

INTERVIEW WITH TOM & MOLLY TAYLORINTERVIEWER: Klaus Hueneker

24 August 1978.

SIDE 1 - TAPE 1

MT: We were married in 1934, that was when I came and I certainly have seen the changes.

KH: You reckon the family on this photo here is the Taylor family?

MT: Yes, I think Mrs Harris gave you photographs of the other boys?

KH: She gave me this one and they had part of this enlarged.

Molly Taylor : We know it was 1908 when ^{the Taylors} went there, Irene came there when she was 3 weeks old, but she didn't say she was the second one that was born after they came there. Tom was four years old when they went there and then there was 2 more sisters after Tom and then there was Mrs Murray - she was born while they were there. Mrs Murray was born in Queanbeyan and so was Irene Harris.

KH: So you went there in 1934, that's when you and Tom got married?

MT: Yes.

KH: Tom's parents were still there?

MT: No, they had just ... Tom had taken over and then it changed hands - Litchfields sold to Naughton, then Naughton from Tooma - Tom took over and looked after it for Naughton. Mum and Dad Taylor had left, because he had a stroke - he was 76 then - he was past living there. We are the only people left, there used to be so many people in the district and round about - we had a CWA association branch in Yarrangobilly and we used to all congregate there once a month. We had sports, races and they were always well attended.

KH: Did you have a car then?

MT: Horse and buggy when I was first married, we never had a car until 1946 after the War.

KH: Did Tom go away for the War?

MT: No, no they would not take Tom - he had a bad wrist and other things.

MT:

KH: When you got to Coolamine, you did some work on part of it?

MT: We didn't pull anything down - we helped them take the panels out of the wall and that was when I found that they had been numbered. When we put them back up again, I said 'heavens above we haven't got the numbers right' - if you look on this wall you'll find that those numbers are not right unless somebody reconstructed it since.

KH: Why did you take that wall down?

MT: Because we had to - we had to get underneath the house, we had to put new piers under it ...

KH: That explains why the floor is so good now still.

MT: We put the floor up then in 1934.

KH: The eastern building was still quite intact wasn't it?

MT: Yes, we used to use that for overflow for visitors and the place was always full.

KH: The back part of this here was kept for saddles and things ...?

MT: No, nothing was in ^{Southwells} place, only bedrooms. Saddles were all kept in the little shed called the Cheese shed - the one that's so beautifully built - log cabin. Used to be the cheese house.

KH: Did you use it for meat or anything?

MT: No, never in my time, but it was in Tom's time.

KH: You replaced some of the slabs then ...?

MT: We just put them back up.

KH: Did you put up the Women's Weekly newspapers in that bedroom?

MT: I was never guilty of putting newspaper on any wall in my life. I was the one who put the printed paper up - proper wallpaper. That part was never done, but over in this part, Tom and his mother and father, they papered that old part and then we just lined this other portion. They had papered it and they hadn't gone into the corners, I had to strip them down ... they left them there because they were extra good lining ... one of my pet aversions was newspaper on the walls.

MT:

KH: It's very thick, 13 or 14 layers in some places. The people there after you must have put it up - the Women's Weekly from 1942 to 46.

MT: Yes, Mrs Bridle.

KH: Jack Bridle?

MT: No, Fred Bridle, a cousin of Jack Bridle.

Jack Bridle is terrific, he is a very nice man, very informed and most interested in historical things.

KH: He's written several articles ...

MT: I wish I had the poem to show you that he wrote on Blowering Valley, before it was Currango ... now I've got three homes.

KH: So all your stuff is still at Currango?

MT: I still live at Currango. My husband leased 'Heatherbrae' - when he retired from the Rangers, we didn't know that they ever stay on at Currango because I'd started a little ... fisherman would come in there ... they closed Rules Point down, they all got to know us through going to Rules Point for our mail and they appealed to me could I do something for these fly fishermen. Well I had a big house and my family was gone, we only ever had two boys, I didn't mind doing it then, but I wouldn't have anybody when I had my children. I took these guests, I never advertised or said a word, they just went by word-of-mouth and it got that way I could only just cope and that was all. They didn't want us to go.

KH: Is it National Park? The land the house is on as well. You have a lease have you?

MT: Yes I lease it from them now, I'm the only one living within the National Park.

KH: You still lease it from them?

MT: Yes, that's the privilege over the years, Tom was a ranger there and the people all appealed so bitterly. In the meantime we didn't know - it's like all government things, they don't say you can or you can't, until it was the day he went to retire, then they told us that we could stay.

MT:

In the meantime we had to have some little roof to go to, so we leased this country. We couldn't have got it at a worse time, we moved in '69 - paid about \$7 or \$8 for sheep and in less than 6 months - in about 3 months they wouldn't have picked them up in the paddock if they fell over. There was a hut there too - it was very cold, we fixed that up and made it comfortable to live in again.

KH: Currango is pretty old too isn't it?

MT: Currango's very old, but Currango's just lovely.

KH: I've never been to Currango.

MT: Currango is a beautiful old place though. There's about seven bedrooms in Currango, big verandahs, kitchen, dining room, lounge room ...

KH: What are the walls made of?

MT: Wood, sawn timber. The timber that you see in the Old Currango, that's all hand done, it's beautiful.

KH: Part of the wall's gone I think and the verandah ...

MT: Well the back part of it's gone, it's like the annex of that part, that used to be our storeroom, what you call the front - that's the back.

KH: You call this the back of Coolamine?

MT: Yes.

KH: That's the logical way to think of it in terms of when you drive in.

MT: That used to be a store room and then we put the bathroom - the bathroom used to be down here ... just about over here there is an old dead willow tree and beside that is a place all filled up with tins, like a big hole - that was our water hole, there's a race line to that. When I was first married, we had our wash house down there and our bathroom down there. I carried water while ever I lived there - we put the bathroom on there.

KH: Where was the bathroom originally?

MT: Down here near the well. We had a portable shower, you know Gilligan's Island - I love those showers still - I've got them at Currango

MT:

for them. There's an overseer's house, then a station hands house - they used to call a hut in those days, I've just left those for fisherman now.

KH: Do you still go out in the summer?

MT: Yes. We could stay there, we have a telephone and all that sort of thing, but we're too old for that now. This place was going, we had a house in Tumut and Tom wouldn't go to Tumut to live, last year we bought this place.

KH: Where do you keep most of your documents, like the poem?

MT: That's at Currango, worse luck, I nearly brought it with me, I've got some of the photographs here.

Looking at old photographs.

KH: You had a pet wombat did you?

MT: Yes, he was good.

KH: That's just above the dam?

MT: No, he was on the island.

Tom Taylor bursts in.TT: I'll tell you what I thought about - that old house, I read that in the Canberra Times ... I can remember I think when I was a kid, before they put those fences up, the boundary was different. I think the old survey, the rough outline in the very early - I've got a map of the whole thing, with the Campbell's on it, written on it ... it's all peeled off and spoilt the map. I'll get the map if I can find it.

KH: It's of Currango is it?

TT: Yes. It was a good map and easy to read, but it all peeled off. It was all on the goldfield - 1891 on it.

I think I remember on top of the hill east of the two elderberry trees, there used to be bare ground, where the house used to be in the early days - I remember seeing a post on the hill, a survey peg, it would probably be a tandem peg ... on the plain. Those sort of things didn't

MT:

interest me much, the boundary was there and what ever was done that was it - I took it for granted. Back in the early days when they were making it freehold - 640 acres grant. I saw the post on top of the hill, another one somewhere out on the plain - it would cross right across where the house was, where they shifted it from. It would go straight across the house, so it would leave a room on each corner of each paddock ...

KH: This was the MacDonald's wasn't it?

TT: Yes. There was Sandy and Jack and Mary MacDonald. They used to lease 640 acres each and Tim Kell/her I believe did the other one, I'm not sure. They were there back in the 1929-30s. Tim used to class for Fred Campbell in the old shed at Yarralumla, (wool classing).

KH: You remember him as a boy?

TT: Yes. He had a place there, I think it's the part that Harry Curtis got ...

KH: That was during the time when ...

TT: I'll tell you who could tell you all about it, he's still alive. He was there when Cunninghams had a place there - Andy Cunningham - old Tim was living there then ... his family, one was married to a Blewitt, I think there might have been two girls, but the two boys are dead ... she could be still alive, his daughter. The fellow who could tell you all about would be Gregory.

KH: Tom Gregory?

TT: Tom Gregory would know about it too - he was a kid then. He was there the time Tim was living there, he's married to one of Tom Oldfield's girls - Vic Gregory. When you go up to Orroral, just when you cross over the main river there, just near the junction of the Orroral Creek that comes down there - there's a house on top of the hill - before you turn down - you come down a bit of a hill, then start to come up - you come up Fitz's, you look over and you can see the place on the other side. That's Vic's place. He can tell you all about Tim Kell/her, because

TT:

Harry Curtis leased the place off the Federal after they resumed it.

KH: Tim Kell/her and the MacDonalds must have been out there in the 1870s. Before Southwells.

TT: They were. I don't know if Tim came there after the Southwells, it might have been before them - it would have to have been freehold wouldn't it.

KH: My impression is that the Taylor's came after the Southwells.

TT: We did. The Southwells had been there 18 years before we came.

KH: That's according to that book by Gwendoline Wilson.

TT: Well I think that would be pretty right because that's what they said ... that statement was pretty right, it was pretty good and that house could have been shifted from down where the elderberry tree was ... to [Campbell's House] Peppercorn. Leo Hoad, he's dead now, he said he'd shifted it from Peppercorn. In the first place it might have been built out at Peppercorn, because on the hill there was quite a bit of timber cut around the face of the hill. There was a good bit cut afterwards, when Peppercorn hut was built out of it. When I was a kid I used to go up there and there would be these big old stumps, they've rotted away now. Bits of huts and things were still there when I was kid. The main place had been shifted, you could see where it was, had been - a big log fence right around it and some of them would still be there.

KH: This is where?

TT: Under Peppercorn hill, right on the old track. The new road goes over the top of the Spur and you come straight down the Spur to the creek, its right at the point of it. There's an old track turns off further back where the electric line crosses where the little hut is - I think they have shifted it down below. You come from Tinpot Flat, and the first bit of creek you cross before you go up Peppercorn hill, the hut used to be there. You turn off on the other side and you go down, cross well down

TT:

below the road about a mile and you come around the foot of the hill.
When you come to Little Peppercorn Creek - its a boggy place and not a good place to cross - just when you get under the hill, its right there - there's big logs lying around where the old houses used to be.

KH: So you say the main Coolamine homestead ...

TT: It could have been there and they used to call that Franklin's hut in the early days when I was a boy. And all that was there is an old bark thing, a bit of bark hanging off the roof and the old rafters rotting away and falling down. Southwell's might have stayed there in the very early times. That house was shifted from there over to Coolamine where it is now.

KH: When I was looking through all the stuff I collected, speaking to your sister and so on ...

I agree that that's the Taylor's on that photo there.

TT: She wasn't born then, that baby that mum's nursing was Alice and she came there as a baby and Sarah was born about 2 years afterwards and I reckon Irene would be born about 1912-14.

You didn't find those names on the rocks did you?

KH: No I haven't yet. Where do you reckon ...

TT: Well, those two big elderberry trees on the plain, they are the oldest ones there and at the junction of the creek. There is one creek that comes down through Sandy's paddock and another one comes down through Mary's - its right at that junction.

KH: Right down in the valley?

TT: Yes, right on the creek.

MT: I've never seen any initials in the rock there.

TT: It's there, I'm going to put a flag in it to show where it was.

KH: How far away from the homestead would it be?

TT: 3/4 mile.

KH: Down on the plain?

TT:

MT: It's not really on the plain.

TT: You'll find where the four paddocks join, the main ones.

It's right in the gully walls ... there is two big willow trees growing right in the limestone. Bill and I grew them from sticks we were hitting our bullocks with - we stuck them in the ground - they're growing there - always around water (more discussion on shifting of homestead).

KH: When you got there all those buildings that are at Coolamine now were there, including the cheese house ...?

TT: Yes, the big hay shed and the stable.

KH: The bullock wagon ...

TT: That bullock wagon that is there now, that was nothing to do with the early part of Coolamine. After we came to Coolamine, we gave up the old dray a few years after, it might have been somewhere back in 1910-11 or 1914, I think 1916, the war was on, and we acquired that wagon - we bought it off Jack Dunn - the Campbells did, what had the mill at Yarrangobilly, not where the old mill was at the high place there near Rules Point, but further on - Cumberland Range - just off that. They had houses there - the Duns ... carted timber - we bought it off them. I was about 9-10 years old. We went to Adaminaby - a couple of times, once or twice for provisions with the old dray, but when we started to go to Tumut we had the wagon. It was an old wagon when we bought it - it had been used in rocky country, all the hub had run into rocks and was cut off ... Blewitt took the wheels ...

MT: He only took two of them and the other two have gone to wreck and ruin.

KH: I have some photos of them - they're rotting.

