'd go to the show and they're yelling at you how this bag and this bag and this....we never said a word and we couldn't keep up to the people who were around that counter being served. And they'd say "Now aren't you lucky to get that job - you get a pound a day for going out there." That went up in all the thirteen years that I was there - a pound a day we got and we started sometimes in the morning at seven o'clock and we didn't leave sometimes till ten o'clock at night.

696 When the show was on?
Mmm.You'd get your lunch break and you got your two hours - you'd shut at five o'clock and you got from five till seven at night just to have a bit of a fresh-up and run around and round and see something.

And then you'd work again from...?
From seven till ten. And then you were allowed to go home.

Yes. And then you'd start again the next day and this'd go on for....?

There were busy days - all those busy days like Saturday - there was Friday and the Saturday and the ~~Monday~~ were like that - the other days were not so early. But for a week before we were...the chosen few of us - there were about three of us - used to go out with Mrs. Youngson and we'd decorate the stall - the one stall - one big stall - beautifully done - no expense spared at all - it was beautiful when you think back now - but it was hard work for a pound a day - it's terrific money - the girls - the other girls all around us were envious of us - they had to sell by commission - and yelling and trying to sell their wares and we weren't allowed to say....

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BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2

001 They bought everything for us except our caps - I don't why it was we used to have to buy our caps and our aprons because our frocks were bought for us - they always took us to David Jones and we were fitted for our frocks and they cost a little penny.

004 They were white?
No. Sometimes they were nearly always in...oh sometimes there was white and blue - mostly blue trimmed up with white but it was...a nice frock - something that you'd put on and go out to tea - there wasn't much of it left in it when I lived

006 in it for ten days (laughs). It used to have go through the wash as quickly as you could get it through in the nights when you were home - could've done with two or three I'd tell you.

Did you wash it yourself?

Oh yes we'd have to do that - but they had an exhibition once - an all-Australian exhibition and that I think ran for eight weeks and I went to that - that was late pretty well every night.

For eight weeks?

Yes.

Six days a week or....?

Yes - six days a week. And then they had another one - Mardia Homes Exhibition and they had that in Phillip Street and I went to that and that was more-or-less in the winter time and it was a bit tiresome towards the end because it really got...I don't know why they kept it going for so long but they did and we had a visit from the Queen at that time - I remember it was wattle time and Wattle Day was on and the place was all done up with wattle and you wouldn't have wanted to have been a hay-fever sufferer but that was very nice but there was no selling it was just an exhibition you see - just showed the goods and that was all. But that was - I did thirteen weeks there and that was long enough.

020 When you were at the factory what were your normal hours there?
We started at a quarter past eight in the morning and we always finished at a quarter to five in the afternoon.

You'd have an hour's break for lunch?

Oh yes - an hour's break - we used to walk home for lunch - my sister and I - well I always walked home and then she used to have her lunch supplied for quite a while and then she decided she liked the break so she used to walk home with me and....

Did you have morning tea and afternoon tea as well?

We had morning tea and afternoon tea but I think I used to always have a sleep - I preferred it to afternoon tea and morning tea - I was never a tea drinker.

026 You drink it alright now.

Ah yes - you've got to have something - I'm afraid I don't like the water [discussion about merits of tea and water]

030 That was the glory of the mountains wasn't it - didn't matter what creek you came to you could always get out and have a drink of water - see I wasn't used to that when I lived out west because you had to push the scum back off it and then boil it before you drank it but now it'd be muddy looking so I was never really keen on billy tea when I was a girl because I'd always think of that - pushing back that slime - and I didn't like it. [More discussion about water]

040 Did you have any unemployment benefits or sickness benefits - like if you had to have a day off?

Never had any worries like that ever.

If you did you'd be....?

Never had those sort of worries.

But those who did - who had to have a day sick at some stage - would they continue to get paid?

Yes - there was never anything said to you about that at all.

I can remember when our mother wasn't well at home and we'd say something to Mr. Arnott and he'd say "You only have the one mother - you stay at home until she's right."

Oh - good - even though that took several weeks?

Well - it didn't because we'd share it off and things like that but that was terrific - he was a terrific man - Mr. Wally Arnott. He was terrific.

Did he get to know you I suppose because there were two of you from the same family?

Yes - and my sister was his private secretary for many years. And they were very good to us - I couldn't speak anything else but highly of them.

050 So you would've had a very good relationship with...your employer?

Yes - very good. Yes it was very good. I don't know what it's like now because things have changed so much and the people have changed of course - the war changed everybody. In my day before I left anyone that was married - they left - there was not a job for them if they were married. They left and they'd be working for somebody else but then the war came along after that you see and - see I was married in '34 - the war started in '39 - and they just had to keep them on - the girls - and they've never stopped since - 'cause I think quite a few of the married women today could stay at home but they won't because they don't like doing a little bit less and they've taken all the chivalry out of the men I'm afraid - or nearly all.

059 That's an interesting comment - we'll leave that to the present. Were there very many big changes to the equipment whilst you were there - thirteen years is a very long time?

Yes - well - you do see that - the adding machines came in see and that was a big difference.

You had an abacus - beads or something did you?

We just had the ordinary adding up with your fingers - you know - how to run your finger up and add it up...and then you had to cross out because most of it was piecework and everybody earnt a different amount every day so that you had to add across and then up as well - there was a lot of adding on those sheets - we would've had I suppose about two hundred or more on the books that I did you see - well

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on the book that I did - well everybody had about ten girls in the office and they all had that so that (coughs)...across adding and adding to do so that when the adding machine came in the girl that went to learn the adding machine - she did all of those which saved an awful lot of time - and now I suppose it'd be so different - it'd be all computerised and I just wouldn't know where to start and look or see or understand it now.

Do you remember any major changes in the biscuit manufacture?

Oh - that was changing all the time - I mean they're always looking for improvement.

Were there times when a lot of men were put off because machines replaced their work?

No - that didn't happen...come into vogue in my time - only sometimes when they'd get overstocked you know and there'd be some sort of...in the Depression years...when they'd give us a Monday off.

Yes.

We'd have a Monday off but that never hurt the office staff - but the other ones were docked of course - got Monday off - the workers would miss that but - no - they were already proved and I'll tell you an interesting thing - this lady that used to do the show she was - getting on now - she wasn't easy always to work with but I got on with her very very well and she was very kind, very good to me and I couldn't say anything but the best about her - but she was having...they used to always have trouble the way they'd put a label on a tin - there'll be blisters under it - you don't see it today but you did in those days - and of course they had Peak Frean come into the business and there were several other brands came in and they were always... one was trying to beat the other and the competition was pretty strong so she said to me one day "I've found something out" and I said "Did you?" and she said "Yes - we had an old man - he's papering the walls of our house - and" she said "he was putting all the papers out on the table and he was pasting about three before he hung one and I said to him 'why are you doing that?' - he said 'because I hang up that one I've done first and let the other two stay and then I'll put those other two up and then I'll do three more and then I'll do them again see' and it was going on the wall and not even - she said "Why are you doing that?" and he said "Because it takes all the bubbles out - the paper gets completely wet and it goes on evenly". So she went back to the firm and she put it to them - they said: well how are we going to do it? because there was a pasting system at that time - the things come along on a conveyer that had been through the paste you see and the girl slapped it on...put it on the tin and they used to make that go round once and then put it on the second time - and they never had any more blisters on their tin labels...under their labels - and that's how they learnt to soak it. So a different system had to be done about that but what came out of it...they took them off and soaked them you see and then...it was a bit more handling but they had perfect tins. That's how you learn, so I suppose it's got a different label altogether and the icing of the biscuits - I can still see those - fairy-what-do-you-call-them - fairy

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cakes being iced - it was amazing. Always [incomprehensible] had a big tin of zoo-zoo mixed with all the little funny shaped little biscuits and I can remember when I was a little child as far back as I can remember I can remember these zoo-zoo mixed and they never even packed them in the tins like they packed them. But watching those girls pack was fantastic. And watching those things being dipped - the whole thing was dipped and turned over and...up on a rack to dry and run along till it dripped off and then it was packed at the other end as quick as lightning you know. And it was all very very well done. Very interesting - if people were interested enough to go and look. Then they started having people going through because - that hadn't started in my time but it did go through after - they used to take people through and show them but they never did in my day.

121 Were the jobs for men and women - were they very much separate?

Oh - the men did the men's work and the women did all the other lighter work - they didn't do any heavy work at all - but I was glad you brought up that part about work because in that Depression that we had in the '28s - '29s I 'spose - and I think of the little children of those days - there were little boys - not girls so much but boys - as soon as they turned thirteen their parents were in such dire straits

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that they...those little children to be taken down to the Department of Labour and Industry and they'd get a permit for them to go to work - and I've come to work in the morning and I've seen - that was a long street - and I've seen little children from one end of that street to the other standing in a queue (coughs) from that time in the morning - it was a quarter to eight when I went to work - just on the offchance that they might get a job - and they might stand there all day - that's what I saw. And then they came...you'd see some of them come in and they'd have to go up to the office and be booked on the sheet and...the department and they used to mostly go to what they called the "tin room" and they used to have to bang tins out that had been to the country or had been out round and - you know - they'd get bumped and get dents in them - well they put on being the same size as the tin - and belt it with a hammer till they got into shape - well of course that's all a boy of that age could do. Well you can imagine what a little boy of thirteen or fourteen ought to be doing - he'd be shiacking with the little one next door and having a little bit of a giggle and a laugh and having a bit of fun - and this old man was pretty hard in that place - I don't know how he could've been so hard - but he'd turn off you know "well you haven't got anything else to do - go off and get your pay" and that - because they knew there was another one at the gate - that's something I couldn't tolerate. I couldn't stand that and I used to think...these little kids would come up crying - you know - you can imagine what it'd be like. We had a boy come to our office to work - he was a nice-looking boy and he was thirteen I think or fourteen and he had a permit and do you know where he ended up? The Bursar at Newington College - and I was so pleased because he was a handsome boy and he was...dear he was good at figures - he

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was terrific at figures and with the changes and rising wages everything had to be adjusted so you see and then they'd have to adjust the wages and then you'd have to adjust your books because everything was worked out on peicework and we used to have to do that and someone would have to work the rate out and then somebody else'd check you - you see - and that was alright - and he was excellent on that - that was that boy started on with a permit for a job at that age and that's terrible you know - and that happened in my time - I can remember that. I hope I never see that again.

And then there was all the older men looking for work as well?

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The older men were looking for work but I think they more-or-less stayed more stable than the children because the older I 'spose had been put off - but they didn't put off much - they didn't put anybody off much - that was the only work that they could give to these little children and I...it used to make my heart...to see these poor little children... and to see them sent away and they'd be positively crying 'cause how would you go home - you had nothing - and people'd come to the door in those days and ask for a meal - if they asked for money mother never gave them money - but she always gave them a meal - and there was a continual

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stream at our gate. And I remember one day a neighbour of ours was there and - as I told you my mother was hard of hearing - and she said...we had a little dog - it was my little dog 'cause it used to bark when everybody was asleep but mother liked him because he'd make her hear and go to the door - and people'd want food and she'd give them food - if they asked for money she couldn't give them money (coughs) - she never turned them away hungry ever. And so this friend was there this day and she said "Oh it's a man wanting a meal - food" she said "And I told him he'd have to go somewhere else." and mother said "Mrs. Page I never send anyone away from my door that asks for food" and she got a bit of a shock - but anyway somebody said they go past the places next door but there was a fire duct used to go across from the northern line to the western line and the trains used to go over the top you know and... a tunnel - you know the sort of place that I mean - a bridge - and they used to go and camp underneath the ditch poor things - out of work - and somebody said "I'm sure the number of your street's there". We all went to look...at the wall...

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183 Oh - that'd pass down the grapevine very quickly. You were very lucky to have that sort of employment from 1921 to 1934 during a very difficult period.

Yes I know I was but we never had any...we were very fortunate and never complained and not any of us ever complained - we were very grateful for what we got.

And you would've lived at home - so you would've paid board I suppose to your mother?

You bet we did - mother didn't have anything...

What did you earn?

I suppose when I left to be married I was on three pounds ten a week which was seven dollars which was very good money'.

190 And when you started - do you remember?

Oh - I must've been on...Oh I suppose I would've been on thirty [shillings] - three pounds ten I 'spose - something like that.

How much of that would you pay in board?

Oh - you'd give about a pound of that - you'd have ten left for yourself. 'cause even when I worked in Grace Bros. I was only on twelve and six I think. When I was away that time teaching I was on a pound a week and keep - I saved a lot of money (coughs) Well fifty pounds in those days was a big lot of money - you were very wealthy if you had that much.

I'll say - that could just about buy you a car or a second-hand car.