TT: The front of the hub was all cut off where it had been bashing the rocks, the wood breaking off right back onto the iron beam.

We carted from Tumut a good many years, with the bullock team, bringing in salt and provisions two and three times a year - go to Rules Point to pick it up. The last time we used it, if I can remember - how we came to get it

TT:

we broke the axle of the old bullock dray down at Brandy Marys Flat, we had to leave it there and come up to Rules Point and get another axle from Carol's Reef, take it down and put it in. The next day we went back and got it. load from Tumut and come back again and after that we never went back.

KH: What was the name of the store you mentioned at Tumut?

TT: Bakers.

KH: Did you ever know Bob Hughes?

TT: Yes, knew him well.

KH: Did you ever know Bill Hughes?

TT: No, knew his wife when he first married her, don't know whether he's still alive or how many kids or anything.

KH: I don't think he's got any children.

TT: I'm sure he had a child.

KH: He got married twice.

TT: Last time I saw him and her was back when he was married first in 1933.

KH: Before he went up north - he went away for a long time.

TT: Yes, he started that Four-Mile tunnel in there on this side of the hill to go in to cut the Four-Mile diggings down at Tabletop - if they had of got through they would have made a fortune. His brother Bob lived in Kiandra when the Parks started for many years.

That hut up on the Four-Mile creek - there was a girl hibernated in there the other day in a snow storm - that's Bob's hut - he was mining there. I knew his father, Bob's father - old Bob I knew him well, he used to run the mail to Kiandra.

Time flies fast, a lot of those fellow the last 10-20 years have died.

KH: There is a fellow called Frank West, he died last November?

TT: Yes.

KH: His wife just died, is that right?

TT:

TT: No, that was another Mrs West.

KH: So Frank's wife is still alive?

TT: Yes.

KH: He was one person I would have liked to talk to - he knew quite a bit about the country.

TT: Yes.

KH: What about a fellow called Jack Bell.

TT: Yes, but Jack can't remember. He's younger than me too. He was only about 16, his father was living in Kiandra at the time ..

KH: That Charlie Bell?

TT: No, Charlie was his brother.

MT: Charlie was a fishing inspector.

KH: Is Charlie still alive?

MT: Yes, he's at Khancoban.

KH: George Bell was the father?

MT: Yes.

KH: Did they work the Grey Mare mine. Do you know anything about that?

TT: Yes, I know when he was there.

MT: Charlie would know that wouldn't he?

TT: Yes, they were all out there. His wife was a Bartholomew from Tumbarumba - George's wife. Very hospitable people if you went to the place to stop.

KH: Did Jack Bell go out to Grey Mare?

TT: Yes, Jack would be out there when he was a kid.

KH: Because it started off again in 1949 or something when they took a stamper there.

TT: They took a lot of machinery in, it's a pity it ever stopped. There was pretty fair gold there, too, I think. I don't know why it stopped, but most of the money was spent on top of the ground before they got the gold. There is good gold there, in the early days they used to have escorts to bring it

TT:

in. There was a lot of gold.

KH: So Jack's memory is not so good any more.

MT: He'd remember some, but I think Tom was taking him back to his teens.

TT: He should have remembered coming up from the Brindabella on a blinking horse, on a bag I'd filled up with tussock for a saddle for him. I ran the horse down, he was a bit of a brumby, he'd only just been ridden around a bit. I think I'd only just ridden it around for a bit of fun in the yard - I think that's all the riding it ever had. It was a shetland pony. By rights I think it belonged to Maxwells or Blewitts - we all thought it was Blewitts. It ran out with a mob of about 20 and I chased him down into what we call Hinders little paddock on the river - Jack and I after a lot of trouble caught it. I put a bridle on it. I was riding bare-back too - makes it lighter for my horse running and the ground was slippery, if he fell I'd come clear of him - which he did a couple of times ... had this bag of grass for a saddle and I made him up a bridle out of something and away Jack went to Kiandra that day. I said when you get up there, take the bridle and let him go and he'll come straight back. He was back in Brindabella next day. He was a wild one - I thought he might buck and throw Jack before he got up there and come back without Jack - I was worried a bit.

MT: Jack might be able to give you some of that old Grey Mare business, he lives in the next street up - York Street.

TT: When they first went in there, bulldozer jobs had come out, but they didn't have any blade in the front ...

KH: Where was that ...?

TT: When they went out there to Grey Mare - they had a small one in there putting the roads in ...

KH: A small bulldozer?

TT: Yes, they used to pull a grader with it or something behind to make the track. I remember the dozers.

TT:

TT: They used to drag things out of bogs and pull in loads - they put a fairly good track in. They took a lot of heavy machinery in - the stampers and engines. They started to put it up and never finished it.

KH: When I was there years ago, some of the stampers and wheels and things were still in their packing crates and now it's all over-grown.

TT: It's a shame you know because there's gold in that. It's a pity the parks locked everything down. People want things, and they say, the environment, we can't upset it. But one environmentalist wants to control the bloody lot - give him some of it ... give him all the Blue Mountains - but don't lock the lot down, There is just as much spectacular things going on in the early days, more so than there are now and what's the good of land just to lock down and say there it is we are not going to use it, just to look at and breed a few animals or something that generally die out or get burnt and we lose our blinking interest in it.

KH: We also have quite a fight to try and retain the huts.

TT: I don't think this is right for a few people to come together - the very idea of things in your environment, what you loved when you were a kid, what you thought was good, this grows with you and you adapt this idea, you think it's right, it's like a religion. It's not a religion when you forget about the other bloke and you want to domineer the lot and say I'm right and you're wrong and you go to buggery. I don't think it is right. I think everybody ought to have a go, let him try his own idea - probably the fellow who thought he was right, his kids might come around and say Dads wrong 'He's an old stick in the mud, he's an old square'.

KH: To go back to Coolamine, you feel very strongly that slabs - that hut with the high pitched roof - that those numbered slabs have definitely been shifted from somewhere else. The same building has been up somewhere else.

TT: It could have been shifted from Peppercorn because the water dried up down there in the summer - up to a better site where there was permanent water, where it is now. It could have been shifted twice easily.

TT:

KH: The earliest newspaper clippings that I found on the walls - I felt it would give me some idea of when it was built - was 1892 - the oldest newspaper that I've come across in that building and the one next door was the 1880s. That coincided with what I knew about the Southwells.

TT: That's about right ...

MT: Why did the Southwells leave, Tom?

TT: They had a place at Canberra and their own stock - they wanted to go down to run that.

KH: I suppose the kids were grown up by 1906 and when people get older they prefer to move back to a more settled or warmer place.

TT: It wasn't a place for the girls, they would want to get away to a more social life, the boys were getting older. George had a place somewhere around Canberra, Yarralumla. He was very well liked - he died shortly after an appendix operation - he bled to death. We were all very sorry about it - I was only a kid and only knew him for a little while when he used to come up and down with his stock.

MT: Mr Hoad told me himself he helped remove that place from Peppercorn and re-erect it - this is what he told me. Mrs Bill Harris won't have that that is right. I'm only going by what this very old man - he is dead now - told me himself.

TT: Where was this photo taken?

KH: That was taken on the back verandah ...

TT: It was taken at Coolamine?

KH: Yes, the back verandah in this corner - that's the back door of the main home and here on your right is what you used as a store ...

KH: Because you drive in ... I think of that as the front and so looking over to the plain, to me, would be the back.

MT: That's the back as far as I'm concerned - it was never considered to be my front door.

KH: That's five years before you came here.

TT:

TT: Yes, well that would make them about 15 or so wouldn't it?

I don't know how old Fred was.

... Stan Southwell was carrying me on his back on his skis - now Fred - mum was after me to give me a belting and I ran down and over the fence and Fred pulled me up on the horse - I missed a belting. He was quite a big boy then, 16 or 17 years old. I think they're dead now.

KH: Yes, they are all dead, there is only one lady - a wife of one of the boys, who is still alive.

TT: There was Mac, I think he was killed in the 1914 war and there was Stan - Stan was older than Fred.

MT: Who did we meet Tom, was it Stan?

TT: Yes. ... that was George ... they are a fine looking family.

KH: What you call the cheese house - the log cabin one - did you ever use that as a cheese house?

TT: No, but the Southwells did to make cheese.

KH: Did they have dairy cattle?

TT: They used to milk about 10-20 cows. None of the girls, but all the boys went up milking and I remember next morning, Stan or Jack said to me to come on up - we went up to give the milk to the dogs - there was two native cats in the tins - they jumped in and drowned. They were a damn nuisance.

KH: You don't see many of those now?

TT: There're still about in the bush. I've still seen them - I've seen them caught here ten years ago.

KH: When you first went there, the Southwells were still there?

TT: Yes, we went there on Xmas eve in 1908 and they still hadn't gone.

KH: You moved in then?

TT: Yes, we moved in and they moved out - not for a week or so - we lived together for 1-2 weeks. Dad and them went around and mustered all the cattle up and Southwells counted them over to my father. Southwell's

TT:

cut their stock out of them - they had some sheep too. They went away with a couple hundred head of cattle I think.

KH: All the stock was Campbells when you were there?

TT: Yes.

KH: Why didn't you continue the dairy part?

TT: We did - we never bothered with cheese, we didn't know anything about cheese. It had a cheese press there - screw down one and there was another one they made themselves out of a tree - they had a tree stuck up on a high post and fork on the bottom end of it, came down on top of the lid, the thing kept coming down with a rock or two on it. I lifted it up and dropped it on my toe - skinned all my toe.

SIDE 2 - TAPE 1

MT: ... Leo Hoad must have been a young boy when he helped move that place ...

TT: He didn't help move it.

MT: He told me he did help move.

TT: He told me he knew where it came from, he never told me he worked on it. He was over 90 when he died about 3-4 years.

KH: He would have been born in the 1880s and this photograph definitely shows that this looks like that it's at the back of the existing place - this photograph.

MT: We used to always call that Mr Campbell's house.

KH: That's what your sister told me.

TT: We stayed in that part when we first came, but in that 2 rooms - when they went we shifted there - those places were kept when somebody came and there was always a couple of rooms kept for Campbell when he came.

TT:

TT: I remember it well because in the drawer there was always a bottle of 'Schnapps' whiskey.

KH: With the information that I had, I put it that the Southwells built that building furthest to the east, the one that is fairly delapidated now. I reckon they built that in about 1884 when they first went up there or soon after. According to your sister, the one with the high pitched roof was then built for Campbell during the summer time.

TT: He used to use it for his residence, that's where they used to have the ball, where they danced the night they were going away. I can remember them going away, they had about 6 horses and a wagon.

KH: Which way did they go out?

TT: They went out Brindabella - down the old rough track - they don't use it now.

KH: The one that comes out the back of Smith's place?

TT: No, it goes straight down, it keeps under that road that is there now, down the Coolamine Creek - it crossed the Coolamine Creek 13 times - every bend of the creek to get up the valley - you couldn't get up the side of the hills. When they started the mine, they put a cutting in - one bad crossing in the creek, well you didn't cross, you went up through the gorge. It was so rough, they made a track around the top of it. When that track was around the top, we used to go down there with cars and lorries

Looking at photos ...

TT: That old tin place at the back there ...

KH: ... the garage?

TT: I don't know if it's a garage - the back of that other place, Tim Kelleher's place, as I call it, there used to be a full length of that right along in front and another building right along we had for a kitchen, with a stove and a pantry we had in there - it got burnt down. If you look at that wall plate under the verandah, they're all charred. We kept it from

TT:

burning by throwing water on it. It's all charred black along there.

If you look out - this is Bill Harris' hut ...

KH: His daughter calls it 'Blue Water Hole House' - I remember that now - it's not Long Plain hut but Ibbotsons and its not Cooibil but Long Plain.

TT: The last maps they put out in '44 changed that. It never should have been changed. Long Plain hut is up where they call Cooibil hut - they had the lease for Cooibil for years, since 1914 - they bought it from Triggs - 10,000 acres.

KH: Did you help with the building of Harris'?

TT: No, a couple of other blokes helped him - Fred Murray and Gordon MacDonald. Peppercorn's verandah was all good right around it ...

KH: The story I heard was that somebody was washing some parts from a motor bike with kerosene ...

TT: They went away to Canberra or Queanbeyan, when they came back it was burnt - they left a fire in it.

MT: They never knew what happened to it - they came up to us very upset.

TT: This was all boarded right round, the chimney end didn't have a verandah on it and well done. I was there when they built that - shingled all underneath. An old bloke down at Tumbarumba, built another hut exactly like it, there is several huts like it through there. He built one at the ^{King's Mine?} Mary-mile(?) for Bradleys - the huts still there, they've lined it inside with fibro. It was built on the same design as that one was.

KH: Did you do any skiing at Coolamine?

TT: No.

KH: Did you have any skis there?

TT: Yes - I left a pair there somewhere. Leo Hoad made them for me - I gave him a quid for them.

Alec Lee was his name that looked after ... something to do with Mary-mine(?) there ...

KH: Was that in the Park?