No - I think the cheapest car I ever saw was three hundred - and I can remember that was about the price of them - I can remember the Chevs at the Sydney Show at that price - but then you didn't have that sort of money.

No.

Isn't it silly when you think of it now? They won't go to work unless they get that much a week.

Oh yes - but that's relative isn't it?
(laughs)

204 Do you think that...

I think the people are better off today than they were then though.

Yes I think they are.

They go out a lot more - even though the prices are very high and the food's very high they still don't deny themselves anything. See we couldn't afford to do that - we couldn't afford to go out very much.

Do you think in terms of the treatment of men and women at the factory - that they were treated fairly equally?

I think they were treated very well really - Mrs Youngson saw that they got all the amenities that they didn't have before she came there because we just sat down - whether they were doing their work but when she came she saw that they had a proper lunch rooms and go into them - and then they got canteens and the lot came along - and everything was improved and I don't think that they were short of much at all at any time there.

216 Did you join a union or anything?

Never been in a union in my life and I never had any worry about wages or anything - I 'spose it's fair enough if you were...if people fight for your struggle for you...you know they never ever came near us - the unions - we were sort of different to the head office - we were the factory office - and we were different to the head office - I think they had it at the head office but we never had unions at the factory at least in my time. Never would've bothered with them thank goodness.

222 And you mentioned that most of the girls left when they got married?

Oh - well they had to - that was the rule - you got married - you left.

It was the tradition?

Yes.

I see - you were virtually forced to were you?

No - I didn't intend to stay.

But did some of the girls stay on after they were married?

No. Nobody...until the war came and then they were...well they were begging them to stay because they had to do the work of the men then when the men went and they had to do [incomprehensible] on all of them. But most times nobody worked on buses - that was...men were conductors but not women conductors - not conductresses no. That wasn't till after I came back after the war when I went back at different times for holidays and that sort of thing but I saw the difference - I wasn't in the city much during the war years. I was there once in '42 and we got away again [Int. discusses going back to the bush with two children during the war]

345 When you were working in Arnott's you mentioned before that you had a hankering to do some painting and drawing - did you start any other courses while you were there at nighttime or...?

No - it was too far away you see. As I tell you - we had a long way to walk to and from work and we did it twice a day because we'd go home for lunch and go back again (coughs) We were about a quarter of an hour - twenty minutes walk to Strathfield Station and that was...when the buses started running we had the buses which were...but it was so much quicker to go on the train you see - about forty minutes going in the bus - you were in in a quarter of an hour in the train so that we went a lot by the train but it was too much - you couldn't do it after a while and we didn't have anybody else to do the things - we have to used to do ...well - keep the home going and everything - we had nobody - we had a father who was a cripple too you know.

He was a cripple because....?

He broke his thigh and then he went to Sydney - then he had another fall after that and cracked it again and then he was always in the....He had a caliper on his leg and he was more-or-less crippled and then he got diabetes and he never knew he had diabetes and he was just....We just had to look after our parents - that was all - so we did.

266 And at work did you discuss sort of world things with your colleagues - whether or not there might be a war or political situations?

No - you see it hadn't started in my time then.

What about the local political situation?

In 1941 of course I wasn't working in that period.

270 No - but did you discuss things beyond....?

No - we never bothered - we never seemed to. We were very busy with our home lives and our interests - we played tennis and sport and that sort of thing and I never worried about what was going on much on the other side of the world. People didn't get backwards and forwards like they do now you know.

Communications were much slower?

Much much slower and - as I told you my sister went to Canada to live and she never came back again - she went away in about 1924 - and she came back in 1929 ...

That was very courageous of her - she went on long ship journeys at that time?

Yes - she was a very very bad sailor - terrible sailor - I think I was about the only good sailor amongst them - but she came back and brought a little boy in 1929 and she stayed out with us for quite a few months and then she went back again and we never saw her again till we all went over in 1974 - but she only just died last month. She'd love to come back again because she just loved Australia.

289 She died in Canada?

Yes - her husband never wanted to come back again although he had lived out here - he was an Englishman and got caught up with the Canadian Army and did very well in the first world war and they took him back in the second one and they didn't want to release him from that because he was such a very good man with figures - they kept him in a very good position but he said he was sick of it at the last and he got out - but he never wanted to travel about - he was just - a bit like Tom [Int's husband] - he was satisfied to stay where he is....

I suppose you would've liked to have gone to Canada too?

I did go once.

In '74?

Yes.

Not in the '30s?

No - that would've been lovely to have gone then - but then you see people never had the money to go in those times - you never seemed to have it - it's flying that's made it... it's more expensive of course - you went over for a couple of hundred pounds before - on the boat - if that much. I tried to go once as a stewardess but a lot of people talked me out of that and I just didn't push it too much but I was going to...

306 Yes - that would've been your cup of tea.

I thought about it. I had a friend who was a stewardess on it and she used to go backwards and forwards and I thought "now this'd be nice" and some other bushwalkers talked me out of it - they said "No - don't go. You won't like that life". So I didn't go - I didn't try any further. I was always down the wharves trying to get a job as a stewardess (laughs, then coughs). I suppose if you pushed enough you could've gone but....

313 Did you feel that there were things at work - in terms of your conditions at work - that could've been improved while you were at Arnott's?

Except that it would've been much nicer if it had been in a cooler room - it's been 106 where I've been trying to work and do wage's sheets and you'd lift your hand up and you'd stick to the sheet (coughs). No - we never bothered about... not rebellious at all.

323 No - but you would've observed things that could've been changed - not that they would've done anything about it.

Well I think if you saw anything and you suggested it - it was always given a try. If anybody came up with anything that they thought was an improvement on anything they'd always give it a try. That's the only way you can advance isn't it?

So the employer was quite positive when something was suggested - they'd generally take it up?

Oh yes - yes they would - they were very good.

But they didn't cool it - they didn't bring in fans or something to cool the room did they?

Well (coughs) they couldn't because the office was like a mezzanine floor and there were sixteen others beneath you.

Could've relocated I suppose.

Yes - they could've - I don't know what they did - I have no idea. They must've I think - and we used to have sliding doors in the ceiling - but you know sometimes the temperature down in Sydney is better outside than it is inside (laughs) And we used to have fans and we'd have heaters for winter - those radiators and things - and I don't know that they ever improved the radiator very much. Have you seen those old-fashioned ones with the cone in them? And they were fairly good - they warmed a lot - I think they were better than a lot of these that they've got now. And the heating - I'll tell you what - was very oppressive. And there was nothing else and there was glass doors you know - sliding doors, windows and things - we used to keep them closed up see because you couldn't stand them open on you because the heat'd just come in - but that was one disadvantage and I don't know what they did later on. I never went back - did I tell you? Not ever I don't think, after I left.

351 And they supplied the uniform?

Never had a uniform at work.

Only when you had the exhibitions?

Only at the shows - yes.

Not at work - you could wear what you wanted to?

I don't what our own clothes were.

354 Did you know the regulations - regulations about your behaviour in the....?

No I don't think they ever had any bother like that. We were never tied down to any regulations - I tell you they were a very nice staff - we were a very happy crowd - we really were - we all worked together - we were always running things for charity when it was needed for children's homes and we'd throw balls and we'd throw all kinds of things...and we'd go and work for these things - you didn't get catered for - we did the catering and we'd do the cooking and we'd do the waiting on the tables and it's so different to these days.

Did you have a fair amount of freedom - like once you learnt the basics of the job - were you largely left to your own devices?

Oh - I think we were - yes - we had a manager in the office but he was just one of us and everybody was a...no it was very happy.

Could you slacken off if you wanted to?

No - I don't think anybody...there was never any fuss made about it to us at all. I don't think anybody ever wanted to - you did what you had in front of you. (coughs) No there was a lot of...I think a lot of people complained about conditions in other jobs and things but we never seemed to have that business in our part - we knew what our work was and we knew what we had to do and it was a day's work - you didn't loaf - if you could help anybody you helped them and you didn't loaf. There was never anything that I could see that anybody wanted to loaf for.

383 Would you have wanted your children to do the job that you did?

No - I couldn't have said it of my children (laughs). Yes - they had a lot of opportunities - I never wanted to do shorthand and typing - that sort of thing never appealed to me - I never did learn that - I didn't want to - I would rather do something with figures - don't ask me to type - I didn't like it full stop.

Did you learn to type?

No. Whatever typing I've done I've done more since I was married than any other time but I taught myself and I didn't want to do it - and I still don't like doing it. So I never say anything to my grandchildren when they say they don't want to do shorthand and typing - I say "You should do that because it's very very helpful to you" - so I try to push them along - 'cause I think it is an advantage for a girl if she's going in to do clerical work - although that never happened to me because there was several others in the office who didn't do it either. I was expected to do it because I wasn't a shorthand-typist and they had plenty without me anyway.

[short discussion about interviewer's daughter's high school]

423 So then you got married in 1934 and you would've been 31 by then - and you met Tom at the Rules Point Hotel - was that right?

Yes - Rules Point Sports 1929.

427 You'd gone the year before I think to look at the caves?
 No - 1929 was the first year I came up here - up to the mountains - I had been to Tumut before but that was when I was a child - when I was about ten I came back with my mother - she hadn't been back for many many years.

The first year when you went to Rules Point Hotel it happened also to be a sports day and Tom and a whole lot of other people were there. Were you introduced to him or....?
 Yes. By an old Mr. Harvey - Jindabyne.

Was Mr. Harvey something to do with the hotel?
 No.

He was just a visitor?
 No - he was just a visitor and he was going round - he used to travel round to all these days - sports days and things they had - he used to have a little gaming table - you know unders and overs they called it or something - and he used to have this and he and his wife were sitting at our table at the guest house and he brought Tom round and introduced him to me as my partner for the dance that night and he said to him "Now - have you got a mate" to bring him back for my girlfriend that was with me - she was a Jewess - and a bushwalker - so he brought this little Northern Ireland boy round.

452 Who - Tom did?
 Yes. It turned out later he was his brother-in-law.

Oh yes.
 But anyway (laughs) that's how we met and then we corresponded for five years and I used to come up in my holidays or he'd go down - 'cause they were tough years 'cause they were Depression years - and work was not very much on the land - it was very hard to find on the land.

So you'd just see each other...?
 Tom went mining - he was mining at Yorkey's and got onto the gold a bit.

You'd go and see each other once or twice a year in that period?
 Yes.

Would you go out if he came down to Sydney would you go out to films or sports or....?
 Oh yes - we went mostly for cruise boats and trips down to the national park and down the river to Cronulla and we did trips like that more than we did pictures - I used to like the pictures very much indeed but I haven't been much for years - I think "The Man from Snowy River" was the last I saw and they did that well and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

471 And what did your parents think of Tom?
 They liked him very much.

They did?
 Mmm.

473 Did they get to know him very well do you think?
 Yes and my father was dead before we were married of course - he died in 1932 - but he and Tom got on very well because they were both bushmen and that was how it was - they had a lot in common.

Did your parents place any restrictions on you during your courtship?

Oh no. We were brought up to have a bit of commonsense I hope (laughs) We didn't have the privileges that the young people of today have which I think are too much for their own good.

What did you think of Tom's family and parents?

I like them very much - they were very fine people.

They were at Coolamine then weren't they? Coolamine homestead?
 Mmm. I got on with them very well - never had a cross word with any one of them - now that's something to be able to say.

Yes. And did you get engaged at some stage - formally engaged or did you just then get married?

No - I said I never would be formally engaged. When they saw me with an engagement ring on my finger they could give me a month - the manager of the office roustabout said that wasn't fair to say a thing like that and I said "look you've got plenty of time to replace me" and at that time it was wartime and Depression time and girls wore engagement rings for years and years and so I thought well I'm not going to do that.

509 Were most of your friends married by then?
 Oh - not all of them - no. Some of them were.

Did you feel any pressure to get married - I mean did you....?
 Oh - I suppose it's like anybody else, you choose the partner that you want to live with and that's it.

Even now - eh.
 I didn't want to live in the city - that's was something I didn't want to do ever. I wouldn't have cared where it was - as long as you're with somebody that you love and you want to spend your life with what's it matter whether you're rich or whether you're poor. Well we were poor.

Did you have a honeymoon or anything?
 No. But Tom was then looking after the property that his father had at Coolamine and so he didn't have the time off. Oh he was down for a few days before we were married and we were married on a Wednesday - I always had a funny old feeling - I wasn't going to do the tradition I think.