TT:

TT: Yes, that was in the Park - it ^[Bradley's Hut] got burnt down ... There was Jack Nowland and somebody - they were bullockys and they came up there in 1919 to get grass - Harry and Ted Bullivant owned it then ... the other fellow was Joe Moreton I think. He said if you go up to Peppercorn with your bullocks for grass, there's nothing around Tumbarumba, I'll give you grass, you can stay there for the summer, if you cart the timber for Peppercorn hut to put a new one up. They drew the timber in the 1919 drought. Alec Lee put it up.

KH: The iron has been around for a long time?

TT: That iron they have put on since.

KH: I mean in general - Coolamine had iron on it ever since it was first built so iron was around for a long while.

Tom Taylor: Yes, it was then, but you couldn't get it after the war. They built the pub at Rules Point at the same time, it was built in 1915-16 and they couldn't get iron. The same time they built Rules Point pub, they built Dr. Campbells house, Long Plain hut, they put shingles on that.

KH: Why did Dr. Campbell build up there?

TT: He had a lease there, came from Elderly.

KH: He was a practicing doctor?

TT: Well he had been, I don't know whether he was then or not. He came up there and bought 40,000 acres off Triggs in 1914. The first winter, it split in two and half went one way and half went the other. Bobby Joyce had to come up and build it again.

KH: They've gone haven't they?

TT: No, the huts still there ...

KH: The huts still there, but the shingles ...

TT: No the shingles are still there.

KH: Underneath the iron?

TT: The iron blew off a few years before I retired and I put it back on again.

TT:

KH: When did Dr Campbell build that?

TT: He built that in 1915-16.

KH: As long ago as that - that is one of the very old ones then?

TT: Yes. It was built twice, because it fell down the first winter.

The chimneys were put up by Fred Crichton from Tumut.

KH: It's quite a substantial place isn't it.

TT: There's been nothing done to it since it was built.

KH: I think Jack Bridle has done a bit of work on it. Do you know him?

TT: Yes I know Jack well.

I knew a whole lot of the old people - Jack's father - Jack's younger than I am.

KH: There's some photos in here - what I've done - the photos I got from Tom's sister, I've put in there, I found out that some of those are yours. There are some recent photos of Coolamine in there as well.

TT: The very early days of Tumut and Talbingo and the roaring days of Kiandra - the Bridles lived at Bowlers Flat, they had a boarding house - I think they used to board people coming back and forth from the gold fields. Some of the real old people are the sons of the real old people. Bill Bridle, one of the old uncles would be at Jacks and Charlie - it was Charlie's father that started there first and old Bill I suppose.

KH: How old is Jack?

TT: I wouldn't know how old Jack is. Jim has been dead a few years.

KH: Some of these very old people you mentioned, are they still alive?

TT: No, none of them are alive now. Jim married a Green - Billy Green, that's a sister to Jim's wife - they had a place out here at Bugtown. Jack married a McPhie. I knew the McPhies for years when Jack's wife was only a girl.

KH: Is Jack still at the caravan park?

TT: Yes.

TT:

KH: What about the old Sikh that used to come out to Coolamine?

TT: One that you'd remember, the very first was David Singh. He came in about 1920-25. I don't think he was there before that. In the 1908-9 the old fellow who used to go up was called 'Gabutchan' ...

KH: This is the father of ^(Dava)David Singh?TT: No. He was a stout fellow and ^(Dava)David Singh was a tall, thin fellow.

KH: Did they stay a night when they came?

TT: They'd always stay, sometimes a couple of nights. I remember Harry Vest came up to help dad with the sheep, we had about 10,000 sheep, he had one horse he couldn't catch ...

KH: They had horses?

TT: Yes, always good horses too. I think old Gabutchan had three.

KH: Where were they based, in Queanbeyan?

TT: Yes he came from Queanbeyan - the railway head I suppose.

KH: He'd do this all year, he didn't have a shop as well?

TT: No. ^(Dava)David Singh would go down to Geelong and get all his tweeds and things. Anyway Gabutchan wanted his horse hobbled - leather was as scarce as rocking horses - Harry Vest put up a pair of green hide hobbles - we all had green hide hobbles - I stretched the hide by making a loop and putting a crow bar in and then put a peg in it. Might go round the horses leg twice and then through a loop - a slit in the hide and let the peg come back and catch. They lasted better than leather - leather used to crack and break. They went off to work - dad and Harry - and didn't come back till lunch time - Gabutchan caught the horse but wouldn't take the hobbles off - so he couldn't go. He wouldn't touch the hide off a cow - he was a Hindu. He was going crook swearing in Indian, etc.

KH: He didn't put the hobbles on then ...

TT: No, he didn't take them off either - he waited until Harry Vest came to take them off.

Campbell's bookkeeper at Yarralumla had something wrong with one leg - he had a big sole on his boot. I can't think of his name.

TT:

TT: Darcy Vest would know. Darcy used to get up early and make the fire in his sleep. His father had him up early to make the fire and it became a bit of a religion with him.

KH: You used to cook in the main fireplace?

MT: Yes. I had a stove. I never was one for cooking on an open fire.

KH: It's hard work. I do it in the huts when I go skiing and bush walking.

TT: When we first came there we had a range - a great thing you fill up with wood and drag the ashes and coals out with a rake and then put the bread in when the heat was right. It was made out of rock and mud. Like the old Chinese ovens. In the 1940s, in cities, they were still baking in the old ranges. In some of the big ranges they put in 200-300 loaves of bread.

KH: Did you do that at Coolamine?

MT: No, not at Coolamine but when I was a girl I lived out on the Bogong, I remember we always had it.

KH: Did you bake bread at Coolamine?

MT: I always bake my own bread in a cast iron stove.

When we left, we took our stove with us - Mrs Bridle put that stove in I think.

KH: She went there after you did?

MT: A good while after us. When we left Wagga Weir (?) then Fred Bridle and then after Fred Bridle, Harris came.

KH: Harris was there with another lady or something?

MT: Miss Cochran of Yaouk. She only used to go backwards and forwards because ^{Bung?} Doug looked after her stock. He worked for Miss Cochran too.

She is well over 90 now - she's not so good in the memory now - if she only could - she knew lots of things. Old Mrs Cochran has a good memory.

TT: This Mrs Cochran now down at Yaouk - it was her father, probably before he was married, years ago, that found a skeleton in the cave, where

TT:

they call Murderer's Cave. Somebody else was with him. How I found out, was that Bill's brother Bob told me all about it when I was a kid. He said it was his brother Bill, ^[Montier] Mrs Cochran's father, found the skeleton.

KH: Did you know Aubrey Hosking from Cooma?

TT: No I've heard of him.

KH: There is some information about Coolamine caves and homestead in the Snowy Mountains Walks book and I thought it was Aubrey Hosking that mainly put the history together.

TT: It could have been. He did a lot of that Kiandra stuff didn't he?

KH: No, that was a fellow called Moye. In that there's a bit about the MacDonalds and the shifting of the hut.

TT: They were MacDonalds - Mac...

KH: Did you ever explore Murray's Cave?

TT: Yes. That story about Tom and Frank Sheedy when they went in there - I think 1904 - they were supposed to have gone on and the water dried out, they went further in it, but when the floods came down it flooded a lot of rock out. When I was a kid and went there, that hole was big and those rocks kept filling up in the mouth of it, blocking it up.

MT: Did anybody ever tell you about the Devil's Bridge?

KH: No.

MT: Its on a little creek, the water goes underground, goes underneath this rock ... its round under Scanes hill.

TT: The head water of all those creeks ... when they hit the limestone on the plain ... they come out down at the Blue Water Hole or lower down the gorge but they are the source of the water that comes out. The plain - most of it is limestone, most of the slate in the limestone slate - on the hill its on its edge.

MT: It would be very hard to describe it to you an old track used to go around there - Tom used to have a water wheel there - I don't know if there is any of that work left there. As you are going from the

TT:

road from Brindabella, under the tree line, where the little creeks come in. Not very far from Harris' hut. They used to call it the Devil's Bridge. There was some signs there of an old water race.

TT: Had a waterwheel made out of a cartwheel but it all fell to bits because it went wobbly with the water on it.

KH: You used to have a generator there?

TT: Yes, to keep the battery up on our wireless set.

MT: I said to you a while ago about the Snowy Scheme, I reckoned I'd never see these dams in because everything was so slow in those days, they were talking about them for so long before they really eventuated and then to think that the Snowy Scheme - well it's a thing of the past now.

TT: We talk about uncivilised and bushies in the early days - people at the present time are better educated because they have a better opportunity to get educated, if they're not educated, they should be - they've had every opportunity. In my time you couldn't unless you had a tutor and they were hard to get - they didn't like coming away from the cities - the ones who were good - you got no education at all - there was nowhere to get it.

KH: Did you go to school at all?

TT: I went to school with a tutor and had a bit of an education here and there - I hated school, only because there was no fun and it was hard work.

MT: I'll show you my school house after ...

KH: A photo?

MT: Yes.

KH: This was out west was it?

MT: Yes.

KH: How did you get to the mountains?

MT: Eventually we had to leave the west and we went to Sydney - I was one of the foundation members of the Sydney Bushwalkers.

TT: -

KH: When was that?

MT: About 1927-28. I got interested in cave country - not the caves, but in the scenery around them. I wanted to come to Rules Point, I wanted to come to the cave at Yarrangobilly - I'd heard so much about it. I was enquiring about it and one of the bushwalker boys said ... I couldn't afford to stay at Caves house, it was about 3-4 guineas a week, it was a lot of money ... anyway he said to me 'there's a little place on the side of the road'. I noticed it when I was cycling through - it was Rules Point - so I went there and stayed in 1929. That was when I met Tom.

KH: So, in a way you were really a girl from Sydney - from the bush to Sydney and Sydney back to the bush. How long were you in Sydney for?

MT: 16 years - too long for me.

KH: You went there as a young girl?

MT: Yes I was about 13 or 14 when I went to Sydney. My father had an accident in the country - broke his thigh and was a cripple for the rest of his life and of course we had to go then - we were all girls.

TT: In the early days in the bush all the people made their own fun - played music learnt by ear and they were good players - really good bush music, play games, cricket and tennis. They'd come from miles for a tennis match or dances - it wasn't dull.

MT: Our only mode of transport was in the buggy.

TT: I can remember when I was a kid at Rules Point - they had sports there - horse races, hunts, buck jump riding and so on, dances a couple of times a year, but there would be 150-200 come.

KH: What about the Coolamine ball? Joe Jennings did a lot of work on the caves at Coolamine, gave me a copy of this ballad type thing about the Coolamine ball - a fellow called Bunty Morris.

TT: I knew Bunty Morris well.

KH: Was the Coolamine ball still going when you went up ...

TT:

TT: Yes, it was on the night when the Southwells were leaving.

KH: Did you continue it?

TT: We had one ball in 1914 for the boys going away to the War. Other than that just among ourselves, we used to dance and fool around, we had a player - he used to teach dancing in Tumut - Fred Smyth. He was a violin player. We never put on a big turn out.

KH: So you got maybe about 20 people along?

TT: You'd get 20-30. There was always 22 of us for Sunday dinner.

MT: I can show you my photographs of what a New Year's Day party - just a New Year's luncheon:- we were the second lot to arrive and Mrs Bridle was at Coolamine. I never had photographs of the big crowd we used to have, but when I was first married and went to Coolamine, for Sunday after Sunday we would have 11-14 for dinner. Don't ask me where they came from - they seemed to come from every hollow log.

KH: You had your week at Rules Point, at the hotel there for 2 guineas a week ...

MT: Yes and I used to walk to the caves, we did every cave that was possible to be seen, because both my friend and I were keen walkers - we thought nothing of it - we just walked up and down the hills from Rules Pt to the caves - it was 1,000 ft.

KH: Did you go out every day?

MT: Every day we went somewhere walking.

KH: Did you go to any of the other huts then or other homesteads?

MT: No we didn't. There was always somebody - unless you were invited you didn't go to Currango ... Rules Point sports were on and that's when I met Tom. Mr Harvey from Jindabyne introduced me to Tom. I came back every year or twice a year - the Depression was on - we used to have to take a week out of three in the office where I worked. Instead of taking my week out of three, I'd take three weeks holiday and away I'd go. I could always ride.

TT:

KH: You'd catch a train to Cooma?

MT: No, Tumut ... it's only since the Snowy Scheme that you go Cooma way. We always went to Tumut. The mail train came up from Tumut three times a week. The last time we went up, we came up the mountain - Talbingo - the old car used to always boil and we'd leave Tumut about 1 o'clock and we'd get to Rules Point at 6 o'clock at night - we'd been delivering all the mail. Greg Day, who now owns Wantabadgery station, his brother used to have the caves - he was the mailman.

KH: Greg Day is the brother of ...

MT: George Day.

KH: George Day was from the Kosciusko Hotel?

MT: Yes, the Chalet mostly.

KH: He's out near Wagga somewhere?

MT: Yes, he has a property outside of Wagga and I think he has race horses. Greg's always been with the stock. They are all very nice boys. The modes of transport - have a helicopter land in the back yard - that's what happened at Currango. They were looking for boys last year - somebody was lost - broken down car - they were looking for them, they called in to see if we had seen anyone.

KH: Each year you came to Rules Point, I suppose you got to know Tom a bit better?

MT: I only came to Rules Point the once, I used to come to their place after that.

KH: The Taylor's place?

MT: Yes. We were keeping company from 1929 and we were married in 1934. Tom would either drive in and meet me or come in and bring a horse.

KH: Where the Campbells still ...

MT: I only knew the Campbells - they called once when we were married - no, not the Campbells - I never knew the Campbells at all. I would have liked

TT:

to have known them but I didn't know them. The place is full of history. I hate to see it just going.

KH: It's the oldest building in the park that I know of that kind.

MT: The stock men around Kos⁶le - there were a lot of old buildings in that area.

...

KH: What about the Delaneys? Do you know anything about that hut? Do you know who built that hut?

TT: That hut's been there for years, before I ever had anything to do with it as far as being a Ranger was concerned. It was called Delaney's hut - I think it was Des Delaney or J.T. Delaney from Buckenderra Station, probably the one who went there - it was one of those. It was before my time - I couldn't tell you ...

KH: When was it built, do you know?

TT: It was an old hut when I went there in the 40s, it must have been built back in 1920s I suppose. Harold Locker might know. Harold would have only been a kid when that was being built. There's another hut just over the gap that was still there, hadn't been burnt, called the Alpine hut.

KH: That's the one Harold was involved in building I think.

TT: The Delaney hut would have been a long time before they started on the other one over there. I think the other one was put up when they started to fence it.

KH: So the one that got burnt down was a younger ...

TT: I don't know whether it's burnt down or not - could be still there.

KH: People talk about one that got burnt down near Delaneys.

TT: Well it would be, that was called the Alpine - two room weatherboard place.

KH: You reckon Delaneys would have been built in the 1920s.

TT:

TT: Yes, or it could have been earlier.

KH: It wasn't there when you first went to Coolamine, or you probably wouldn't remember?

TT: No, it wasn't there then I know. On that road in the 1916-17s that I knew of would be the rest hut. Jimmy Carter could have told you all about it - he's dead.

KH: Where was he from?

TT: He lived out at Hilltop. It's the last house on the right from here to Kiandra.

KH: Yes.

TT: Jack lives there - he would know who built the hut - he was only a kid.

KH: Jack Karl. He's younger than you?

TT: Yes, a good bit younger than me - 10 years.

KH: What about Tom Yan.

TT: Yes, he'd be old - be a good fellow to talk to. He'd know about that because he was in Kiandra the time they lived there. I never lived around Kiandra, so he'd know all about those huts - when they were built. He had a bullock team at the same time.

KH: He came out to Coolamine once. Did you have much to do with Tom?

TT: I see him round about.

KH: Did you buy food from their shop?

TT: No.

KH: Was it only the Kiandra locals?

TT: There was no shops in there. One was 'Yens' in here and old Tom Yan had a store in Kiandra in the very early days. That store was closed and Tom was dead before Tommy Yan was born. After that they went off ...

KH: Is it the same store that became Harris'?

TT:

TT: Harris' started in the early days - old Bill Harris - caught in a storm on Kiandra Plain and perished - got gangrene from the frost bite - he layed in bed rotting away and died.

KH: Sounds gruesome.

TT: It was gruesome alright. There would have been a doctor come from somewhere - Dr Schaeffer from Adaminaby I think.

KH: Yes, he had a mine at Three-mile Dam?

TT: Yes.

KH: He came out by himself I heard, with his two children?

TT: Yes. He was a good doctor, he did a lot of work around here and everybody liked him. When he died, his son used to go round - a quack - wasn't trained for a doctor, but he could do lots of good things. He used to set legs and pull teeth and all these sort of things. He would do all sorts of things a practitioner would be doing.

KH: He was paid for it?

TT: No he wasn't. Somebody had to do it. He had all his father's tools to do it with too. I remember a fellow getting his teeth pulled - Jack Hopkins - Joe was at our place at Coolamine - came there to build the long place in front for the kitchen ...

END CASSETTE ONE

TOM AND MOLLY TAYLOR

24 August 1978

CASSETTE 2 - SIDE 1

TT: ... we rushed out, we thought the whole thing was going to go up. We grabbed two five gallon buckets and a big tub - two of the five gallon buckets into the tub would fill it and I'd grab one side and Ces the other and we come up with that. In the morning, when daylight came, there was a ridge of ice about 2' high, as the water splashed out it would freeze.

KH: Was there enough water in that race line to keep feeding the well?

TT: Yes, a big load of water came in.

KH: That's where the rubbish is now isn't it. When I was there last October, we tried to get that race line going again by damming it up further up the creek. It did start to run but very slowly.

TT: It was too flat, now it was a big wide race, we would clean it out two or three times a year and it ran into a well about 3' deep by about 3' or 4' across - rocked up. As fast as we would dig it out, the well would fill again and good job there was plenty of water. It was in August.

KH: That's why you had a lot of water.

TT: If we didn't have a lot of water the whole thing would have burned.

KH: Because in the summer it doesn't run that much?

TT: You imagine, we went all night without boots.

KH: You saved the hut?

TT: Yes we saved it. I don't know what year it was. I think it was 1920 - somewhere about there.

KH: When was the building built that replaced it?

TT: The telephone went too. We had the telephone here and the telephone was first - we rode out to Long Plain and got the other telephone

TT:

out of the old house and hooked it up. Then we had to go and live in the other place - we used to cook in the other place until we got the tin place up. We got another place further down near the water. We had that for a cook house. After Tom went away in 1921, they built it back up there. I don't think there was any stove in it - an old tin place.

KH: It looks like a garage, it's got a stove and a fireplace in there now I think.

TT: We had a big fireplace with a stove in it. We used to cook in it and have our meals.

KH: Was the two-seater toilet up when you were there?

TT: Yes. It was always there. A double job she was.

KH: Was that because a lot of people came or ...

TT: I don't know.

KH: Did people ever use it together?

TT: There were three there.

KH: Yes, there's a single one?

TT: They had pans in them.

KH: Did people ever use them together?

TT: I suppose kids would go down together.

KH: I've got a list of huts here, you might know a little bit about some of the other huts that I don't know much about. Circuits? What did you know about that place?

TT: I know ... the new hut that is there now - there's a tank in front of it - 3 or 4 rooms, weatherboard. That was built by Circuit. Tom Shanley used to look after the stock there - Bert West's father - Tom Shanley's dead. He died about 10 years ago. Tom was wonderful.

KH: Was he a son of Mick Shanley?

TT: I don't know - I don't think so. Tom Shanley's father married ... I don't know who his father was - I did know - I've forgotten, but Shanley married this lady and she had one son, she might have had two - if

TT:

she did I didn't know them. Tom was an old man when I knew him - reasonably old - 40s or 50s. His mother died and she married Jim West after that, out near Gabramatta - lived out there. I think they only had the one boy - Bert West - Mrs West died not very long ago in hospital - Allan who lives out there now is ... Tom Shanley ... he would be the oldest man who was left here that remembered the very old times.

I think the new hut would have been put up somewhere about ... the old one was still there in 1926 - it was a mud hut - mud walls and an iron roof - only the one room I think. The door used to fly open of a night and Tom Shanley used to say that old Davin used to come back for his beer. Davin died down there - comes out drunk and fell off his horse somewhere on the creek, they found him perished there afterwards - his horse turned up at Gabramatta and they came up looking for him - he'd died with the rum still sitting up beside him in the snow.

KH: What was his name again?

TT: Jimmy Davin. Someone had cut his beard off - why they took it off before he was taken down and buried I don't know. This beard was sitting in a tin on the mantelpiece. When I went there the rats had pulled it all out and it was laying about on the shelf. I thought somebody had cut a bill-goats beard off to make a shaving brush - I put it back in the tin and put the lid on because I didn't like hair around when I was boiling my billy or had tucker around. I didn't know it was Jimmy Davin's beard. Tom used to tell the tale afterwards. At night you would go to bed and then something would go 'bing' and the door of the hut would fly open. Back in 1926 I was bringing some cattle through for Litchfield and I camped there for the night - the telephone was on - I think the door did fly open - my dogs would be outside ...

KH: This was in the old hut too?

TT: Yes - it was right about the hut door flying open. If I'd have known it was Davin it would have put the wind up me, but I didn't - I got

TT:

up and said 'bugger the door' and shut it again and went back to bed.

KH: That was in the 1920s.

TT: That was in '26. The new hut wasn't up then so it must have been built about the 30s.

KH: Would the mud pise walls be still up?

TT: They were still up but they took the roof off to do something else with the iron, probably down at the newer hut - the old hut fell down. ... place there for salt - putting salt and poisonous stuff in - somebody's taken the iron off and on the walls is tins phosphorus. If cattle or wild animals get in there and lick it up where the salts been, there's dip down in - it killed a lot of sheep and cattle one year. That's not the hut - the hut is just a bit further south from that. The iron taken off the salt shed has only been taken off recently.

KH: Was Circuits just used in the summer time?

TT: He used it in the summer time, he used to send his sheep up in the summer and he had cattle that he'd leave there all winter, when he had the leases.

KH: He had Nungar Plain did he?

TT: Yes.

KH: That's down from Blanket Plain?

TT: He had a part of Nungar Plain, not the lot. The fence goes down the creek and cuts it in half. He had the northern part and Kymo Station [J.O. Robinson] had the other - J.L. Robertson. There was two J.O. Robinson and Rob in son.

KH: Was Witses part of that?

TT: No Witses hut was on Currango - they called Witses hut old Currango.

KH: The old building which is no longer there? It used to be in front of the existing one.

TT: No, at the back of it. It stood there when I was a kid

TT:

- a big old slab place. Some of those old slabs they have put into a new part of the weatherboard place there. Most of those things that you think have been sawn out - the weatherboard - Ted Brassil split them out of the timber at old Currango. Some of the boards were sawn out but most of them split.

KH: I don't ^{know} much about old Currango. You are calling old Currango, Witses?

TT: I think it was called Witses in my day.

KH: The one that I call Witses now is on the Blanket Plain up near Cooimbil - no ...

TT: I know where you mean, its on Boggy Plain. They call that Witses hut - I know where you mean - that would be right, because none of them knew about that old place over there.

KH: It's on the Blanket Plain according to the map.

TT: That's it there.

KH: I thought it was Cooimbil?

TT: No, its not near Cooimbil, its still there - out of the old fallen down hut they built a little hut.

KH: Yes, that's right.

TT: It was a big old house - that was known as Witses.

KH: And they've taken the slabs out of it ...

TT: It must have been over there at old Currango because in the early days that old place at Currango was called Witses.

KH: What was Circuit's christian name?

TT: George Circuit.

KH: Where did he come from?

TT: George Circuit came out to Campbell at Yarralumla and worked there as a Jackaroo. He came from wealthy people somewhere over in England or Scotland.

KH: And then he bought land up here?

TT:

TT: I suppose his people had money and he came out here Jackarooing, learning something about the land. He has this lease up here - he bought it off McKeahnie in the early days. McKeahnie put the netting on it ... he had that place there and then he got another place right down the Lachlan, it was called Uabbalong. Then he had another place at Cooma. He used to live at Uabbalong himself and George Circuit, his son, wild man when he was young, good fellow to work for - Tom Shanley worked for him for years and years. Learnt stock work the hard way - well educated fellow. Campbell and Circuit in the early days were in partnership. George Circuit and Fred Campbell had the Blue Water Hole - all that country. When we came to Coolamine in 1908, they had that.

KH: Together?

TT: Yes, they had that place, Circuit and Campbell. Then Circuit and Tring went into partnership. My father drew the timber over to build a horse yard ... We used to call it Dooseys hut, was built by Joe Fell .. the hut was known as Fell's hut, then it was known as Circuit's hut.

KH: What do you know about Pockets?

TT: That place was sold in 1914-15, Campbell had the offer but didn't buy it right out - afterwards. Circuit and Campbell sold it in the first place to George McKeahnie, Cuppacumbalong - and he sold it to the Australian Estates in the 1920s. He shifted part of the old hut over to the Pockets, then they built a new hut at the Pockets.

KH: Did you stay at the Pockets?

TT: Yes I stayed there one year.

KH: That dates back to about the 20s does it?

TT: That would be about 1939 - war broke out.

KH: The hut I was trying to think of before is Gooandra which is near the Witses that I was talking about.

TT: Gooandra in the early days was an old hut built there by the

TT:

fellows who were mining down at the creek - miners hut. That was the first hut in the early days and then Fred Lampe got it, they built the other place, I don't know where they brought it from ...

KH: It's all sawn ..

TT: Yes, some place they bought at Kiandra or roundabout.

KH: It's a big place.

TT: Lampe would come up in the summer with his family and stay in it for a while - nearly all the summer, every summer.