530 You were a bit of a rebel weren't you in those days.
 I said I didn't want to be married on a Saturday and I'll be married on a Wednesday. I didn't want to be married at night but I wanted to be married so my parents could come to the wedding and I didn't send any invitations - and mother said to me "Oh you'll have to" and I said "No I'm not sending invitations" because I just knew so many people and there were

538 so many people that I would've liked to have asked and I knew we couldn't afford that and so it was no use so they just got to know I was being married. Mother said oh - I'll just have to tell this one and tell that one and I said "Mother you can tell them but don't send a formal invitation" and so anyway they just came along and we had a church full - which was lovely.

Mmm - that's quite a lot of people - depending on the size of the church.

And you see I was pretty well known at Arnott's for all those years and mother said "Well you can come to the house" but a lot of other people just came to sticky-beak like a lot of them do - you know they weren't personal friends - and we ended up with seventy at the house.

Oh well!

And it was only a suburban home.

That's a big gathering - my word.

I don't know how they managed to cater - that was terrific - they did a lot of work and they worked very hard - my sisters and mother and all and they gave me a lovely spread and I think it's enough for anyone today - they're absolutely terrible - the prices.

561 Did you make any preparations like a glory box - did you start to accumulate certain things?

Oh yes - this is what I had to give up bushwalking for because I couldn't afford everything you see.

What sort of things did you have in it?

Useful things - I had all my linen. I had enough linen to last me for years. I had lots of useful things - and then the bushwalking people all gave me kitchen tea and that was a surprise - and I got everything I could possibly need for a kitchen - and so I had all of that. The only thing I had to buy I think was a bucket and bread tins.

You were well prepared weren't you.

I had everything. I was very fortunate.

Did you have any idea of what sort of a home you wanted?

I knew what sort of a home I was going to get! And we just had to jolly well work and get it into shape - we took on that old place. The big main room at Coolamine was sort of swamped in the middle - all the joists and things were gone from underneath it - so we pulled that all up - and we lived in one room at that time - and we pulled it all up and we got underneath - all we had to do it with was an old bullock jack - and so we get underneath and jacked it all up and put new posts underneath it and fixed the joists up on it, put the floor down again. And there it is today - it's still there, the way we did it. Never had any more done to it until now - and that was a good while ago. And we papered all the walls.

597 With real wallpaper?

Yes - real wallpaper. I couldn't stand newspaper - no way in the world could I. And when they missed the corners and just papered it across from wall to wall like that - so I cut that all down and tacked it all back because people have all souvenired it since.

Oh - it's gone up the chimney mostly for lighting the fire.

Oh I think a lot of them souvenired an awful lot of it too. And so there was an awful lot of work to be done in the house - we used to not clean up. Tom was at that time fumigating the rabbits and we used to go and fumigate these blessed rabbits - all over Peppercorn and all over Coolamine - clear them all out - fill all the burrows in - and we had a bush blower that Frank in Dibindaboola (?) made for us. Anyway he made it and he was nearly blind that man - he was terrific - and he made it so you could push the levers down on the front of it and put coal in the back of it and it had a handle on the side and you turned this with a Beverson (?) with a fan on it and it used to blow this up and you'd put that bush-leaf smoke up the burrows and my word it killed them effectively.

617

Killed them?

Killed the rabbits by the thousands.

From just smoke from leaves?

Smoke from bush leaves - carbon monoxide, it'll kill you. Don't ever put coals in the tent in a bucket or anything and shut your tent door 'cause you'll die if you do - 'cause men have been killed. Yes - that's a very dangerous thing. Well - Tom'd fill all the holes that he could see in these warrens and then I'd turn the handle of this blower and anywhere the smoke leaked out he'd go and stamp it all down so you'd keep turning and turning and turning and sometimes you'd hear the poor little wretches squealing - they'd come back and get in where the leaves were coming out at the end of it - where the smoke was coming out of it - and it killed them effectively. But we used to go round after and they had nowhere to go so you could kill them, catch them with the dog and we got rid of all the rabbits on Coolamine and all of them on Peppercorn - which was a fantastic job - and there've never been heard of since - people keep that up you see. They go in for this Ten-eighty which is not nearly as effective as that.

658 Were you at Coolamine until '38 in all those four years?

No - until '39. Five years I was there.

Where did you go after Coolamine?

The Pockets.

And do you remember wanting children when you got married?

Yes - I didn't mind - I loved my children. And I had my children very close together - only fifteen and a half months between Don and Ted - and they were absolutely terrific.

667 Do you remember how many you wanted before that?
 Oh - I never thought about it - all I could afford to have was two. (laughs) You couldn't afford it anyway - I was too old - and you don't want to be too old with your children.

Yes - you were 31 when you married.
 I was 32 when Don was born you see and 33 when Teddy was born. But I tried to keep up with the Jones' a bit - I used to go with them occasionally but I don't think I could ski - I never did like that - I never did like skiing.

Do think it was mainly a financial matter that you didn't have any more children?
 No.

Or was it your age?
 Oh no I think I was too old and you have to have money and then they were getting - at that stage...I belonged to the medical benefits fund - I'd always belonged to that fund - you know hospital fund things - ever since I was working - so we still stayed in it when we were married. And so at that time that paid for your child and I seemed to get out of it pretty well. Only get the doctor to pay and it wasn't scandalous in those days like it is now. But when you think of that paying for the hospital - it was terrific. What hospitals are now - they're beyond the pale aren't they?

706 You didn't think it was necessarily a good time to have children but it was alright to have two?
 Well I think so - that was all I could afford to really.
 I suppose if you'd've had six you'd've reared them - you'd've managed.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2

BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2

001 Big families were fairly common - I think I saw one of eleven and a number of people... [Interviewer discusses a family she knew]

026 Do you think then was a better time than now for bringing up children - even though you thought it was a hard time?
 I never thought it was a hard time - I always had plenty of food - I always had a good home for them - and they always had plenty of clothes - and they were very happy really. They had a great life - they wouldn't have changed their lives - those boys - they still come home - you won't find other people that weren't happy coming home. They still love coming home - they still love that life - they still love that bush life and that simple way of living. They were never punters or clubbers - either of the boys - they mixed with men - they worked on the Snowy when they were sixteen - those two boys - and they held their own right through it. They ended up with good jobs both of them - they ended up supervising. Thank goodness they weren't drunkards or gamblers so I think they just loved that life - they're never happier than when they've got a fishing rod in their hands or going out after wildlife or something

044 like that. They don't kill to destroy - they only things that are noxious. They wouldn't touch birds - they don't like anything like that and they love the bush and they've taught their children to like it.

Before they were born did you practise any form of contraception?
 No. It was more expensive than having the children I think.

Would you have had a form of contraception later on?
 No. Didn't have those sort of things.

Was that fairly common at the time?
 I think they were just coming in - these sort of things - at that particular time. I don't think it was like it is today.

Would you practise some form of rhythm method or....?
 No - didn't bother with those sort of things at all.

So you were lucky in a sort of a way to only have two?
 Yes.

You had both in Sydney?
 Yes

Delivered by a doctor or....?
 Yes - my word.

With a midwife there I suppose?
 A sister - a nurse.

Both in a hospital?
 Both in that private hospital in Concord.

062 Were you concerned about....?
 Well I wasn't young - I wasn't taking any risks. And I was a girl that had lived a very athletic life always and I thought that I'd seen so many girls of my age think that they were going to some little private hospital and end up being carted off to some big concern - so I thought well I'll go to my own doctor - which I did do - and went to a fine little...they were elderly sisters really but they were terrific women.

Were they difficult births?
 No I don't think so...

070 No caesarians or nothing major?
 No. No complications thank goodness.

[Interviewer talks about own family]

078 So you wouldn't have had any drugs during the birth to reduce the pain or anything?
 No - I had an anesthetic for both of them - I wouldn't have it any other way. I think it's a traumatic experience in most people's lives - it was a traumatic experience as far as my age and my athletic state was my trouble.

083 So you can be too fit to have...?

No - I'd been riding horses a lot and I had hardened up muscles that I shouldn't have hardened up. That was a difficulty.

With regard to your knowledge about childbirth and pregnancy and so on - would you have talked very much about that sort of thing with your mother - would she have enlightened you as it were or....?

No - my mother was always very...we never discussed things in my era about those sort of things...

How did you become knowledgeable about them or were you ignorant?

I was ignorant enough I think - but you can read can't you - you can get books and read if you want to - and I never went to doctors or anything until I went to Sydney to have my babies.

Did people give you advice during pregnancy?

No - I never bothered anybody. When I was coming back with my baby and I said something about clinics to the doctor he said "Keep away from those places!" and I said I don't think I'll be able to get near any doctor either - as far as I was concerned - "Don't even notice 'em. Your baby wants a drink - give it a drink. What do you think a cow does?" he said. And I said "well I'm afraid that's what I believe in doctor so I'm the same as you" so that was that and I never had any more bother and I never bothered with ridiculous stupid nonsense.

101 When you got pregnant out here at Coolamine did you go to see a doctor in Tumut?

No.

You never went anywhere except to Sydney?

No.

I don't think that's the case today [interviewer goes on]

107 And did you stay on once you'd had the child - did you stay at home with your parents for very long?

I stayed there till Don was six weeks old before I came back and then a very kind neighbour who was a wonderful friend to us - he and his wife drove me all the way to Tumut - which was terrific. He was a builder and he was building a silo at Temora or somewhere and he said "Well I'll take you home" so he brought me right to Tumut which was terrific.

And Tom picked you up there?

Then Tom picked me up there.

Then you were on your own at Coolamine with the baby?

Yes.

And that was alright? No problems?

Of course it was. No - Tom used to go away sometimes for two or three days - a week.

117 So you were quite isolated - you had a party line?

I had a party line - yes - I did ring up and I had a very good neighbour at Currango and she was a nurse and I used to ring her up - she was a Mrs. Russell - and she was some distant relation to whatisname there - all these Russells

121 are somehow connected up. She was very good and helpful to me and if I wanted advice I just rang her - and then I had my sister-in-law who was about - she lived at Harris's hut - and she was a help to me too. Everybody was kind and everybody'd help you. [Talk about family]

129 Of course you had a fair bit of experience with young children for eight months out west.

No - but I never did anything like that - not tiny wee babies - although the last little one was born while I was there - but I never had anything much to do with her because I didn't understand babies and I didn't have much to do with any of them at any time so I just did it with my own. It amused me when I had a friend - Mrs. Walsh that used to be at Currango when she was first married - and she got up to about her third or her fourth and she'd be coming down to me for the "Taylor, what do you think I'd better do?" I said "You've had four darling - you know more about it than me I think." But you get to treat all the little ailments and troubles with them - high temperatures were always my biggest fright. I had them with 102 and 102 and 102 and I couldn't get onto anybody - Teddy was terribly sick and they sent Tom home and as soon as he saw Tom he was alright and then Tom wasn't through the gate the next morning and he was 102 again so I said "Oh well, I've got to stay 102 Ted - I can't do anything about it".

146 And did it go down?

It went down. I always believed in keeping children lying down if they had temperatures and not letting them run about - some people let them run about but I don't believe in that because you never do know what children have as long as they haven't that pain in the side then you've got to worry about appendix something like that. There's no isolation in the bush these days.

150 Spencer's hut was very isolated - it had no phone did it - it was very primitive. How long were you at Spencer's hut?

If I wanted my horses I used to have to go to that other paddock where Peter Jones' hut is - I used to have go there for my horses.

From Spencer's?

Mmm.

Good heavens!

'Cause they didn't like that grass - there was only kangaroo grass and they didn't like it - and I used to put them over there. I used to keep one hobbled.

And your horse was your form of transport was it?

It was my only form of transport.

While Tom was away?

Yes.

When were you at Spencer's hut?

42 - '43. I think it was the 12th of April when I went there - it was written on the hut - 12th of April '42 and I think it was the 12th of April of '43 I left. And I was praying for rain when I was there - it was a terrific year. Terrific

163 spring of '43 then it got so dry and it never rained and never rained and never rained till that April and then it started to rain and then it started to snow and I had water again but I used to have to go and cart water until that stage but I enjoyed doing up Spencer's hut.

Did you get much help from Tom with the children in the first four years?

Oh Tom was absolutely terrific with the children - he knew more about them than I did because he'd been used to children more than I was when his sisters were little - there were four or five of them younger than him - so that he - no four of them younger than him - he was terrific with the children. He taught me a lot.

Would you go into Cooma or somewhere for a regular checkup or....?

No. Never went to Cooma at all. Tumut was our way.

Tumut. But would you go to a doctor at Tumut?

If they were ill - yes, my word.

Do you remember any...?

I had to take Don away once. He wasn't very well - he had a very high temp. - I couldn't get it down - and I took him down to Tumut. But a mail car used to come around - that was amazing - you can't credit it - he'd drive across that swamp that's called Mosquito Creek. He'd go in there on that side and he'd drive right across that swamp and come out at Currango. I came down with him one night across that place and after you could bog a duck in that place - you wouldn't dare do it now but he used to do it when it was dried up I suppose. I still never knew how Tom Dunn came across there - but he used to.