KH: So the old building there was built by the miners?

TT: Yes.

KH: That would be very old then?

TT: Yes - I don't know who the miners were.

KH: Tom Yan told me the cook used to live in there ...

TT: Yes, he used to live there, and then they built another place and the cook lived down there. There are other little bits of huts around too. They put up the woolshed in later years.

...

TT: ... some of the lettering would be gone all together.

KH: I'd like to take you out there.

TT: I'd love to have a look at it and get an idea of what dates are there. There John MacDonald, Mary MacDonald and Sandy on the rock and the date was 1886?.

KH: There was a date there as well?

TT: Yes, the dates on the rock.

KH: You haven't been back there for a long time?

TT: I haven't looked at the rock since about 1930 I suppose.

KH: How far from Coolamine homestead?

TT: About 3/4 mile - coming north. Straight from the house, across the plain you'll see a bunch of trees - round trees - the track used to come

TT:

past and we used to look across and see the mailman coming. You go straight in line with those trees, you first strike the rocks, its goes across over a dry creek - stones and sand in it - walk straight over towards the elderberrys.

KH: It's quite a way away by the sound of it. I don't think we went far enough.

TT: You have to go down to where the fences cross - they were there with the 640 acre block.

KH: That old map that you have got is that of Currango?

TT: Yes.

KH: So most of your documents and old photos are at Currango?

TT: I've got nothing at all - Molly would have a few of them.

Where that paddock crossed, that's where the hut should have been - a big clump of rocks and the house was over here. They shifted it back to make it convenient for fencing and they cuts the names in that rock.

KH: You know the dairy cattle that the Southwells had, did you keep those on?

TT: When we first started there we had one cow. They would be milking 15-20 cattle.

KH: Were they producing milk and cheese for the neighbour?

TT: No, making it for themselves.

KH: That's a lot.

TT: ... and for people who called and they would give some away, but they wouldn't sell any. When he went away, the cows would be taken down to Yarralumla. The vats were quite high - had about 3 or 4. They had a wooden vat where they kept the cheese after it was made.

KH: So they let the milk go sour ...

TT: They curdled the milk, it wasn't sour.

KH: How did they curdle it?

TT:

TT: In the early days [would] couldn't get the cheese tablet - it does curdle the milk - rennett tablet they call them. They took that out of the gut of a calf in the early days - I don't ^{know} much about it. They would kill a calf - just born - and they would take enough of this stuff out to make lots of cheeses. You'd make the milk go thick, the way it came away from the milk when its washing down ... they put a cloth around it - a cheese cloth - also to keep the fly out because the flies would put maggots into the cheese.

KH: So what you ended up with when it was pressed down was just a white substance - like a cream cheese.

TT: Yes, and it always had little holes all the way through it. When it had holes and pockets through, that was when it was good cheese and they use to make beautiful cheese. They put the colouring in it.

KH: The Southwells would have done that too?

TT: I don't know what they did - I never saw one of their cheeses.

KH: The cheese you buy is coloured.

TT: We got it from Jersey cows and very rich cream, it would naturally have a yellow colour in it as it got older and a bit more matured. I think they put colouring in it - they do in butter too.

KH: Normally butter and cheese is white?

TT: If you get butter you make out of your own dairy, its always yellow, if you put a bit of colouring in it, it looks a bit nicer. I'm certain they would have to put colouring in the cheese.

KH: I thought it was maturing too?

TT: It might be the maturing.

KH: So after they put it in the cheese cloth and press down all the liquid in the cheese press, they were left with this fairly dry sort of mass.

TT: The juice would come out through the cheese cloth and then the

TT:

other stuff would catch in the net and with a heavy weight you squeeze all the whey out of it and leave the real cheese left. The real cheese would more or less be the curd stuff and the cream. Then you keep it and that would mature if you like. They used to put it in nice little wooden kegs - we used to use them for butter - the lid fitted over the top - the weight of the lid would keep it down. The kids used to milk a lot of cows and we'd make butter and we'd put it down ... cause you couldn't milk in the winter when the grass got short, you'd only milk in the flush of the season - in the summer, October, November, December, January - February you'd be thinking about knocking off.

KH: How long was that cheese left to mature?

TT: Any time you like.

KH: How long before it was used?

TT: You could keep it for ever - you could use it straight after it was made - put a certain amount of salt in it. All the cheese they made up there always was crumbly. When you cut it, it would come off like soap - you had a job to cut it straight - that was the best cheese too.

KH: Sometimes that happens if you buy some Bodella, sometimes its crumbly and other times its really smooth.

TT: That's the idea of keeping it damp so that it wouldn't break up. Some of this cheese was damp to cut although it would break off - not really bad - all little holes through it. It was beautiful cheese to eat. We used to give them a quid for 5 pounds - it might have been 10 pounds. When they put it in these wooden kegs, any dampness in it couldn't get away and the cheese would stay moist and wouldn't go blue mould.

KH: The Southwells log cabin was that built for a dairy?

TT: No, it was built for a house to live in - it had a chimney in it. In the very early days of the Murrays, they used to travel through to Tumbarumba ... when they were short of blankets - they'd carry a lot of

TT

blankets with you - they thatched it - the chimney was made of pipe clay too - stand a good bit of firing.

KH: Well the thatch is still there underneath the iron.

TT: Yes, they thatched under the iron, no doubt under the iron in the first place could have been shingles. Seeing the shape of the thing is made - the gable roof - must have been iron from the start. I don't think it is any older than what the houses are. It was built for a hut - they never put a chimney in it.

KH: There's a bit of a chimney now - its a very low one.

TT: There used to be a window in it and a verandah on the front.

KH: That fire place - my idea was - to keep warm in there for the cheeses in the winter time. What you're saying is that it could be older than the other homesteads ... by Murray, but that puts it back ...

TT: No, it wasn't the Murray house. Murray's hut was joined on to that - an L-shaped piece off it. When we first went there that was their store-room - flour, tea, and sugar in there.

KH: But that would date back to the 1850s or something.

TT: It was very old, it was the first one built there - big old wall slabs, pushed along in grooves in the wall plate, when one would fall down one would fall out, one would go sideways and then they'd all fall out. It was lined inside with Ruberoid, that came along later and that was the sort of stuff ...

KH: Not that tar paper?

TT: Yes. They might have had a roof made out of that in the first place on the gable thing, the idea was that if they had that there before, and there were shingles under it or over the top of it, or it didn't have any shingles on it at all - that would get rid of the snow, that thing with a lot of battens under it, and the straw underneath, would take the water off before the iron was put on it.

TT:

KH: Iron has been around ever since the 1860s I believe.

TT: That must have come about the same time - under those rooves over there at Coolamine is a tarred felt - under the roof ...

KH: It's coming off in strips ...

TT: Mice and sparrows got up there and built nests in it.

KH: It's weighed the ceiling down - insulation.

TT: ... it would keep the moisture from getting through the iron inside.

KH: Like they do with insulation bats ...

TT: That felt was ok, you could push ^{it} in anyway. There was a lot of sparrows there in the early days - you had to block it all up, if you didn't block it up a mouse or rat would get up there and dig it out. A sparrow would build his nest up there. In that old cheese house up underneath that stuff, there were sparrow nests by the hundred.

Once people leave a place like that and they're not putting in vegetables and crops and so on, a lot of these things leave, they only want to be where there is feed. When I was over here they put out this 1080 that all birds eat and it kills, especially sparrows - sparrows wouldn't last 2 minutes.

KH: Pigs were initially with people and then they got away ...

TT: Anything will go if you don't keep it under control, wild things.

KH: There are a lot of animals that will stay in the bush, even when people might have brought them there in the first place, but they'll still survive.

TT: A lot of people say - the kangaroos are dying out they'll be all gone - this is stupidity. We have millions of sheep in Australia and lambs are an easy thing to kill with the cold, wet, helpless things, hawks, foxes, and things will go for them. A kangaroo will carry a joey around in its pouch, it will survive the cold as long as the mother can survive. A lamb will die and the mother will live.

TT: 2:1/13

TT: If you want to get rid of kangaroos, the best way to get rid of them and rabbits, is not burn the grass, let it get old and dry - they won't breed. If you want multiple rabbits, have short grass, doesn't matter about it being a bit dry either, as long as its short stuff and they can scratch around for roots. Wallabies are a different thing altogether. Wallabies do like grass, they eat a lot of grass but also eat a lot of scrub - they're a different thing altogether. There's twice as many wallabies on the road from ^[Adaminaby] to Currango than there was when I was there.

Lyre birds are different again, altogether. They like to go into swamps and just mess about in the water and dance around, but they like bare ground. If you have a lot of lyre birds, you have a lot of bare country. There is a lot of bark on the ground and not much grass. They scrap away the bark and get the spiders that live under the bark.

KH: Talking about bark, have you ever been over into the alpine ash country in the Dargals, places like Pretty Plain and Wheelers?

TT: Yes.

KH: Do you know anything about the history of Wheelers?

TT: No, I don't. Wheeler put that hut up when he had a lease there. That's where the old Toolong diggings are - there was a rush there - must have been fairly rich while it lasted.

KH: That was back in the 1860s I think.

TT: The old huts there would be burned now. The road on this side of the river - the Toolong River - right up to Grey Mares ...

KH: Did you ever meet Wheeler?

TT: I think I might have seen him once. There was somebody there when we camped there one night, me and Dr. Johnson. We met somebody that day on top of the hill, it could have been Wheeler, but I didn't know him personally.

KH: He only had one arm.

TT: He must have built that hut because it was a very old one when we were there in '44. There was a big old tin bath in a wooden sort of thing

TT:

- I slept in that. I went back to it several time afterwards - the cattle had got in and the door had shut behind it - they'd been there for quite a bit.

KH: That wasn't Pretty Plain was it?

TT: No, Pretty Plain hut was a big hut.

KH: There's a story of a cow having wandered in - its White's River I think. It was another old place - the cow had wandered in and the door had blown shut and the cow had died in there.

TT: That happened over here at Currango.

KH: The bullock had died in the hut?

TT: Yes in the winter but he never went back in the winter, but the law said you couldn't be away for more than a fortnight - you had to be back on your block. This guy had been up there and knew the bullock was in there and he came down - he'd just been down to Yass and he'd been up there a couple of days before ... a bloke told him he'd been back - he was only up there a week or so ago and he knew the bullock was in there all the winter, it was still in there when he came past.

KH: He actually dobbed him in ...

TT: No he didn't dob him in but he was trying him out. Then it's like causing another fellow's pain and thought 'we'll cancel your block if you're not up there' He say, 'you been out to your block' ... 'oh yes, I was only up there last week' ... 'that's a funny thing I was there a couple of days ago and there's a dead bullock thats been dead there for a month in the fireplace'. Everybody around the town would know.

KH: I've heard that story several times now.

TT: A fellow told me - knew all about it - was an old guy - it was his brother who died there at Currango, Harry Shelley, he fell off a verandah and slipped and fell down and broke his ribs. They put him to bed, they couldn't take him to Tumut, he was too sick to travel on horseback - there was no other way of taking him there - they thought he'd be right - he

TT:

layed there for 2 or 3 days and died - he bled to death - the ribs had punctured his lungs. I think they took him into Kiandra and buried him.

KH: What was his name?

TT: Arthur Shelley. He told me a lot about Moores Hut ... that Witses hut, we used to call it Moores hut.

KH: The one near Gooandra, on the Blanket Plain.

TT: It's not exactly on the plain - its on the side a bit.

KH: What about Hains hut, do you know anything about that?

TT: Yes, its down on the river ...

KH: It's used by fisherman now.

TT: Yes.

KH: It's not very old then?

TT: No, it was only built back in the 40s, might have been 50s.

KH: What about Gavells?

TT: Gavell's hut is still standing, I was there a couple of days ago.

KH: Was it built by Gavell?

TT: Well Gavell had the lease of that in the early days and the first hut in 1939 wasn't where it is now. It was just a long place with one old room, a flat roof, all tin iron. I camped in it when I went dog trapping in 1929. Roast in the daytime and perish in the night. It got that hot in the day time you couldn't keep butter in there. I'd take it over and hang it in a tea tree in a bag in the creek to keep it from melting. After that, it must have been back in the 30s or later they built that hut and took the tin, they built a weatherboard hut.

KH: It was built in the 30s?

TT: Yes, not a bad old hut. Gavell had that in the very early days, didn't have it in my time - I didn't know Gavell.

It was the year the Southern Clood was lost - I used to see it fly over there every day - fly back and forwards over that mine - used to fly further north.

TT:

TT: The day it was lost it was snowing and blowing from the north west - a lot of snow falling, might have been 3-4 inches fell on the ground.

If I'd had known what Shelley knew then I could have found the Southern Cross ^[cloud] because he was up at the Three-mile and saw the fire going up. I never knew until after the Southern ^[cloud] Cross was found.

KH: Why didn't he go out and look?

TT: Well I don't think he told about the fire going up. A fire wouldn't have been out there unless there was a hut on fire - no huts were burnt - it could only be a petrol fire. He knew all about the plane going down ...

KH: He would have heard the plane going down...

TT: He must have told somebody about this. A few went in there looking about, but not too many. If he'd told me, not then, it was rough country, I didn't know much about it then. I'd been to the Three Mile - I had enough bush craft to go through there and have a look. The fellow's from O'Keefes hut heard it flying around at five o'clock in the evening - George Finch and Westley Clarkson - that was the night that Shelley saw the fire go up.

KH: Bill Hughes told me that he was at the Elaine mine - they'd come out of the mine in the afternoon, it was very cold, the plane sounded unusually low, and said if he'd gone to look for it he would have gone to look near Round Mountain.

TT: In 1944 we saw it and didn't know it was a plane. We were on the opposite side of the creek, the scrub was growing thick around it then. We didn't take much notice - I thought the Southern ^[cloud] Cross was an aluminium plane ...

KH: Wasn't it?

TT: No, it was a fabric covered thing. If I had known I would have gone up. A day or two after we'd gone up, we were back on the other

TT:

side - we came right down the Spur and mapped it out, right down to the bend where it went back ...

TAPE 2 - SIDE 2

KH: Did the plane crash before the '39 fire or after?

TT: It crashed about 1937 I think. Anybody flying over in '39 after the fire must have seen the plane because they knew it was in there - they saw it flying up over ... Matt Bradley and Billy (?) was working there digging the shaft ...

KH: You actually went looking for it?

TT: I went looking for it afterwards ...

KH: Did they do much searching for it in that area when it actually went down?

TT: Not a great lot.

KH: Even though it flew over and all these guys ...

TT: The blokes that heard it didn't bother about it at all.

KH: What about this guy who saw the fire?

TT: He just put it down to someone making a fire ...

KH: Because it was rugged country then wasn't it? To get there there was no road except a track down to the Tumut and up the 15 Mile Spur. It would have been a fairly hard trip to get in there wouldn't it?

TT: I went in there with a pack horse - surveyed the lot of it. It wasn't that hard to get in.

MT: They found a girl's diamond ring. Our son was there when they picked the diamond ring up, he said to him, 'that doesn't belong to you' and he was told to mind his own business. Nobody wanted anything to do with those people. Everybody who was closely connected with them after they were found, they never bothered about them at all ...

TT:

TT: A few blokes came out carrying the tail of it - I said I wouldn't touch that even if you give me a \$100 to take that away for a souvenir. I said, if you want bad luck that's the first thing you want to do. Three weeks after, two had turned it upside down - one nearly broke his back, but got out of it alive.

We were talking about that Southern Cloud - I'll tell you something funny about that. There was a woman who used to live up at Jindabyne, she's dead now, who was a sort of a clairvoyant - when Hayes and Seaman got lost, she told them where they'd be and they found them exactly where she said - not until two years after they found Hayes - he landed back on his skis - another fellow she said, was sitting with his back to a stump and his skis sticking up in the snow behind him - that's the way they found him.

KH: She said that?

TT: Yes, and she said when the Southern Cloud got lost, I asked her brother about it. We took her the map and she said it must have been Feathertop - she said it's crashed into the side of the hill like that, hit a big tree, and I can see a blonde woman's head hanging out of the back, its in mountain ash and just on top of the hill there's an open flat. That's exactly where it was. She was fantastic. She said to a woman once, your son has just fallen off his horse and had a nasty accident down the road and they laughed at her.

KH: But Hayes - I thought they found the remains of him inside his sleeping bag.

TT: He might have been in a sleeping bag, but she said he was laying back on his skis at the bottom of a big drift.

MT: He just sat down to wait for his mate I heard.

KH: That was Seaman.

TT: They reckon the other bloke got blown off his skis, the wind

TT:

hit him and blew him over the drift - a 100' fall straight off over the rocks.

KH: There wouldn't be rocks below a drift.

TT: There was, I seen it plenty of times.

KH: This was in the winter - lots of people have fallen over drifts.

TT: I've seen at Kosciusko - if you fell over you'd be killed - plenty of times.

KH: I thought all that was left when they found him was bones - it was 18 months afterwards, two summers later.

TT: He was under the snow, the snow thawed, and they found him - but he rotted away of course - he'd been out of the snow for quite a bit. When they were looking for him, he was under the snow.

It was Lindsay Willis who found him.

KH: It was Ashley Willis or Lindsay Willis who found Hayes and one of them has just recently died. The one who found Hayes has just recently died according to Neville Locker. (Jack Willis)

TT: I don't know which one it was but I met Lindsay Willis this year, so Lindsay is not dead.

He used to look after the sheep at Mawson's hut when I knew him.

KH: Lindsay Willis?

TT: Yes, he used to camp up there at Mawson's hut with - can't think of his name now - they had 22,000 - 25,000 sheep there. (Looking at old photos).

TT: All the old McPhies are dead are they?

KH: I haven't found any.

TT: I'll tell you somebody who can tell you about lots of things - Max McPhie - he lives out along the Cooma Road here.

That was old Davey Williamson who used to be up there at Mawson's hut.

TT:

TT: That's where Willis used to work with him, up there for the summer.

KH: Williamson didn't build Mawsons?

TT: No, I don't know who built Mawsons. Mawson I suppose - he used to be in there with stock in the early days.
(Old photos of Rules Point - Molly Taylor).

KH: You were talking about the McPhies. Where does Max McPhie live?

TT: He lives along the road going from Adaminaby, on the right hand side. He's one of the sons from old McPhie from up there. You follow that track in and take the first beaten track that goes to the left.

They were the greatest mountain people - they would be in the snow all the time mustering.

KH: Did the McPhies have a hut - they are a bit of a mystery - the McPhie's huts are marked on the map out near the Grey Mare, between Grey Mare and Pretty Plain, no one has found the site.

TT: They've got it wrong. The McPhie's hut was the one at the head of the Gungahlin.

KH: Where Kellys is?

TT: Yes, well I don't think its Kelly's hut, because the furthest one up the top.

KH: Kellys is the furthest one up that I know of.

TT: That was McPhies. They used to use that when they camped.

KH: That hut they now call Kellys was McPhies.

TT: Yes.

KH: Its got battens and then plaster on top of the battens.

TT: There's an old hut along side of it - very old place.

KH: I don't remember that.

TT: I know the hut they are talking about. McPhie's hut - that was built up since the leases came out. I was going back in the ancient days

TT:

looking for it.

KH: Noone's found it.

TT: It used to be up the top - they had a bit of private property down there on the plain that ran right along that range. The range was leasehold and then on the other side there was a bit or private property that took in a bit of Happy Jack's Plain, on the top hut where they call the Tin hut - that was all freehold - the McPhies had it.

KH: Did you work with Jim Pattinson?

TT: I put Jim Pattinson on - I was the senior ranger. Him and West worked on that side.

MT: Jimmy knows the area very well.

KH: Yes, I've spoken to him.

TT: You know where the Tin hut is ...

KH: Mould's hut. Some people call it Mould's hut.

TT: It's a mouldy place, because it has a dirt floor.

KH: The Sydney Bushwalking Club did it up and then a ranger came along and burnt it down. Apparently he objected to the way it was restored - the Sydney Bushwalking Club had relined it with aluminium sheeting on the inside and they had put a verandah on and they'd used some transparent fibreglass corrugated stuff that let's the light through, a new floor and some bunks. When you went inside, with all the shiny metal lining and the white bunks, it really didn't look like a stockman's hut - it was certainly a much better hut, more windproof.

TT: It was a terrible hut.

KH: It did generate some controversy - some people thought that the hut shouldn't be restored like that, it should be kept more or less in the old style. Anyway this ranger took it into his head to burn it down - that was in 1976. They have since burnt down another one I believe, or about the same time, called Harveys down on the Gungahlin, on the way into Alpine. People say it is the same guy who burnt it down. This has made us very

TT:

concerned about the huts.

MT: You could go in there and be desperate ... it's all very well for these rangers, they have never been caught out and there's days coming when they are going to be caught out.

TT: All those huts should be kept in good order.

KH: The value of Four Mile Hut was shown when two girls were out that way the other day. They were extremely lucky.

MT: Just as long as there is something there for you to get a bit of shelter from, its only people who have been out in these blizzards and storms, as we have been; not on one occasion - we've walked home from Rules Point, 9 miles, in a dreadful blizzard and I got home and there were icicles on the back on my scarf.

TT: That Pretty Plain hut ... all the logs are getting frayed out on the outside.

KH: Only on the northern wall, the rest of it is in very good condition. This summer we want to go in and replace some of the logs because we have about 40 clubs now looking after different huts.

TT: Last time we were there, somebody killed a wombat in it and left him there. I dragged him away - he was still stinking. We didn't camp in the hut, we camped outside in a tent. There was many a fish in the creek there then, is there any now?

KH: I don't know.

TT: I went fishing there - got 35 I think, we fed ourselves and the dog for a week. They weren't big ones, but there were hundreds of them there.

Did you go and have a look at Pearce's hut? Pearce's hut fell down, but they put a new one up just over the Tooma Dam - Montague built one there.

KH: That's down.

TT: Did they pull it down or did it fall down?

TT:

KH: Pearce's hut - there's nothing, just a pile of rocks. But there's a Snowy Mountains Authority hut just behind it.

TT: They built it there?

KH: Yes.

TT: Is it alright?

KH: No, the windows are gone, not a very nice place. That's the surprising thing about Delaneys, that it is still as good as it is because it's close to the road.

TT: It never was much good. I'll tell you what I like about Delaney's hut - there's plenty of wind gets in it - it's clear - the wind blows everything out of it.

KH: It was the only hut I had available to take the ABC crew to the other day - they were making a film on the huts - it was the only one we could walk into which had some of the atmosphere of an outback hut.

MT: Tom, do you know about the other one that's across the creek from that one ...

TT: Burke Dam. (?)

MT: That was a nice little hut.

KH: I believe that's gone.

(Looking at photos of old school house - Molly Taylor aged about 6 years).

KH: This is the school house?

MT: Yes, that is where I was educated when I was 5 to 14.

KH: There are about 10 in the class?

MT: Yes, that's about all we ever were. We weren't very many. I would like to go back one day.

TT: Whose got it there?

MT: I don't know, people whom Joyce knew had it - very flat country, the Bogong.

TT: The McKinnons left it altogether?

TT:

MT: Yes, they'll all be dead.

KH: You worked at Arnotts did you? In the office or making biscuits?

MT: Yes, my sister was there for 45 years. I was in the office.

I was terrifically paid there. We got £1 a day working from 7 am until 10 pm at night. That was terrific money in 1928-30.

TT: Did you ever come across that little hut near Kiandra up on the hill? Reel built it there. I went there to camp in it and the two doors shut, it was airtight, little stove inside - how they didn't die in it I don't know.

MT: You know it as Governor - Tantaranga.

They used to call it Governor - its Tantaranga now.

KH: Built privately.

TT: They used to take skiers out there.

KH: You call it Governors?

TT: It used to be that name, it's Tantaranga Mountain.

KH: How old is it?

TT: Reel built it back in 1940 sometime - 1946.

KH: Not far from the top of mountain.

TT: There's two doors on it - you come in and shut one door and then shut the other door so the wind couldn't get in. Do you know it?

KH: I've never been to it yet.

TT: I'll tell you something about it. There were four bunks, one above the other I think and a little bit of a stove inside. How somebody didn't die in the thing I don't know because it was airtight, there was nowhere for the air to go in, the fire would take all the air out. I went there and the foul air that came out - there was tin around the outside and lined inside with ruberoid or something. The bunks had sweated and all gone mildewy - I lifted them all up and tried to dry them out, they were all rotten and falling to bits. I didn't camp in the hut. I went around with a pick and drove holes in the tin so air could get around the bottom

TT:

into the hut. I reckon somebody would be mad enough to go inside and shut the door and die in it.

KH: Apparently there is a group of scouts that look after that now from Sydney and they have improved it - the stove had gone I think and they put another stove in and painted it. Did it have a dirt floor? If it is the same hut they just put concrete - mixed concrete in with the dirt ...

TT: The boards in it would be rotted out with the dampness. I think it must have had a dirt floor because he wouldn't have the way to get timber in there. Reel built it.

MT: That was always known to the old Kiandrians as Governor ...

KH: The hill ...?

MT: Yes.

KH: Tantaranga mountain?

MT: Yes.

TT: ... If you came in here and put a tin - whether cement floor or dirt floor - you have a kerosene tin and a fire burning out there and you brought it in here with a lot of red hot coals in it, you'd be dead in the morning - you wouldn't smell any of that coal or you wouldn't notice the smoke from it because there wouldn't be any, but there would be carbon monoxide coming out - you could never smell or taste.

MT: It killed some Italians ...