185 You would've breast-fed your babies?

Not for long. I was not a success. We always had cows.

How long did you breast-feed them?

Don had too long I think - he wasn't getting enough nourishment - I suppose about four months that I started to feed Don and supplement his feed - and I never bothered with bottles. I always fed them by spoon. Good old Arnott's Milk Arrowroot biscuits.

Did you get a special supply of those at a discount?

(Laughs) Teddy was a lot earlier than Don - I weaned Teddy January or something (coughs) - I put him straight onto Milk Arrowroot biscuits and milk and sugar - a little bit you know at a time. And he used to cry and cry and cry and he said "You told me this was a good baby - he's the crackiest thing I've ever seen" and as soon as I said "Oh I'm going to feed him Jack, I'm sick of it" So I started and I fed him. And I used to put a little bit of milk on it and a bit of sugar and...you're gamer then - the poor little first ones always get a terrible time I'm sorry for them. Everybody's first baby I'm sorry for because they're always ones that are experimented with - that didn't seem to hurt Don - there he is over there. [Talks about son's photograph]

212 With your babies - did you always pick them up when they cried?
Yes - I certainly did. You would never know what's wrong with a child if you don't pick it up. How were going to find out?

Did you use a dummy at all?

Oh yes - they used a dummy - they were terrific. When they fell down the crack they were gone and I never got another one.

Did you use any sedatives?

No - I don't think I...

If they had any pain or....?

The kindest thing I found for my children when they had wind and that sort of thing - people'd think you were awful - but I used to give them Wolfs Schnaps with a bit of sugar in it.

What are they?

Wolf Schnaps in a bottle.

Oh - schnaps - oh.

Yes - in that green bottle and - you know - warm water and sugar with it - don't give it to them straight. And up'd come the wind immediately and the baby was satisfied. So why worry? I can truthfully say that I never lost a night's sleep with any of them until Don was about four I 'spose when we were at the The Pockets - would've been '39 - and he got sunstroke one day driving along in the sulky - he only had a little hat on - and his little shirt collar came down and he got it of course at the back of his neck and we didn't know what was the matter with him and we felt him and we thought he was so terribly hot so we tried to ring up the doctor who was at Currango - we couldn't get him. So we got cold packs and put them on the back of his neck and on his forehead and then he started to go to sleep and that was all that was wrong with him. It could've been dangerous - he was running a very high temperature - I always took their temperature so that I'd know (coughs) what they were. That night there was somebody else who was ill in the area and the phone was busy and I had a phone at the Pockets but I couldn't get through so we got on him ourselves. Another night Tom was away somewhere when Teddy was a baby and I always had them beside the bed - I didn't have them tucked away in some other room - never - never ever - I hate that - and those little things have been cuddled up for nine months and loved and cuddled and close to you and they never should be poked away when they're born somewhere else away from their mothers and fathers. I don't say in bed with you but if they want to when there's anything wrong with them it's a wonderful place to comfort them. But Teddy was cry cry cry and I couldn't think what was the matter with him - I had one of those little cosyby - you don't see them now - and they were only made of...little fold-up things and you could carry them anywhere with you and they were terrific - but I used to always line mine with rugs and blankets but they were apparently bleached calico they were made out of and of course it was a bit too airy although I had a rug over the side. He got his little hand out and I'd

256 cover him up and he'd grizzle again - and I put my hand out and touched his hand and it was transparent and solid. And I flew out of bed and poked the fire which was always going - it was cool night at the time. And I got him out and I got some warm water - tepid water and warmer and a little bit warmer and rubbed it and rubbed it till I got his hand back and then of course I put him into bed with me. But for years after that boy's hand would go like that - if it got cold it'd go transparent - you know like frozen meat looks - like that. Heavens was I frightened. I was frightened until 264 I got that circulation going. Well they're the things that ...privation in the bush...that now of course you'd pick them up and run to the doctor and run to the hospital with them - I don't think they know any more than you could give them for that. Of course I had very good neighbours around me - the people of Yarrongobilly village were very helpful - everybody would help you - if you rang them up and said you wanted something, told them what was wrong, they'd come and help you or they'd tell you why they couldn't come but they'd tell you what to do.

272 Did you get Commonwealth maternity benefits?
No. We never got those - no. The only thing I got was child endowment and I never got that till Teddy was three. I couldn't be bothered - it was only five shillings a week.

You were in a health fund so I guess that paid for your hospital fees for the births and so on...?
Hospital fees...yes, that's all - but I never had any benefits - and I had a couple of good sisters and my mother in those days see.

Did you think that having children was very important for you as a woman?
I quite think that it's something in everybody's life. I don't like to see childless marriages - not from wilfulness - some people just simply cannot have children - I've got some very dear friends - women particularly - that never had any children and have both had sisters who...one had eleven and the other one had twelve - but she never had any. Now she's doing her duty she's looking after a...I don't know what you'd call her - just a little girl - she really is her niece but she's no blood relation - she was a little adopted girl in the first place and then her mother and her father both died and since she took this girl her husband has died so she's got her but she's a friend of Tom and my granddaughters so they spend quite a bit of time together - she gets a bit of home life there - but it's very awkward for her not to have any children of her own a girl of eleven - but she's sixteen now. That's a difficult time in anybody's life - I don't know what ought to be done with sixteen-year-olds - I know what I would have done with my mum. I thought sixteen ... I died when they were sixteen - I didn't think I could endure them - so they were branded that there were never to be any more children around sixteen - and I had the two Reid boys from when they were six and seven and when they were sixteen I said "I won't have you - don't you dare come here while you're sixteen." And then Dougall came to the back door and he said "I'm here" and I said "Yes I can see you here." and he said "You know how old I am don't you?"

308 And I said "Yes I know just how old you are and you're just passing through".

You got just the right year?
No - I couldn't stand them when they were sixteen.

Seventeen was alright was it?
No - no - I had to see how they came out at seventeen. They were generally a bit better when they were seventeen. But oh - you'd be surprised and my own grandson when he was sixteen last year - he said to his mother "I can't go up to Nanna's this year can I?" and she said "Oh why can't you?" and he said "You know she won't have them at sixteen." (laughs) so I think he was a bit of an exception - he'd never been any trouble as far as I could see - at sixteen - but I can't say that about all the other boys - 'cause Don was bringing them home from school you see at sixteen - his mates that he'd made at school and Ted was doing the same and oh if I didn't have my money's worth of sixteen-year-old boys - and they are terrible - and I don't know what the girls are like at that age - I haven't had enough experience with them.

I haven't yet.
Haven't you? You haven't got any of sixteen?

[Discussion of interviewer's family]

327 As far as 1938's concerned - there were four of you living at Coolamine.
Yes. In all the years from then on - then we moved to the Pockets.

Did you have any permanent casuals living at Coolamine at the same time?
No - Oh look I had lots of friends and people came and we had lots of - there were people - lessees in the mountains - not in the term that they were - they were different lessees in those days - they were men that had had the country - like Peppercorn and those old places for years and they used to be coming through to their leases and they'd always...we had lots of company. We were never alone - seldom ever.

337 Did you have anyone to assist you at certain tasks in the house - like laundry or anything like that or....?
No. I remember a friend that came - Mrs. Forbes for instance - and those sort of things - it was different then - Mrs. House's sister-in-law she is but no we'd didn't need anybody there to do that little house (laughs).

It was quite a substantial place wasn't it - you had a number of rooms available didn't you?
There was only about three bedrooms in it - at Coolamine - but then I used to use the other old house for people if they came.

So you were quite well off as far as accommodation was concerned?
348 Oh yes - I had plenty of room.

349 So the boys could each have their own room?

No - they didn't - they were too little there. No they didn't - they shared a room. And then when we went to the Pockets they shared the room again - they had to because there was only two bedrooms there and for guests we only had the hut - and we used to have a bit of canvas up and the strip of work on the other part....

At Coolamine you had the main living room, you had small bedrooms opposite the living room....?

Yes and then the little one off there. See that room was not any good for anything - the other room because there were three rooms opened off it so I used to just have a little table in there and chairs and the telephone was in that room. There was a fireplace...

Yes there was a little fireplace - it's a bit of a fight there yes. The three rooms entered into it and all the floors were covered - I had lino on all the floors.

You had that outbuilding too didn't you?

Yes - that used to be a storehouse - that was a storeroom there. Well we carried a lot of stores because we got the stores in by lorry twice a year - got them in about March or April and then about October or November - so when I came up the first time after we were married I came in with a Mr. Hudson and we brought all our supplies and all my things from Sydney up you see - because I had quite a few things down there that had to come - trunks and luggage and things that I saved up over the years - boxes and boxes and boxes of them - and Tom had to go down to Darling Harbour to put them on the trucks down there and then they picked them off at Tumut and Mr. Hudson brought us in. Then when I came home with Don he brought me in again - no Tommy Daring brought me in when I came back with Don.

379

Did you have much furniture in the rooms? What sort of furniture? Well the furniture was always there and it's the sort of furniture they've still got at Currango today.

Sideboard and....?

Yes. Sideboard and chairs and...they were always there. So I just carted them about with me from where I...from place to place.

There was nothing built-in at Coolamine was there?

No. And we always had it fenced off and I had a nice little garden and I had daffodils and different things growing - I used to cut the grass with a lawnmower and keep it tidy - well it'sI don't need to say anything.

No - it's not like that today. And did you - in terms of entertaining people - that was mainly in the kitchen-living-room...?

Dining-room and lounge room it used to be.

So that was the most important room in the place?

Yes - and that's where we congregated anyway - but too many cats and too many dogs got in it after I left. There was a willow tree - a young willow tree - that's growing there now - was planted the day that that boy was born.

398

400 Willow tree...?

In that fenced yard - there's a square hole there - used to be a well - there's a little overflow from that - that went down the yard a bit - and it's just down there that he planted the willow the day Don was born - and that's the only one that's there. There used to be a big willow in the yard there - a real big willow - and there used to be a couple of tin sheds there - one was a wash-out bathroom until we moved it up onto the verandah - and then of course it's just gone to wreck and ruin. When the men came after I left they tied their horses up about the house - see Walter Ware came after us and he just tied his horses outside the house - and pulled the fence down that I had round the house - 'cause I had to have it when the children were little - that was pulled down and all the garden gone and then of course "Bung" Harris came and Jessie Bridle didn't do anything about a garden because she never would work on a garden but she didn't have horses around the house or dogs in the house - but the other people did - to see dogs in the house is terrible.

422 You wouldn't have had any electricity there? Gas lighting was it?

Yes - we only had gas and the kerosene lamps.

Did you have any...for ironing you would've used?

Flat irons - yes.

Flat irons - stoves - fuel stoves?

Yes - they used flat irons at Currango. They'd usually come here to iron.

Did you have a hot water system at all?

No - only at Pockets.

At Coolamine you would've had a big fountain or something did you?

At Coolamine we had a big fountain on the fire-place and we used to have a copper and when we had the bathroom down by the well - we used to just like the copper down there you see - and then get the water out of the copper. And I think we had a bathroom - I'm afraid I can't think where we had a bath heater - no we didn't have a bath heater 'cause we used to have to go to the water and put it in. But we mostly showered so you didn't use so much water for baths and we used to fill up one of those showers...you know...like they've got at Currango. (coughs) We always had bathing facilities. We always had plenty of water.

444 You wouldn't have had a washing machine?

No. Never had a washing machine until I came here.

You'd boil it in a boiler I suppose?

Yes - a copper.

You didn't have a washing machine until you came here to this house which is just a few years ago?

Oh - I had a little one over there in '69.

But not before that?

No.

450 Fridge at Coolamine?

No - I never had a fridge until I went to Currango. Never bothered with them.

Did you have a wireless?

Always had a wireless. Always had a good wireless.

You'd keep that - what - in the living room on the mantelpiece?

Charge your own batteries - yes we used to charge our own batteries and we used to go over to a little creek there by Bill Harris's - there's what we call the Devil's Bridge - goes over underground...

They call that the Devil's Influx or something I think.

No - I suppose they would - they change the name. The Devil's Bridge we knew it as - and that little creek on the other side of that - and Tom had the water wheel there and he built it himself and he used to charge up all the batteries for people all round everywhere - everybody'd come and bring their batteries and I said "You never went for a sulky trip anywhere but someone didn't give you a cursed battery to carry" and you were always frightened it was going to spit on something and burn things.

469 You were a party line - right.

Always on a party line.

Was that used a lot?

Yes - it was used a fair bit.

Use it once a day?

Oh well - yes - of course you would - there was always someone you had to talk to or somebody rang you and kept in contact with you that way.

Would you use it two or three times a day?

Oh yes - it all depended on what you wanted to ring. See we rang each other up and like - I could ring Mrs. Cotterill and oh - I could ring Long Plain or I could ring Col Ibbotson's - which is what they call Long Plain house now - or the other one that they call Cooinbil but in our day that was Oddy's house down there - Bill Oddy lived down there what they call Long Plain house now and Cooinbil was called Long Plain - never know of anything else called Long Plain. So it's awkward how to take the changes...but I mean you just take them. But the Pockets was a different system altogether - Currango was on it too - and everybody heard anybody else ring and you could hear anybody else's conversation if you wanted to but I never bothered listening in - 'cause I always found that you had too much to do and I suppose all my life I'd been used to party line telephones because that was the system at Darrabong although we didn't have it on - and I know there used to be an awful lot of fussing and nonsense about people listening in and it is a nuisance because dash-it-all I don't know what they want to bother for. I'd have learnt a lot more if I'd've listened in but I couldn't be bothered.

495

499 And at Coolamine I think there were still six or seven buildings there then in '38 - the barn was still there wasn't it...?

There was this shed here and another shed over there - that was two. There was the old kitchen was three. There was a saddleroom down there was four and the cheesehouse was five and the main house there is six and the joining part on the back was seven and mummy and daddy Taylor's house eight. There were eight buildings there.

Eight buildings? And the dunnies?

Yes. They're the only thing most people did anything about. Those are an essential thing.

And you had a vegetable garden?

Never did grow various bits of it 'cause I never had that sort of water and I never had time to grow vegetables with children [Interviewer and interviewee talk over each other]

517

I never ever got anything much off those gooseberry bushes - and I never got any fruit - only fruit I used to get was out of the cherry gardens but we used to call the cherry garden the Haystack Paddock over in Currango - used to go there sometimes for cherries but not so much until we went to the Pockets to live really. Most of the fruit I got I had to get from Hills Point off the trucks that used to come through from the vegetable carters and so forth. But Tom was never a gardner. But Bill House was a terrific gardener and Harcourt Reid at old Currango was one of the best gardeners I have ever known. Every bit of backyard except a part about that long about that wide was under cultivation - it wasn't flowers - it was vegetables. Around the side and up the back.

535 And what did he do - did he sell some of it?

Oh sell them? No he gave them away.

He just liked planting things and growing things.

He had a fairly big family - about seven or eight of them and they kept themselves in vegetables and he could grow - not tomatoes - but he could grow everything else - and he had one of those little rotary hoes - the ones you push along yourself - not motorised at all - and every child in that family weeded. And every child wanted to do something in the garden. I'm afraid mine didn't.

Where did he live?

Old Currango. Tom and the boys aren't interested in tilling the soil. I was a gardner but I never had time. I used to have a very good one at Currango when I first went there but I was a younger woman then. And I had to let it go

557

I had a lovely garden early in this stage - can't do it now. I had lovely little things that used to grow from year to year but [incomprehensible] the blessed kangaroos took over you see and they ate everything - they ate all the little succulent things and took the lot of them - everything that was annual - percnial was alright but they didn't allow any annuals to grow. As soon as they came up they ate them off again so you didn't do any good at all with annuals. Nothing eats percnials - funny that isn't it? Don't like them.

570 In terms of the daily chores - you'd get up pretty early I suppose - you'd be up at six mostly would you?

Oh yes in the summertime - not wintertime - I never get up early in wintertime - 'cause I think it's a silly waste of time. (laughs)

Too cold?

No - you've got to wait till it's daylight in the mountains. Got traps to go around - you've got to of course.

Traps?

Yes. I was no good as a trapper - I used to try and go with Teddy - he was lonely after Don went away to school you see and he'd say "You come with me Mum" so I'd get up and there's frost in the morning and your horse is making tracks in this white snow - white frost on the ground - oh no thanks. I was a bad trapper.

What did you have for breakfast?

Oh we had to cook a breakfast - but I don't now.

Meat?

Oh yes - we had chops - we had plenty of meat always.

Eggs?

Yes - we had our own eggs. Fowls never laid and I never did like preserved eggs and I didn't preserve eggs so if we didn't have eggs we did without eggs. They always stopped laying about April - they never started laying again then till September. They lay much earlier here.

597 Preserved eggs - you mean powdered eggs?

Oh - you put them in a water glass and some of the [incomprehensible] goes off.

That sounds awful. But powdered egg is awful too. [Conversation about eggs]

I had fowls at Currango and I had turkeys and I had geese. I had ducks. And I just had them for foxes cause I could not keep the foxes out - they got in no matter what you did - they climbed over or they dug in and I just could not stand keeping fowls for foxes.

Did you have them at Coolamine too?

Had them at Coolamine. And we had a fowl-house there and they could get up on the roost and get away from...they didn't seem to be worried so much but people in the mountains would build fowl-houses on creeks - well if you see a fox going he's going along a creek and all the fowl-houses - and I couldn't get anyone to construct me a fowl-house off the creek - I knew it shouldn't be on it. Fowls don't like to go in the gully - they like to be high up on a hill or high in trees - they don't like to be in gullies and I tell you I just got sick and tired of feeding the foxes at Currango so I went out of fowls.

642

645 At Coolamine Tom was away a fair bit I suppose?

Oh yes - he used to go away and he used to sometimes go down as far as the Ravine and meet stock coming in and take them that far when they were going out - he'd be away two or three days and he never was away from the house very much other than that when the stock were in [talking over each other] At Coolamine he was mostly home - yes. Only when the stock were coming in or going out...[talking over each other] You had to ride the fences and you had to keep your rabbits down and it was a fulltime job.

Do you remember what happened after dinner in the evenings - would you listen to the wireless?

666 We never used to listen to all the radio...

Read?

No - never liked reading with those lights very much.

The Kerosene lights?

Yes. We used to play with cards - we used to have a lot of callers. We'd play a lot of cards - Five hundred and we used to always listen to the radio.

You still do that don't you even till one o'clock in the morning sometimes. What ...five hundred or....?

Always five hundred - yes.

Not Euchre or Bridge?

No - Don't play euchre - don't play bridge - too serious. I must have something that you can have a bit of fun out of.

Five Hundred's good - not too taxing.

Oh no - it's good if you've got anybody keen. I don't like cheats - that's the main thing. We used to have some fantastic times at Coolamine...of course the Depression years hunted a lot of people away out of towns like Queanbeyan and places like that just before the war and they had to go away shooting foxes or trapping rabbits and doing things like that...we got to know quite a lot of people and they came and stayed sometimes - stayed the night with us - and play a game of cards and they were very keen on the wrestling in those days - there was Chief Little Wolf and I've forgotten about Smally's ones - you know they're all so fake [incomprehensible] when you can see it on the screen and you can see how fake it is.

697

701

Wrestling?

Wrestling - yes.

How do you mean wrestling?

You know - fighting - men wrestling.

Yes.

Chief Little Wolf and I've forgotten what some of them were - but I used to know them all. And I'd listen to them on air.

Oh - listen to them!

Listen to them on air. I said when you see it in reality on the TV you see what fake it was the other way.

709 Oh - they wrote in the grunts and...?

Oh yes - yes.

On the radio?

Oh you hear them.

I see.

And then he's got him down and got him down in some sort of a hold - now you got another hold - well you know we'd sit up to all hours of the night....

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 3

001 And I had to sit down on the front verandah and all the other crowd were in one of those bedrooms on the end of the verandah where I knew they were giggling me all the time and it was the most awful feeling because they knew I hated being interviewed and I remember they said to me something about a washing machine "Have I ever used a washing machine?" I said "No - I've never used a washing machine" see - and something else they asked me - and [incomprehensible] they didn't put it in the paper as an advertisement for this thing that was coming out - they put it over the air and it did come on TV - and Molly Taylor who'd never used a washing machine in her life (laughs) - this thing advertising me. I'll laugh about that because really and truly I never had any - I never thought of any other way of having your clothes - only boiled - and see you never boil them now. And they don't feel the same and they don't look the same. And I could boil them at Currango where I had plenty of water but I can't be bothered turning that wringer - I'm spoilt now you see. I think perhaps after all these years I'm entitled to it.

I think so.

A little spoiling. I couldn't get over me using flat irons and I remember a little Italian girl coming to Currango there - one of the first caretakers, her husband was on the dam - and she said to me - she was trying to explain to me in Italian and she looked to him to make him say the word for her and I said "No you say it Natalina - now what is it?" and she said "You know" she was showing me how to smooth the clothes with her hands and she looked down on the stove and she saw my flat iron and she said "Merta You don't use those things!" and I said "Yes I do Natalina - that's all I've ever had to use since I was married" and she was amazed. They'd used them in Italy you see but they'd never had anything but the electric ones when she came out here. She was always wanting to go back to Italy and he used to say to me "She won't be able to live over there you know - she only thinks she can." I don't know where they are today - I'd love to have kept in touch with them.

023

025 Who decided how the household money would be spent - did you keep the accounts or....?

There was never any discussion with money ever. The cheque was put in the bank and we paid it out by cheque - there was never any savings accounts. It was always on a cheque account - and things were paid. If you bought or sold a horse or cow or whatever it was well it went into the bank and it's amazing - I look back over the butts - and I kept them for years and years and years. I don't think I've ever thrown any butts away. I don't know where they all are now.

Could you tell the story of your life from those butts maybe?

Yes. Look back at all those huge amounts we thought we had to pay for things (laughs).

Tumut was the main place where you bought clothes and food and shoes and that sort of thing was it? Do you remember how much things cost like a pair of shoes for instance in 1938?

You'd buy such a great deal like that. I knew I got those sort of things when I went to Sydney - occasionally I bought them in Tumut.

038 Would you go back to Sydney once a year?

Ooh - about that I suppose.

Did you know all the ropes up there - did you know where all the shops were wouldn't you?

Yes - I was always at home in Sydney. And I still am as it may be you're getting around now - you might be in a foreign country - you might be in Hong Kong sometimes. They're so mixed now.

Did you buy anything on hire purchase?

No - only motor cars.

In '38 would you have had a motor car?

Ooh no. No. We never had a motor car till about '45.

Do you remember any major things that you bought at Coolamine in '37 - '38? Appliances or anything like that?

Heavens I couldn't imagine.... We bought a new wireless which Tom went down with these chaps I told you were catching the rabbits and... to buy this wireless. Teddy was eleven months old I remember that.

Do you remember how much it cost?

No. And he paid cash for it. I think it might've been 32 pounds and we thought it was an awful lot of money. Awful lot of money.

053 Yes - 32 pounds.

It might've been about that. It was a very nice wireless and I've still got it in the corner of the diningroom at Currango but I... it would go again you know it was only the batteries and that sort of thing were charged but we've taken off little winder knobs off because the children would get at it and you know you lose track of things that old - I thought of having a little cabinet made out of it but I thought I've got no room for it anymore. So you've got stock and you need a little house now and [incomprehensible] is very hard.

059 Years of collecting things.

Was there anything delivered to the household - I suppose you would've got your mail?

Our mail used to come - when I first was married - through Brindabella on a Sunday and then Mr. McDonald came to Rules Point and it was a bit of underhand work - he got the mail changed to suit him and he got the contract - He'd have to have signed everybody's name because you couldn't have got it done otherwise unless there was a petition in and he landed on the back verandah one day and I said "Oh Mr. Mac it's a surprise to see you" and he said "You should never be surprised to see the mailman" I said "Now what do you mean?" (coughs) "Oh the mail is coming from Tumut from now on" he said "They've changed it". "Well" I said "I think we should've had some notification about this because I have my mail directed through Brindabella and I don't suppose I'll receive it tomorrow." "Oh yes" he said "They couldn't do that." But it didn't come and that must've been stopped - they said it couldn't be stopped unless by something like that - and so it was a bit of a shock to us I can tell you.

073 Mr. MacDonald - he was running the Rules Point Hotel then?

Yes - and he did funny things - but just the same - strange things - I don't understand - but anyway that was done but it didn't make any difference because we got our mail twice a week but he only brought it out the one day I think - on the Saturday - and if you wanted it on the Wednesday you had to go yourself for it. (coughs) Mrs. Bridle used to run it twice a week I think - yes - she ran it Wednesdays and Saturdays when she took it over. And that was a long ride - it was sixteen miles from Coolamine to Rules Point - and she used to come via us - it was further you see - it was twelve and twelve are twenty-four - and she used to come by us and go back by us - and that was forty-eight miles she did. So she did that twice a week.