TT: They were down Dargal way and they were making eucalyptus oil, pulling the eucalyptus trees down, breaking the leaves and boiling them in these tanks. There were 5 of them I think with two tents - ordinary tents with the tied up front and a fly over the top. They got buckets of hot coals out of this fire and took them into the tents - the tents were only about 10 x 12 - they put the coals down to warm the tent up - which it did - and made them go to sleep. Three were dead in the morning and the other two they took to Tumut hospital, they never knew what happened to the other two fellows.

TT:

KH: Now I can see why some of the huts are as draughty as they are.

MT: It's such a simple thing to do and a lot of young people wouldn't even think about it.

TT: In the early days of the mining and the hardship when they didn't know and they came out built their mines and tents and things, lots of miners died. They didn't know what killed them half the time.

In the early days in Australia when the dingoes were around and the country was wild, they shepherded their sheep and blacks and things about - blacks had a lot of dogs - the tribe would come along $\frac{1}{2}$ mile ahead and there might be 50-60 dogs and the dingoes would follow them too. My father used to shepherd for his father, you'd see all the dogs coming, you knew the blacks were coming, you'd leave your sheep and run home - frightened of them but they never hurt you. They used to make a thing to take about, the old shepherd would have it, they'd put it in a wheelbarrow - build a big wooden barrow and the hut was on it. Just enough room to squeeze in. They made them out of mountain ash palings, when you got down in the lower country, you got heavier wood of course.

KH: I think the National Library have photos of them.

TT: Not only did you take the hut, you took - they made square frames to keep the sheep in - hurdles I think they call them. They're about three feet high and I think about six feet long - load them onto the wheelbarrow too. They would hold 3,000 - 4,000 sheep. ?

KH: Often in the mountains, you come across places where the hut is gone, but the old fence is still there, where they have just tossed down a whole lot of wood - one bit on top of another - stack fences.

TT: There is a dog-leg fence they used to put up. It was a bit easier if you had the timber, bit more firm, you could repair it easily. They put a fork in the ground, then put a rail in it about a foot from the ground so the sheep couldn't get underneath. Then they would get two sticks and dig a hole in each side of that log ... that's what they call a dog leg,

TT:

then layed a rail along the top. Pretty good horse fences or cattle fences. You could make them six feet if you like, the heavier the log the more stable the fence, nothing would shift it.

KH: What about Oldfield's hut? What do you know about the history of Oldfields?

TT: That tin that's there now was put around the hut, the first hut was a log hut at the back of the one that's there now, all fallen down. The next hut they made out of slab with a tin roof, then they made a stable out of iron.

MT: Murray Creek hut we used to call it.

TT: It fell down ...

KH: He didn't call it Oldfields?

MT: No, it only became Oldfields after, but it doesn't matter. Oldfield was the last I suppose.

TT: Oldfield was the first one there. The stable started to fall down, a few slabs in that and a good tin roof on it. They took the tin roof off and put it around the hut - that's there now, made it more weather-proof and looked better from the outside. Bill Oldfield had it built, he died about 87 years old. He had the freezing works in Queanbeyan, he did alright - he made money. He had a lease to come up to, cattle and sheep in the summer, Jack Feeney used to look after it for him. He had a garden, vegetable garden. He'd rear a few pigs and have bacon. If you came along there you'd have bacon and eggs and damper.

MT: There must have been somebody there before Bill Oldfield.

TT: There was nobody there before Bill Oldfield.

KH: When did he build it then?

TT: There was no ring-bark, no scrub, no fences and Bill Oldfield then used to help his father - Tom Oldfield. I knew Tom well. When I was a kid, he was an old man about 80. He shifted down and he took up a place right down where the ranger is now - Tom Gregory on the Cotter. He had a

TT:

lease around there or a bit of private property and the hut was on the opposite side to where Gregory is. It is was over on the Canberra side of the creek, well up in the side of the hills with cherry trees around it. It was a big old slabby place, 2 or 3 rooms. His father lived there - Tom Oldfield. When Tom left he had a place down at Moss Vale, then Bill got it. Bill had it until the Federal Territory took it from him, then he came up and took up the leases at the Pockets. There was no other good ground to get, not at Pockets but the Murray's Creek hut because all the other country was taken up earlier by the squatters. He ring-barked country there and scrubbed and fenced it all - used to run sheep and cattle - had a real good place. You could go there and get mutton, meat or anything you like.

KH: When did he build it then?

TT: That was built right back in 1924. The first hut, Jack Oldfield lived there in the first place and he had the long hut at the back and then they started fencing and had the other one put up. It was up in 1926 I'm sure because dad and I went over to see him about getting cattle out - old Bill was cooking fish on the fire he'd caught in the creek and he ^{had} somebody with him - a couple of fellows from Canberra - Jack Feeney was there. We had dinners of fish and eggs I think and damper. I remember seeing something in the Queanbeyan paper when they went back. Some of the fellows with him must have been from the papers because they wrote something about it - about us coming over land to there - I've forgotten what it was.

KH: So it was Bill Oldfield who started the place in 1924?

TT: It was going before that. Back in 1919-1920 he was down ... at Blue Water hole, putting that mine there because George and I rode over to the Cotter - Jack Oldfield was at the Cotter - Jack had gone away and left us a note - we told him we'd met him before this - we'd gone over to get some pigs for Xmas. We bought them off Jack. They'd gone, so we stayed the night, me and George Hancock, we got the pigs the next day

TT:

according to the note how to get them, bought the two pigs and put them on a pack horse and packed them home. That would be about 1920, it wouldn't have been any later.

MT: The hut must have been there then. How did you get the pigs?

TT: The pigs were running over the flats on the Cotter river. We packed them up to the top of the hill - hot sort of a day - in bags ...

KH: Still alive?

TT: Yes. We had to give them water, otherwise the heat might kill them. We nearly fixed them - George ought to have known better, he was an old man, but didn't know much about pigs. So I thought we'd dip them into the creek and hook them back on again and they'll be right. The water on top of the hill was so cold in the creek, we took them off in a hot bag, dipped them down in the creek and one of the pigs went out to it. I'll never forget that and I thought we'd killed them - wouldn't move in the bag - we hooked them up and trotted off and the heat of the horse and the pigs shaking about, they came to life.

KH: What about the present hut - what sort of era was that?

TT: Well in '26 they had the hut up that's there now - only the tin was put around recently. The other one back there is rotten and falling down.

MT: Yes, well I've known it for forty odd years.

TT: I just don't know when Bill left, but I do know the time he left down there when he was put out of his lease at the Cotter - he probably put in and got the lease up there before that and he started that hut.

KH: It's certainly a logical place for him to go because it was just over the hill wasn't it? I've only been on Mount Murray, I haven't been to old Bills yet. I've been to lots of huts, but there's so many of them. We came up through the upper Cotter and we saw old Bills down below...

MT: Were you walking up or did you come on four-wheel drive?

KH: We came ^{in a} four-wheel drive.

TT:

MT: What do you work at?

KH: Well I was working in the Forestry Dept. at the University but now I'm freelance, making films, writing articles for papers, magazines and trying to get this book together on the huts - just a very small book ...

MT: Just so people will know where they are and the condition they are in ...

KH: Yes, and a little bit of history about them and some photographs.

TOM & MOLLY TAYLOR

CASSETTE 3, SIDE 1

TT: The last time I was at Mackays hut, I saved the whole lot from getting burnt down. They left their camp fire burning and it just started as I came along one morning.

KH: Who built Mackays then?

TT: Norman and Sam Mackay.

KH: Where were they from?

TT: They were from Adaminaby - Norm is still alive.

KH: What year was that, the 1930s?

TT: Back in the 40s, after the leases, somewhere about '44 when they started there - it would be '45 or '46.

MT: In 1943 the leases went out ...

KH: So after the Kosciusko National Park had been declared and after some of the leases had been ...

MT: Some of the huts were built then.

KH: Some of the leases had been stopped hadn't they?

MT: They didn't stop until '69.

MT: Kosie was closed and I think they were closed too on that side - the Kiandra ones.

KH: It must have gone on otherwise they wouldn't have built the hut?

TT: They had 7 years to go on. I think they got a second term given to 14.

KH: I thought the leases went until 1958, not into the 60s.

TT: Well from 1944 to '58, that was 14 years. They must have only got a seven year lease of that land.

MT: Last year at Currango end, was '69.

KH: At that end it might have been, yes.

Mackays is a very substantial place, it surprises me ...

TT: They didn't know how long they had when they started - a 7 years

TT:

term with a preference to take another seven. I think they had 14 altogether.

KH: Because it is one of the most substantial huts in that part of the Park.

MT: There was a nice one built along the road, there was a very nice one built past, what they call Long Plain house, its gone, someone burnt it down. Somebody would get fanatic about these things ...

KH: Well this ranger did. He just took - got a bee in his bonnet ...

TT: It all depends on the environment you are brought up in and how you look at that environment - you might be against it for some reason. But the one you like, you're stuck too.

KH: Did the Mackay brothers also build those stock yards?

TT: Yes.

KH: They are very substantial, they weren't there before?

TT: No. They fenced it.

KH: They must have had quite a bit of money?

TT: They spent a lot of money. All the guy did, wanted it shut down and let them wait until it cost them a lot, then he'd lock it down so they would be discouraged - fanatic - two fanatics - never did any good for the country at all, it went back. It's harder to get through, not as hospitable as what it used to be, the wild life is no better, the bush fire ravished it, now where there was green timber, there's dead timber and old dead grass waiting for the next fire. Never go into that country when there's a bush fire thinking you can save your hut, you won't save your life. If you're going to go in, go in from the west, never come in from this side. The fire travels from the west across - go in behind it, never towards it. Fires are terribly frightening things.

KH: How long was the holding that the Mackays had there - how big was their grazing lease.

TT: I think I've forgotten how many stock they had.

TT:

TT: They'd have a couple of thousand sheep or 1500. I think it was 1500 sheep and about 50-60 cattle.

KH: They went up there for the summer?

TT: They would have somebody looking after it for the summer - up and down and drench their sheep.

KH: They used to drench them up there did they?

TT: They drenched them when they got them there to make sure they were clean or drench them before they went.

KH: It looked as though they had the runs for the sheep where they ...

TT: That had a drafting gate on it - they get through the fences. Everybody would have trouble with their sheep, you'd have some of these you'd draft them off.

The fellows that were out there, looking after the cattle for the summer, they were so good at branding - their eyesight was good and they would know strangers got in - cut out 20-30 of other peoples cattle out of the 1000. I did miss two head once. I went down, they had broke the fence and got in with the bulls. Another guy with me thought he knew stock and how to get them out ...

KH: Apparently they used to have two musters. They had one where they just picked up what they could fairly easily, and then all the stockmen would get together and pick up all the strays, then bring all them down to one place and sort them out.

TT: It was a good idea because it saved time. You could stay there - there was plenty of grass, but you had to get out before the snow and you couldn't dilly dally around. It's better to get the big mob out and then go back for the rest than lose the lot.

Angus McPhie and Dave, Davey Williamson might have been there, I don't know who the other fellow was now, he's dead now, he was the overseer. He said, 'I think we had better go on because it might snow tonight'. We'd go on down to the Gungarlin - it was late when we got

TT:

them altogether. Old McPhie said it would never snow enough - in the morning there was only their horns sticking out - they couldn't shift them. The whole lot died - 1500 head. If they had been sheep, the sheep would have lived underneath it. I think it was 1945 - it snowed in April when Percy Kramer was mustering at the Eight-mile, he mustered up to the Three-mile dam, he was 150 sheep short, they were snowed in there for about a week - the snow plough came along and opened the road to Rules Point, cutting the road, digging drifts and driving cattle up and down, got them onto the road and got them out. Jimmy Pattinson went back in the country looking for the sheep and couldn't see anything of them. He was riding over the top of them. I came along in the spring, what they call the Kings Cross - they had got in under that and the snow had come right over in some heather country - snowed them right over. There was only two sheep dead and all those that came out were in good condition. Up at the Tin hut they were snowed in one year and had to be dug out.

Wallabies can go under like that in the snow and live. Kangaroos will die - can't take the cold. I've seen them die out twice since I've been in the mountain. They died in 1943.

MT: 1964 was terrible.

KH: Apparently 1946 was bigger.

MT: '46 was very big. Tom was carting the food around for the different rangers and we had a truck, provided by the Dept. of Lands, and the snow had been very bad. They used to start at the Alpine, just get to the foot of the Alpine Mountain, then they'd come back - the workmen, then start again the next day - never got any further than the foot of the Alpine. There was never any big equipment until the Snowy came - but they got another road open - all the stockmen got together. Tom thought he shoot through to Yarrangobilly with a load, so we went - Tom, Fred and myself ...

TT:

MT: When we got to Kiandra, from there to the top of Bullocks Hill and half way down Bullocks Hill was a tunnel - as high as a door - they just went through it with a bulldozer - there was a mob of cattle that went through, but one was left behind and she was in this tunnel when we got up there - she had no where to go ... We got down Bullocks Hill and slipped off to the left and went into a wall ... we got down to Yarrangobilly but decided not to stay. Tom wanted to go straight back because it was winter time, about end of June. That night it snowed again and it was not opened until October. It was only when the Snowy came that they could open roads with their big equipment.