084 Riding?

Yes. Now today she's a cripple down there - you must've seen her at Mrs. Harris' - must've seen her at Leenie's

I saw Bill her husband [Conversation about people they know]

098 Would you have anything else delivered like vegetables and other foods?

No - if you wanted those sort of things you had to go yourself for them. When we went back to live at Currango - that was in '46 - we had our own car then.

Did you have a special day for baking when you were at Coolamine?

No - I don't think....You baked when you wanted it. I never minded baking at Coolamine and I never minded baking when I was at Spencer's Hut but when I went back to Currango after living at Adaminaby I - for some unknown reason - I couldn't make bread - and I could make good bread before that - and it was after the war years - whether that the flour was all too new I never ever did know - but I never could make bread the same.

110 When you went to Sydney or if you went to Tumut - would you eat out of a night-time? Would you have a special occasion?

I never bothered much about eating out. I think over the years we might've done it a bit more but we usually stayed with friends(coughs) or with Mrs. Harris when we went down - but going out like that - we never did a great deal of that - I don't do a great deal of that now. I might have a splurge occasionally - but it's very very occasionally.

Did you celebrate birthdays in any big way or....?

That all depended I think. While your children are little you do - and they always had their little friends - whoever was around them.

What about Christmas time?

Christmas time has always been a time they'd always come home.

But I mean at Coolamine?

Always. Always had Christmas at home.

What about Easter?

One Christmas in all the years that we've been married I had away and that was the year that Tom went to join the surveyors and we had it with Tom's sister in Fontenoy over here but that was the only Christmas that I've had away in all the years that I've been married - I always had it at home and they come home - Don used to even come from Anglesea with his seven - he doesn't do it anymore because they've got their own life now and they have it at home but Ted still comes.

131 What about Easter time - did you have anything special at Coolamine - I mean back in....?

No - I never made a fuss about Easter.

Melbourne Cup Day? Did you used to be glued to the radio?

Yes - yes. We were always interested in the Melbourne Cup - we always listened to them - and for a while we [talks about the present]

When you were at Coolamine would you go down to Tumut show or something like that as a family?

Not very often. We went to things that were at Yarfangobilly - whenever the sports were at Yarfangobilly we'd go to that.

Or Rules Point sports day - would you....?

Rules Point gave up having sports - we went while they had them at Rules Point and then once Mrs. Cook passed on they never had any more sports at Rules Point and they had them at Yarfangobilly then and we used to go down to the race meetings and Of course I was in the C.W.A. and used to go to all of those things and that's where I caught the whooping cough for the boys. I thought "Isn't it wonderful - something'd go wrong with us if we went down there" and we'd come back and we'd be gastric or something'd happen. When we went to Yarfangobilly sports Christmas time nothing was wrong with us - we thought it was wonderful - and that was the time that Tom joined the surveyors and we rode from

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155 - I drove in the sulky and the children and Tom rode the pack horses - from here to Kosciusko. From Spencer's Hut to Kosciusko.

When was this?

That was in 1942 we left there and I came back in '43 - in the January of '43. And George Day at the Kosciusko - it was closed down during the war - he invited me to go up too - he said he'd have me coming too so I went up and I had to drive because we didn't have another pack horse. It was very hard on a horse to pull a sulky all that way - it was awful. We just got to the Subaco River and Don developed this dreadful cough and it was whooping cough - and they had whooping cough very badly - both of them - by the time I got ...Ted wasn't sick till I got home - but they were both very ill little boys that I brought back to Spencer's Hut I can tell you. I didn't have my money's worth of whooping cough. I'd been all round Adaminaby and all round the district I think - not knowing that I had it. But I picked it up that day at the sports at Yarangabilly - terrible luck - I found out after we'd come near these boys from the mill who of course gave it to everyone.

173 Did you have singsongs at all at Coolamine?

No - we didn't have anything to...Oh I think we used to have a little bit at parties sometimes when people came along - sometimes when Mr. & Mrs. Reid would go home Christmas time - which was most of the time - then they'd all get together. But we didn't have any musical instruments unless anybody brought musical instruments and I mean you'd just be singing - which I didn't do (laughs then coughs).

Did you drink much alcohol in those days?

No.

When you were with relations or at card nights?

No. I can truthfully say that has never been part of our lives. Alcohol - no.

Did you get newspapers or magazines when you were at Coolamine?

Always had newspapers.

They came through the post?

Yes. We always got a paper.

183 Did you go to the library at all - would you borrow books from Tumut library or buy books?

No. I never had the eyesight to read too much and I think when I was a little girl our father used to say to us if he caught us reading "There should be something you children should be doing for your mother". So mother'd say "Well don't let him see you" you see but well we read a bit but not a great deal - I tell you I was never a really great reader.

191 Most of the things that you did you would've done with your children?

Yes.

You took them wherever you went I suppose?

Yes - we never left them. They went with us wherever we went and if we were going to the dams we took beds and things and those children came and they were never left at home.

Did Tom go to things that were separate from you? Or what about the C.W.A. thing?

Well he'd always drive me down or I'd go - probably from Rules Point - I'd go down with Mrs. Crosser and he'd stay at Rules Point or something like that. No - we've always gone to things together. Thank goodness. We've never been tovers or povers (laughs then coughs).

I don't know whether we missed anything through not going but I never did do it and it's never been done in my life and I never encouraged it. I probably missed some of the funny stories that used to go on at Talbingo. We used to always call there and have a drink if we were coming home - just to patronise them - and I didn't ever call I think when the people were there that wrote - the chap that wrote "The Best Years of Our Lives" - Morris...and I never did meet them until after they'd left and came back again but some of the other lessees of the place we got to know - but we seldom ever did that sort of thing. No - the life in the bush was wonderful in those days and I think you made your enjoyment and I really think you appreciated it more - it's all made for you now. I had a doctor and his wife - a doctor Lawson and his wife - and they came there with their children - they had four - three girls and a boy - and they'd often bring little friends with them - and one day they brought this little boy who said "I'm bored!" and she raged - she said: "Don't you ever let me hear you say you're bored here ever again. If you can't find something to do there's something wrong with you." She'd take them down to the creek and she'd have them making dams and she'd say "Well go find your own amusement - go and do it" and she did make those children independent - and they really did grow up a very nice family. She was back again this January.

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227 Would you say that in your situation at Coolamine that it was a fairly equal situation between you and Tom - like did either of you have greater authority than the other as to what was done and what was saved?

No - I don't think we ever bothered much about that.

Did you ever punish the children in a physical way?

My word I did (laughs).

How did you do that?

I'll tell you what I did with them - brought them up castor oil and stick I think - the same way I was brought up (laughs). No - if ever we promised them anything we gave it to them - be it a hiding if they didn't do as they were told - or it was a sweet or a trip or anything they got - we never ever cheated them. And to this day I think that stands the same way with them. They know that what I said I meant - and I wouldn't say that they could have this or that or the other and not give it

242 to them. Whenever I said - they did something and they shouldn't do it - I punished them - I did. So they knew what I said I meant.

How did you punish them?

I gave them a good slap if they needed it - around the legs.

You didn't use a stick or something?

My word - I used whatever I had in my hands. (coughs) I remember when I was trying to teach them school I had one of those rolling pins that had a handle both ends of it and - you know - I'd be doing something and they wouldn't be taking it in and I hit it down on the table and I broke both ends out of that - I didn't hit them with the rolling pin. I just hit on the end of the table to try and call law and order. (laughs)

And it was negative - the fact that it broke. They would've laughed about that behind your back I would've thought.

They've been punished several times - I think we were a bit hard once but I don't know - I had to know where they were - and if I didn't know where they were I was most upset - if I could hear them I didn't care because I had two little boys when I went to the Pockets and you know yourself how big and lonely that can be - you've got a gully down one side of you and big tall trees at the other side of you - and in two seconds you were out of the sight of the house - at Coolamine you had a bit of sight around you - you see around a bit clear - but there there was nothing. And I went there with two little boys - I suppose three and four - and I tell you it wasn't very easy and so it was the only time in my life that I tried to frighten them of anything - and I used to tell them that the kangaroos were hairy men and if they saw them they must never get out through the fence - I said "You must never get through the fence - just stay in this fence and never go out through that fence because the hairy men know that you belong inside that fence and if you go outside the fence they might pick you up and put you in their pouch and take you home." I said "They won't hurt you but they might pick you up and put you in their pouch and take you home because they'll think you're lost. So don't go outside that fence." And they never did go outside that fence.

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Do they still think about those hairy men?

I don't think they were frightened of the hairy men - they weren't frightened of the kangaroos because they always hopped away from them you see - but they didn't go away thank goodness because I was terrified that they'd get out of my sight. Because I was on my own - Tom was away all day - and I only had neighbours - as I said - Currango was a neighbour but there were people that couldn't come to you anyway because they shouldn't. Mrs. Russell - she wasn't able to come there - I just had to learn to live on my own.

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278 What were the things that you valued most highly in terms of their upbringing and how they should behave in society and so on?

Politeness I think - not to be rude to anyone. I remember stressing that when Don was even sixteen - he was rude to somebody and I said "Don't be rude to anyone in my house - I will not have anyone rude." And I still to this day don't like anyone to be rude - and I don't think either of them were to anyone - I know it was to another boy and I think he might've deserved it - but I still didn't like it. I can remember when I wanted - when I had Don christened - and I said to my uncle - my father's brother - the only one left alive - and I said to him: "Uncle - will you be his godfather." and he said "Yes Molly, I'll be his godfather if you promise me something" and I said "What's that?" and he said "That he honours his mother and his father all the days of his life." I said "Uncle that's a big order. But I'll try." So I think he has. He was a very good church man Uncle was - one of the pillars of St. Matthew's in Windsor (coughs). I think Don did - I think Don has still - 'cause I remember once here in - it would've been 1976 it was

306 [talks about incident in 1976]

338 In terms of differences between boys and girls - when do you think you first discovered the difference between boys and girls or when did you discover that boys were different to you?

I've never known that one. It never ever entered my head - that was something that I never ever thought about. I knew there were boys and we were girls and that was that and I never thought any more about it. Those sort of things never entered my head. I suppose you ^{were} brought up in a country life - well you'll come up with animals that are different - so that's something that you know is different and it was something that we never discussed. We never ever thought about that sort of thing.

You can't remember learning it?

Never learned it anyway. I think this is ridiculous nonsense the way they go on about it at school - I think it's utterly unnecessary.

You don't think it needs to be taught?

I do not think it needs to be taught. I'm certainly sure it isn't. I think that films are the most embarrassing things that you can sit in and watch with people now and I just feel like turning them off and I do. I don't think a lot of it is necessary - I think it is just so unnecessary. That comes with commonsense and being taught by a good open free life I think without any nonsense. That's what I think anyway (laughs).

You don't remember anyone having a miscarriage at all in the '30s or in the '20s?

No. Not in those days.

Did you have problems in that area or....?

No I don't remember ever coming into contact with that.

367 Anyone having an abortion?

No.

367 Even going to Sydney?
Never heard anything - never knew anything about that sort of thing. Never ever come up against that. I think country people kept those sort of things to themselves anyway. Now it's all plastered over everything for everybody to see and know about.

Was it just that - you know - no one's told me they know of any miscarriages or abortions - anyone I've interviewed so far - so it must've been fairly rare.

I don't think it...there was never anything serious that I knew about - nothing that (coughs)....

What about homosexuality amongst males for instance?

Never come into contact with any of that thank goodness.

It would've startled you when you first discovered it or...?

It would've. I'm afraid it's accepted so openly today that it's a little bit unnecessary the way that they try to get known - every film you see or every story you see there's just one of those in it - every one of them. And I don't think it's necessary to be all in front of people.

390 How were homosexuals regarded then do you think - in the '30s - what would've been the attitudes say towards males?

Very different. The only one that I ever came across - we just didn't bother - he lived across the road from us when we lived in Strathfield - down a few doors. But it was very feinted - he'd wear funny cuts on his shirts and an effeminate voice and that sort of thing or...We just didn't talk about him and that was it. He only mixed with the high-class anyway. Didn't know him at all - you'd see him walk down the street - lived in the same street as we did - we never spoke to the man.

Were they openly chastised or...?

No. I don't think anybody boggled at him. That was all but - I tell you - he went to the church over the way and he mixed up with this fellow and that fellow and the other one and he'd walk up the street with Miss Vickley and "Oohyesoooh".

414 Did you think there was still a class difference and consciousness? Certainly there was a class difference - see we lived in that part of Strathfield where all these beautiful old mansion homes were.

Did you?

Grace's were on the corner and I feel so sad today when I hear it's been taken over. And they were a very nice family that...the Grace's and they lived on the corner and it's been made into one of those wedding reception places - and I don't know whether it still is now or not. A little bit further down the road there was another old maiden lady lived and it was a beautiful home that she lived in and the

427 Vickery's, the boot people, and all the Arnotts lived in Strathfield. Beautiful homes and we used to go walking in the moonlight round the gardens and round these beautiful homes in the moonlight, round the streets. (coughs) And all that Boulevard and up Breadmeyer Road in Strathfield - the old homes are still there - I wonder who's living in them today.

435 Yes. It's a very strange situation - it's very isolated - all around are factories or much smaller houses - the railway. It's rather beautiful.

When I went up Homebush Rd. and I knew it all very well but there were some different homes there - absolutely beautiful.

Did you have one of those homes?

No - we only lived in very nice old home - but it was right opposite the Methodist church in Carrington Avenue with all the big homes off one side - Grace's on one corner and I can't think who lived on the other corner - but it was well back and very high fences - and then there were a couple of these little bungalows - well not bungalows they were - they had those bay windows that came right out - and very nice places all along there but then I suppose at one time they'd been the grounds of those other houses and the places at the back - the Vickery's lived at the back and they had another big home at the back there and they went into property after the Vickery's - but they used to be in boots - making boots and shoes and that sort of thing.

Which class did you think you belonged to?

457 I was right in the very middle - a bit on the poor side of the middle. (laughs then coughs) Definitely aside - but they are not like they are today - they lived very quietly - those people - they didn't go to parties or anything like that - you never saw a lot of frivolity going on at the place at all - they all lived very quietly. But I can remember the Grace's going to the pictures and Miss Grace'd go down and take her little nieces to the pictures and take them down on the threepenny seats. Away out the front 'cause the children wanted to be there with all the other children I suppose - but....

When you were at Coolamine did Tom belong to any particular political party?

No. Not that I know of.

What about voting at that time - did you....?

We had to go to Yarrangobilly to vote.

Do you remember who you voted for in 1938?

I couldn't give you...

The Country Party or the Liberal Party or....?

Worker's Party.

478 Worker's - did you tend towards the left rather than the right?

I don't know whether I did or not at that particular time - I can't tell you truthfully about that. I voted for the man I liked - it didn't matter much to me what party he was in - as long as I thought he was an honest man.

Do you remember Joe Lyons?

Yes I remember Joe Lyons - I remember John Curtin very well - and I'm not too proud to say that I voted for John Curtin because I think he was very good - I don't mind saying that a bit - that I voted for John Curtin because I think he did a terrific job - he took over a mess and straightened it out - and so did the old fellow that followed him - Ben Chifley.

- 493 I think we've still got to find a better prime minister and I don't think there's one about at the moment. I used to call him the engine driver. But I tell you a man's worked amongst men understands what the other fellow man is. They haven't worked amongst men - these other men that are around today.
- 500 What did you know in terms of State politics - did you know much about Bruxner or Premier Stevens or Lang - Jack Lang? I don't think I could take Jack Lang. I can remember he put a lot of policies that people complained about but they never altered them did they? They never took them away. No - well you've only got to go back through the things - he put in the child endowment and they never took that away.
- What about local politics in terms of the shire - were you part of the Tumut shire or the Cooma shire or....? We were in Monaro I suppose - they're still the same - this is still Eden-Monaro isn't it?
- Yes.
- So I think we came into Eden-Monaro but it was always a darn hard thing to know what you voted for - you were always absentee no matter where you went you were absentee. These parishes always bothered me - parish of this and something and something else - county of somewhere else - and I never could understand what they were. But I think it was all Eden-Monaro - 'cause I think we were always absentee voters.
- 504 Being isolated the way you were.
Yes. You could only do what you think is your best at the time of voting - it's never any good complaining after is it. (coughs).
- What about health care - did you have any special home remedies?
I know about castor oil as I told you.
- Anything else?
And the stick I think (laughs).
- That was your patent medicine was it?
No I'm still a great believer in castor oil.
- Are you?
Yes - my word I am.
- I'm glad I didn't get any.
(laughs) No - I think it's a wonderful old cure for most things.
- 538 I remember someone telling me there used to be a doctor in Canberra - no not Canberra, Queanbeyan - there was no Canberra in those times - and he'd say - they lived in the Brindabella valley - and he said "If anything goes wrong give them a dose of castor oil - if that doesn't cure them give them another dose of castor oil - and if that doesn't cure them well take them to the doctor." What would've happened if you had appendicitis I didn't know but...for some things it's alright but you've got to be....

- 549 I suppose the most common problems were colds and flu I guess?
I don't think that ever bothered very much - it's only when you've got young children that's always a bother - you never know what causes it with them - but I think accidents - things happening to people.
- Did any accidents happen in '37-'38 when you were at Coolamine?
Yes - In 1935 Tom had a fall off my horse - he was taking the horses up and we were going over to see Mrs. Russell - taking the baby over to see her - and he was going to be up amongst the rocks and I forgot the baby anyhow - I remember looking out the window and seeing him waving his arms like that and I knew - I could see my horse standing there - and my horse was a horse that paced a lot you know - and he wasn't very good at picking up his feet but I never rode him onto rocks and I knew how to ride him - I never put him into places where he'd fall - and of course Tom was going to bring the horses in - never thought about Chappy (?) and of course he hit a rock and fell - and (coughs) I went up after him - got him on his feet - I threw the baby in the basinet and I got up - can't remember whether he was right out or not and I ran for my life and he said to me "look at that - look at that" and his wrist - this part of his hand - was sitting up there - right up like that - right up here and he was delirious as anything - he'd hit himself on the head and he said "It's a good season isn't it - wherever this place is it's a good season." And I got him back to the house and I thought "now who am I going to get?" and I thought "I'll ring Rob Payne and I rang Rob Payne and I just caught this chap before he went out and I said what had happened would he come quickly - and I started getting everything ready 'cause I knew he'd have to go to the hospital and I knew that I'd have to go and Don had to go and I - tell you what - it was a awful ordeal 'cause we had to...he had to come down past their houses this man and pick up Bill and they came on over and got him rigged up and I rang Bruce Cotterill - you never asked anyone to come in on the roads in those days with a motor car because they wouldn't - or very few of them'd come in - and...they'd come in to Currango but they wouldn't come out to Coolamine so I rang Bruce and I asked him would he wait - so he said yes. That was sixteen miles we had to drive out there - but that man had his hand up like that - it was shocking. And that was one of the things that put him out the war thank goodness. And it came against him again years after too - innoculating sheep. The bad things are frightening but most of the things happen - you've got to get somewhere - and with concussion you never know what's going to happen.
That's what I was always frightened of - accidents.
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- So that was much more concerning that other illnesses?
That was the first - that was when Don was only a little fellow - and we went down to Tumut and the doctor wanted to see us again later on and I said "We'll go to Sydney and see so and so." you see - anyway he brought us back from Sydney a couple of days before Christmas which I thought was quite unnecessary - he thought we were going to Sydney to see somebody else about the hand - and of course it was a compensation case and he could've said "well get me till over Christmas" but I had to come home a couple of days

627 before Christmas - I wasn't very pleased about that. But anyway we did and that arm was a terrible nuisance to him - still is - that was his right hand and he hurt it again when we were at the Pockets inoculating sheep and the sheep reared back and he had to go to Sydney that time because he'd got arthritis in it and it was very bad.

And you were Church of England?

Mmm.

Did you go to church at all when you were at Coolamine?

Yes - sometimes. No - I don't think we went from Coolamine - I don't think we went until we lived at Currango because we were too far away. Occasionally somebody'd come and visit us - not very often - a minister sometimes'd come around - but they don't come these days - they don't bother about you.

Did you do anything special on a Sunday? Like would you restrict the children from playing and enjoying the sabbath?

No! No - I never did that sort of thing - I didn't believe in that. Oh no - we used to go to Yarrangobilly to church when we lived at Currango because it wasn't so far to go and we had a motor car then which makes all the difference in the world - saddling up a horse and having to go is not very easy - not all those miles. I used to ride down (coughs) to C.W.A. meetings sometimes and sport and those sort of things from Coolamine but we always had the car at Currango which made it much easier - well that you could get out.

668 Would you be visited by a clergyman at Coolamine?

No - not Coolamine we weren't - at Currango we were. Occasionally - of course they all became friendly with you - they don't have time today.

Did you think there were conflicts between members of different religions in the area you knew?

No - I never saw anything like that. That never mattered to me - we never...that didn't matter.

Did you ever hear of any jingles that reflected badly on Catholics or....?

No. I don't think so - if you don't want to hear these things you don't hear them - you don't mix with them. That doesn't belong to the country - that sort of thing - I don't think. You were all one big family. And that's how it should be I think a lot of the time - you don't want those sort of things with people.

Did you come into contact with many new Australians while you were at Coolamine - like that Sikh guy who had the cloth and materials - was he up in the early days of Coolamine?

Coolamine - the old Indian hawker? Oh yes - they've always been part of my childhood always - those people - the Indian hawkers coming. Way out when we lived out west we always had Indian hawkers with their turbans and we had other people - missionaries used to come around there sometimes - and they'd always have little bibles and used to ride pushbikes for miles and miles and miles in that hot climate - it was terrific.

706 The old Indian hawker used to come up to Coolamine and he'd been coming for many many years - he came again the last time - poor old man came again...

END SIDE 1, TAPE 3

BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 3

001 down through BrokenCart and Tom said "No you Indian man - you won't go through BrokenCart I won't let you" he said "You'll have to go back by Currango and" he said "You stay with Fred Bridle until after you get better." - 'cause he was just a malnutrition case and his legs were all broken - it was shocking - so Fred and Jessie were very kind to him and they looked after him for a while and - a few days - and then he went down by Yarrangobilly and he went right away up to Bondo out of Tumut - I don't know whether you know what Bondo is?

Yes. That's a State Forest now.

Yes - well he went out to Bondo - he had a little hut at Bondo - and they found him dead. I don't know how many hundred he had in his turban - they found hundreds of pounds he had in his turban. And he had a lot of property I believe and - oh - he had thousands in the bank. And Tom - he said - he was saving up his money for his mother and he said "Good heavens Indian man - your mother'd be a hundred!" You know I think he was delirious when he went out there at the Pockets - poor old fellow - I don't know how he got that far because he was walking and leading this white horse and the horse was that wide - it was so fat - and "Oh no I can't knock my horse about" - he was walking and leading.

013 He was denying himself for a very long time?

Yes - not feeding himself very well and not looking after himself. He'd tell you this one was mean and that one was mean and that one wouldn't give him a feed and somebody'd else wouldn't give him a feed - but I tell you it was very hard to sit at the table and watch him eat - Oh! Didn't like to eat with him anyway - but we always fed him and saw that he had something to eat when he came to us but - I mean - there was no need to have hundreds of pounds in your turban and be dying of malnutrition is there?

What was wrong with his eating habits? He just couldn't eat or....?
Oh no. I don't know what sort of a caste Indian he was but he was too...oh no....

Rough?

Rough - we'll put it down as rough. I don't think he knew how to handle a knife and fork - I don't know.

022 No?

Oh, terribly careless, terribly rough.

He knew how to make money alright?

Yes - he knew how to make money - he always seemed to know that. He'd be here in Adaminaby staying all that winter and he said he'd been ... "Oh very mean people, very mean people." It didn't worry me whether they were mean or not - he could feed himself!

027 Yes - that's right.

His horse was much better - ~~he~~ was feeding him alright. They weren't being starved - it's a funny way to be isn't it when a man couldn't have been healthy - he had poverty sores on his legs - I'm sure they were - they looked like it to me.

Did you meet any others - any other people like Jewish people or Russians or....?

No - not till the days of ...

Not in the 1930s you didn't?

No. Not till the days of the dam going in - that was when the foreigners came in.

During the 30s did you think much about the White Australia policy?

No. It was just accepted in those days - there weren't very many coloured people here - only our own aborigines. There might've been an odd Indian - but you didn't see the mixed races that you see today - goodness I feel foreign when I go to Sydney now.

At the time do you remember having a particular attitude towards other people coming into Australia in the 30s? Did you want to keep it the way it was or....?

I think that it was - as long as there was a white race in I don't think that you want to bring people in that are going to disturb it - it worries me a little bit when I see all of these different races that are here nowadays all sticking together - and they seem to be so troublesome - so noisy - we're not used to that rioting business - we were not - but of course it's been going on all over the world and it's just coming our way.

046 Yes. I mean there's been a lot of striking in England which is I guess the roots of many people here.

It's a touchy subject to get onto - that one. It's one to be careful of isn't it?

It's a great polyglot now whatever the word is. Do you remember the celebrations in 1938 - the Sesqui-centenary - the 150 years of the coming of the first English at Port Phillip?

1938? No I was away then - I would've been out of all of that - there was nothing done down here. I think they had something in Tumut but we didn't go down to that - Sesqui they called it didn't they?

Sesqui - that's right - Sesqui-centenary.

They had something in Tumut at that time but we didn't have the ways and means of getting there - it meant if you went to Tumut you had to drive to Rules Point or drive all the way in a sulky or buggy - but we never did that - we used to go down by the mail car or get a hire car and go down - and that was expensive.

062 Oh yes. How much would that have cost in the 1930s?

We only went down with Bruce I suppose and it was never very much - it'd only be about five pounds I suppose but

064 the mail car - when I first came up - I think it was three pounds to come up on the mail car I can remember - or was it thirty shillings - no I think when the Dunns were on it - he went down on it at thirty shillings but I think in '38 they charged two pounds ten I think. And of course it got down and down and down till it was a pound.

Went down?

Yes.

Good heavens!

It was getting a bit of opposition - there were other people running up and down. But the mail car had to go three times a week - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays so that - well it had to go - so why charge an awful amount to bring anybody up - went down to a pound. See that was better than anybody else and they got so much a parcel and when you think of it it was very good money in those days in those mail cars - because it was so much for a loaf of bread - can only have been a couple of cents [sic] for a loaf of bread and you didn't have to collect the mail - the mailman didn't have to collect that from you - the baker did - and that wasn't your responsibility - the baker did it for you. And then your parcels were paid as a rule from the grocers or the stores in town and that was added onto your bill so that they picked up quite a bit on the roundabout - but it wouldn't be a paying job at the moment - there's nobody living on the road. See from the time they crossed Sandy Creek in Tumut coming this way they started delivering goods and they delivered them all along the road - and that Blowering Valley was beautiful but you never knew it then...

086 Yes - I remember it before the dam. Yes - we went canoeing on it. Did you?

I used to teach at Yanco Agricultural High school in '64 or '65 and I used to come across that lake and go skiing at Perisher.

Did you? (coughs) It was beautiful and we'd leave Tumut at about half past one and we would get to Rules Point if we were lucky at six o'clock at night - and you were going all the time. The first post office - it was Blowering and you pulled up there and waited till the lady got her mail and she gave you back the bag and then on you went again and you pulled up again then at Talbingo and you put your bag in there (coughs) and that was sorted out and you picked it up again and away you went and you got to Yarrangobilly and all the time you were putting mail out and collecting the whole road from Tumut - and then you put the mail in again at Yarrangobilly and waited to get the mail from there and on you went again to the caves - you didn't go down to the caves first if you were late - if you had passengers you'd go to Rules Point or sometimes Mrs. Cook - if you didn't want to go to Rules Point - she'd send the sulky up and meet you at the top but I didn't want it so I used to say "no I'll go down." Greg Day was on the mail run when I came the first time and we paid the extra ten shillings or something-to be taken to Rules Point. Then he went on down to the caves,

- 109 He's the brother of George?
Yes - he's George's brother - he's the one that owns Wantabadgery .
Yes - I've been over to see George.
[talks about mutual friends]
- 119 Do you remember the Aboriginal Day of Mourning?
No - I don't remember anything like that - no I don't remember anything about what they did with rituals or anything at that time - I know they used to go to school at Dandaloo and they were very difficult to teach. The schoolteacher certainly found them very very hard to teach. Of course there might've been a bit of class distinction there with the children. Which is a shame - I'm glad that's broken down. Because it's dreadful to punish little children because of their colour and I think that's gone now though. I hope so.
In terms of the cities of Australia - which was the city which was most important to you then in 1938?
I think Sydney was always the most important.
- 129 Would you have thought N.S.W. was the most important State? More so than Victoria or Queensland for instance?
Oh I think it was. I think it was really the most populated and I suppose it's not right to say that but as far as I was concerned I think it might've been. I'd say that Melbourne would be the next. I think South Australia would probably be...plenty of people there. From what I've known of South Australia since you see? Queenslanders were very friendly.
Yes - that struck me when I was in Cairns recently.
And yet I know some friends that went up and they were at Rockhampton and they felt quite altogether different - they said they didn't have any respect for southerners at all. And they were so glad to get back and get away from it.
Yes - it varies.
They're in the cities - they're not in the country are they? And I think the country is a different thing altogether to cities and big towns because they....
In terms of going overseas the only person who went overseas was your sister - of your family - she went to Canada. But you've been overseas since in the '70s. Did you keep in touch with your sister when she went to Canada?
- 151 Oh yes. It's only in recent years that she hasn't written and we've sort of lost - I keep contact with the family but they're very poor correspondents but her memory wouldn't allow it alright - she couldn't concentrate (coughs).
Did you think Australia was a freer country in the '30s than it is now?
I think it might've been - mmm.
More opportunities?
The thirties were very hard years. I don't think...they were very hard years the thirties - everybody had their

- 160 shoulders at the wheel. That was when we were still in the Depression - nobody had anything very much and there wasn't a great deal of work. The thirties was the period when those little children were getting permits to work at thirteen.
Yes. Can you remember what your idea of a typical Australian male was in the 1930s - did Tom fulfil your....?
I probably wouldn't have married him if he hadn't.
Did you think he was a typical Australian male?
(laughs) I suppose he must've (laughs)...
- Do you think there were many men like that around?
(laughs) I don't know - I never was a great - oh you know - flying around going to these...never wanted to...never cared about going to dancing or parties or anything like that - never...I went - I used to go - but I didn't particularly like that type of life. I don't know why but...I liked to dance but I liked to go to friendly dances not...like to a tennis club dance or to an office ball or to something like that but as to going to these big balls and things that people used to go crazy about - going the Palais Royal and to Romanos and to all these places - look it never appealed to me one little bit. I never wanted to go - I always felt out of place there.
- 182 So you don't think you were...
Country dances - I loved them at the village - we used to have lovely little dances at the village.
Did you think you were a typical Australian female?
I don't know - no I wouldn't draw the bets. Someone else would have to say. 'Bushman' I think they'd call me.
Bushwoman?
A Bushie - yes (laughs).
What do you think were the worst aspects of the Australian male? At that time - were there any characteristics that you can recall...?
Drinkers and gamblers I think.
Drinkers and gamblers. What about women.
Same I think applied there too. Oh no I don't know - I never had to think about those lines you see - I've never ever thought of singling anyone out like that - or singling any....
No - but there would have been things you disliked about Australian females though - what were the characteristics...?
I didn't know [incomprehensible] Australians did I?
- 195 But there were all sorts of females.
I never liked rough women at all - at any time.
What were rough women?
Well I suppose - but that's very hard to say too - isn't it?
What constitutes a rough woman?
Well I think the women that do odd things and strange things and careless speaking and that sort of business - I never did like that - I liked a little bit of refinement.

201 A bit of decorum eh?

Yes.

A bit of style.

Yes. Plain people possibly but not...I never liked common people that might....

Common? You like people to be distinctive?

Yes - possibly I might. I like plain people - I don't know whether you'd call them distinctive or not - as long as they're good and honest. I never liked common behaviour in anybody. And I think that covers quite a variety of things.

Yes I think it does.

There's a lot of them about today. [Goes on about jeans]

232 In terms of countries of the world - which country did you think was the most powerful in the 1930s?

I don't think you could have gone any further than Germany could you?

I like that one.

Goodness it was powerful.

Was it? More powerful than America or England?

I remember when I was at the Pockets - and one of the bush-walker boys called on us - he'd just done a tour of the world and I said to him: "What did you think about Germany?" and he said "Well - they were very honest - I've been in Italy where you had to shut your hand up tight to keep your money and you had to put it in a box like that so they couldn't get their hands in them" and he said "I went into Germany and that was when they were turning the Jews out and" he said "they took all your money from you within about five pounds or so for instance - and they gave you back -" no - they took all your money - that's right - and they gave you so much more for it." You knew that didn't you? You know about that?

250 No.

Now you went in as a tourist and they took all your money from you and they gave you the equivalent of what you took - what you gave them - and a bit more - but you still had to spend - it was only five pounds of your own money - but you couldn't take any of that money out that they gave you - but as long as you spent five pounds of your own - I don't know why that was - they gave you a terrific amount - and then he said "They were honest - they were as honest as anything - but as to saying that they weren't...getting up to a war - it was so ridiculous." He said "They were absolutely...they lived it all the time." But he said he thoroughly enjoyed it and he said they were absolutely armed to the teeth. And of course there was no time then before there was war. But that's what I thought - it must've been a terrifically powerful country - it must've had a terrifically powerful army. Look at the places he might stay though.... Must've been powerful - it needed to be - or they'd never have gone over Russia.

267

268 What about the Royal family - did you have much interest in the royal family? Were you a royalist?

Oh - I don't know about royalist - but I was loyal.

Do you remember much about the abdication?

Yes - I remember all that - the abdication. It must've been when Don was born or Ted - it was about that time. I remember all about that.

And the coronation in 1937?

Yes - I went with the coronations all the way through you know.

You'd get the Woman's Weekly would you?

No. I think I could count on one finger all the Women's Weeklies I've bought in my life.

Really? I don't think my mother could.

I don't know - people bring them and give them to me so I might have them and I'll read them and I get so disgusted and so wild about it I throw them away. Sometimes when I'm going on the train I brought a Women's Weekly and I'm boring Tom and I get the chips...

You pass the time being boiled up or reading?

Yes. And I get so riled with some of the things they put in that - I think some of them are alright but I get boiled a little bit sometimes. But I've never been a great one for magazines.

289 You wouldn't have liked the Woman's Weeklies that were plastered all over the small bedroom at Coolamine then?

I never would've - no I never bothered looking at those sort of things - no. Over here at old Peter's Hut he used to get them from Mrs. Russell and he'd take them over and paste all the lovely ladies all over the walls. But he kept them clean and as neat as a new pin - that man never left that house unless the table was sandsoaped every day and it was a white cedar board table - spotless. And he scrubbed that floor and it was as spotless - he used to dread the man coming there - but in the end I think he went a bit berserk - it was really no wonder - he lived a long while on his own and he went a bit berserk over there - and he cleared out. But that was how it used to be kept - as neat as new pin. His dresser was scrubbed - he had a dresser there - it was scrubbed - and the crockery was all spotless. And he was the same - he never came to your house if he wasn't immaculate.

Just a couple of more questions now and then we're just about finished. Did you feel Australia had any reason to fear threats from other countries?

No. I don't think that I did until it did happen with Japan coming into the war. I don't think we had any fear and we never stopped to think - you know we seemed to be way out on our own like that but I feel I don't feel the same way now.

315 Where do you feel the threats are now?

I don't think I'd better say. Better not.

316 What about the relationship between England and Australia in the '30s - how did you feel about that? Did you think the ties were important or they should've been closer or we should've become more independent or....?

Well - as far as we were concerned at that time when the war broke out you mean?

Well - yeh - in the '30s.

We were too far away weren't we - there was too much water between us and they had so much to protect them - we had to get help somewhere else because they couldn't come to help us. It got to the stage where we went to help them but then we couldn't....We left our shores which we should never have done but we....

You don't think we should've?

Well what did we gain by it?

Right. You would say the same...

They went back home didn't they - took them to the Middle East then brought them back home again.

You'd say the same about Anzac would you?

That was a different thing. Japan was on our side that time - it was taking our troops across - see Japan was in the First World War from what I can understand and remember about it - that Japan was the one that piloted our troop ships across - you see it was a different kettle of fish wasn't it? The next time.

337 So you think the troops should've stayed here and defended Australia?

We found out later - yes. It was a bit late when we found out wasn't it? All gone.

What about about the future of Australia in the 1930s - did you think...what did you think about the future of Australia as a nation?

Well - I don't think I ever stopped to think about it in that way at all.

Did you think it was a gloomy future or bright future or....?

All I ever thought - we would go under - which we didn't.

And it was just good luck more than good management - very much so.

Do you think that could happen again? That it could be by good luck rather than good management?

I don't know - I think it's very doubtful - our future.

You go along on our coastlines and you look at it - until you get to another part of the coast and look there - I stood...I went out to that place they call the Pinnacles in Western Australia - I went to that west coast and I looked at that coastline and I thought "A lot to defend and a lot to guard." There is nothing - there could be thousands coming in there and you would never know they're in there. It's a very hard country to defend isn't it - with the coastline that we've got. What's the good of having people there when there's nothing for them to live there for? It really wants...I don't know how you could protect it (coughs).

368 But then they've sold a bit of it to this one and that one.

A fair amount of the inland too - has been sold.

I can imagine it - but what can you do? Can't do much to governments - you put them in there.

Any other thing you'd like to say or we'll call it a day?

Yes - we'll call it a day.

END

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