KH: 1946 was the year when Ken Breakspear skied most of the way from Cooma Railway Station into Alpine Hut. There was one or two feet of snow all the way - through Berridale and Jindabyne.

TT: It was six feet at Adaminaby.

MT: They didn't have any grader so Jim Pattinson and Cecil Herington got together and built a snow plough and they came down and opened the road. There was cheers when they arrived there. They had to come down for food. They went through to Cooma and opened the road. You know there was nearly a court case over that because they dared to open the main highway.

TT: I'll tell you how bad that snow was that year at Kiandra. I was talking to Alby Kershaw, he was the foreman on the road there. It was the 15 October - I had ridden up Bullocks Hill from the other side and he hadn't had it open. They never got through until the 20th. They took two to three layers off the top with a bulldozer before they cut it with a ploughs edge. On top of Bullocks Hill there was up to 20-30' drifts.

MT: In 1964 we were at Currango - the middle of July I suppose, till about the 1st week in September before we got out. We used to get out by boat to the dam wall and then break the ice ...

TT:

KH: How high is Currango?

MT: 4,180'. It's as high as most place around. Kiandra is not much higher. We have to go to 5,000' to get out of Currango. We had to go up to the top road.

KH: This was before the new road?

MT: The new road was there but we couldn't get on to it. We had a boat thank goodness, and we used to go down the lake on the boat.

KH: Have you heard of Janey's at all?

MT: Janeys was on the way to Tumut wasn't it? Janeys Creek.

KH: It's an iron/fibro hut.

MT: Where was it suppose to have been?

KH: I don't know - I've never been there.

Well it's on the Wagga sheet - I could look it up on the map.

TT: There used to be a hut at Janeys Flat, this side below the dam - the Blowering Dam.

MT: That's the only Janeys I ever knew about.

KH: That could be - the fact that it has fibro on it sounds like a Snowy Mountains Authority hut.

KH: What about Vickerys this side of Talbingo - have you ever been down there? Apparently Jack Bridle knows quite a bit about it.

I don't think there is a track still there - I'd like to walk down.

TT: That's the hut they call McGrath's hut.

KH: On the right going to Talbingo?

TT: Yes, it goes off the Cumberland break - on the Jounama Creek.

KH: It's a really neat little hut.

TT: Yes. It's a good place to go - it's out of the way. It's pretty steep to go down - need a four-wheel drive.

KH: Is it far in?

TT: It's a fair way in - you go over the top quite a way before you

TT:

turn to go down. It's pretty steep down to it.

KH: A couple of hours walk?

TT: Yes, you'd do it in that easily.

Follow the old telephone line ...

MT: Was that the hut the goats were shut in and they died?

TT: Yes.

KH: Did Vickery build this one?

TT: Either Vickery or the other bloke who had it last - he had the lease after Vickery.

KH: When I came, you were saying Jim Robson's family was painting some of the huts - collecting history and so on. Do you think he was possibly thinking of writing a book about them or something.

MT: Yes, he was thinking of compiling a book or something.

KH: Did he ask you much?

TT: Never saw him. Saw him once I think ...

KH: Did he see the article I had in the Canberra Times.

MT: I think he would have.

KH: I was just wondering whether to send them one or not.

MT: I think what he intends to do is to compile a book of huts without a whole lot of history about them - just the huts and who they belonged to.

TT: There should have been a lot more huts of timber - they wouldn't have cost very much - they went in for too much red tape and money spent in other places. There should have been good substantial huts built on it, maintained by the rangers.

MT: What amazes me is, why the rangers don't live within the Park - they don't.

KH: There's one who lives at Yarrangobilly?

TT: There is one hut you haven't found - Harry Pethers hut. Last time I was there, there was a bit of bark falling off the roof and a few rafters and most of the sides were falling down.

TT:

KH: Have you found Tolbar's hut?

TT: The chimney ... couldn't camp in it anyhow. It's right on the top looking up from Talbingo.

KH: It brings up the point that there are so many huts and so many huts ruined ... we were going to have a photo of a hut in our newsletter and have a hut guessing competition. If you take a photograph of a hut from an unusual angle - you go around the back or below it - you wouldn't know it. Wheelers - I showed it to people and they didn't know it.

TT: There is huts on the Tolbar - near the broken down station the Snowy had up there - there was huts and houses there - I don't know whether they left them there or not.

MT: The Snowy are not allowed to leave anything, they have to take it all away.

KH: They have left some huts - they left Valentines - somebody painted it white with little red hearts including the toilet seat - its on the Valentine River just above the fall. ... There's a little hut called Diana.

...

KH: Some of the first old timers called it the Big Bogong, then it was definitely spelt in some of the old ski books as Jargungal or sometimes they would drop that second 'g' and it was Jargunal and then I thought it was the recent wave of bushwalkers and so on that made it Jargungal.

TT: They changed these names across the Brindabella mountains. The Big Gin in the mountain they call it Ginini - it was always called Gin in the Mountain.

MT: If you're coming back from the Blue Water Hole and you're walking towards the Pockets or even coming down from the hill at Coolamine and you look across on to those peaks - they are just like a Gin ...

KH: Gin in the Peak ...

TT:

TT: When you go up to Coolamine, you go up the hill on this side of the Blue Water Hole at the top and look back - you'll see the two breasts sticking up at Gin in the Peaks and a leg out. That's how it come to be called Gin in the Peaks. The next long one along we used to call Long Bimberi ...

KH: There's Gingera and Ginini. Gingera is the biggest, then Ginini. Other people have said to me that it's Jargunal - I think it was Tom Yan - I was baffled with bushwalkers, who all called it Jargungal.

MT: There's a girlfriend of mine who comes up here who is connected with the bushwalkers, she was telling me how they were skiing one time - she was a very good skier. There was an Austrian who spent hours teaching them to say Jargunal. I said don't you dare come here with that word. They had a mountain in his country with the same name.

KH: What about Coolamon and Coolamine?

TT: They were changed in Campbell's time. Campbell called it Coolamine Plain and the other place here was called Coolamon - just to differentiate between the two.

MT: You will find a lot of people call Eucumbene the 'Eue-cum-bene.

KH: I agree with you about doing justice to the Aborigines and trying to pronounce it the way they did although it's hard to know whether they did pronounce it that way - like Jargungal - that's the way the white man first heard it.

TT: There was a hut they pulled down - should not have been pulled down - just up from the dam there - Trace's hut. They mapped it in 1944 as Traces - should have been Crace. I never changed it from Trace because people wouldn't know where they were on the map.

Bunty Morris used to come up with the Aborigines - he'd go out a week at a time - he reckoned the best tucker he had when he was with them was possum. He had a fair education and was a good poet too.

TT: .

KH: He wrote that long ballad about the Coolamine Ball, about four pages long.

TT: It would be written the time we had the ball ...

MT: How did you come by it, Klaus?

KH: I got a copy from a fellow called Joe Jennings. He has been doing the studies on the cave formations at Coolamine. Somebody must have given this to Joe and it was Joe also who followed up that business about the names on this stalagmite in Murray's Cave which was put there in 1904 and not seen again until 1968 and they included one of the Southwell girls as well as the old girls and some others. It turned out that there had been 2 or 3 severe drought periods when the cave was opened much further than usual, so they got in there - a hell of a long way in - in 1904 ...

MT: They're welcome to go in as far as I'm concerned ...

KH: Joe had been interested in getting a little bit of the history of the place and someone handed him this poem by Bunty Morris.

TT: I knew about it when I was a kid - about them going past it - we all took it to be true. They reckoned when the water was low they got past it.

MT: They should have been able to get in this year.

KH: It has to be a fairly long dry period - it's a bit more complicated than that.

MT: '68 wasn't that dry.

KH: Well, that's when the spelio's got right through.
The Sheedey brothers - their names were on the stalagmite.

TT: I think it's up in there where the fellow got the white fish.

MT: That wasn't the Murray Cave though was it?

TT: I don't know.

MT: I thought it was up round below the Blue Water Hole that he got the white fish.

KH: What about Nungar hut?

TT: I think it's still there - I didn't go to look - it was a tin hut - I don't think they've shifted it.

KH: Iron roof, iron walls ...

TT: ... board floor and a little bit of a chimney that used to smoke.

KH: Stockman's hut. Do you know who built it?

TT: Schofield built it.

MT: They were the lessees in 1943.

KH: Was that about when it was built - 1940?

TT: It would be after that - that would be later on - towards the 50s I think.

MT: It was built there in '46.

TT: There wasn't a hut on Nungar in '46. The Crowes built their hut there first and Schofields didn't have it then. It was built about the 1950s I reckon. They built good yards there too.

KH: In the 50s - that was pretty late.

TT: They came up a few years before that thing went up.

KH: What about Pedens?

TT: It's still there - the kangaroos and wombats ate all the floor boards out - good old camp, it's a pity. I don't know who built the first place, but I know who built that hut where it is now. Peden made it in the early days, but the hut was further over towards the cherry trees and they shifted it over there and brought parts of the hut that was left ... That hut was built by Litchfield - he had the lease.

TT:

TT: I ran the first bullock ride, that was ever run here at a Rodeo in Adaminaby. I rode from Tumut through here one day.

MT: It must have been 1931.

TT: It might have been the time that I talked about the ghost with his beard down there at the Gulf hut. I was in Adaminaby and I saw Bill Adams with horse and cart and some timber. I said 'where are you going Bill'. He said 'I'm going down to Pedens to build a hut for Litchfields'.

MT: It was after I met you Tom.

TT: Of course it was - might have been before that.

MT: '27 or '28 ...

TT: I think I'd gone home for the cattle and was bringing them back and saw him coming in.

KH: Which Litch field ...?

TT: Owen Litchfield.

KH: There were three brothers?

TT: Yes, Owen, Ted and Jim. I think it was Owen who had the lease.

KH: Did Owen also have Coolamine?

TT: Yes he bought it off Campbell and then sold it to Naughton.

KH: Old Bill Adams got around didn't he. He built Whites River too?

TT: Yes. There was a different Adams at Jindabyne.

This Adams here came from Adaminaby. He was Gus Adam's brother and Gus Adam's son, Edgar died and left all his property to him.

KH: There is another Bill Adams who had a dog sled team.

MT: That's a different one.

KH: He used to take provisions up to the Chalet.

TT: They were related. When he built that hut down there, he put a gate post in - the Circuit - at the gulf - I think the gate post is still up.

TT:

KH: Did we talk about Pocket's Hut?

TT: No, we didn't.

KH: Do you know anything about Pockets?

TT: ^[Clapperton] Clapton built that when the Australian States had the leases. They bought it off George McKeahnie. They built the hut and ^[Clapperton] Clapton was the manager - a weatherboard hut. The first hut was old Fell's hut - and put it up out of slabs. ^[Clapperton] Clapton had it quite nice, he had out buildings, a bathroom and shower and so on, garage ... He used to go up there in the summer.

MT: He used to drive his Rolls Royce up there and down to the Blue Water Hole.

TT: He'd drive it down there to catch fish. He was a great old sportsman, so was she ...

KH: All sorts of people have come through your place - the rich and the poor, the tall, the short ...

MT: Yes, we've had all kinds, but you don't see them anymore.

TT: You've got to be out in the bush to see people.

Right back in my grandfather's time and my father's there was always people coming to the houses - always had an overdose of people. One of the aunties lived in Sydney, at Xmas time there was always people coming all the time. In the early days down in Braidwood, all the people from round about - old grandfather had three stores in the gold digging times - they'd all come from miles around - some would stay if they'd come a long way. This went on right through the family - his and mine - its never changed.

KH: Do your children still do it?

TT: Yes, my sons still do it. If anybody comes in the family, he stops. When I was at Coolamine there were more than 20-22 every Sunday dinner. It was an outing for them, but hard work for mum and the girls.

TT: It was all taken in stride - eat half a bullock for dinner. Bake our own bread, plenty of vegetables and meat, flour, tea and sugar - never short.

KH: We get people dropping in.

MT: Where's your place?

KH: When we came to Australia we went to Orange - I've spent most of my time in the country, but it hasn't really been on the land. I've really been in Sydney and Canberra.

TT: It's getting that way now, you can't afford - you couldn't afford it unless you grew your own vegetables and had your own meat. I've seen 20 there for dinner and then someone would come along mustering cattle and as sure as one would come, he'd have a mate, might be three and then another two or three.

I remember getting a terrific hiding from dad once. Bill and I thought we'd go down to the dingo trap dad had set near the Murray Cave, he told us to go down and have a look, but he didn't tell us to take his rifle - he told us to leave the rifle. We took the rifle, because we thought he wouldn't be back until night - they found some cattle close and handy and were back before dinner - we weren't back - he saw the rifle gone and came out looking for us. We shot at anything we saw - I got a bloody hiding when I got home - Bill went bush as soon as he saw trouble coming. I ran in and put the gun up first, then ran away and hid behind an old toilet down in the paddock.

KH: I like that double seater toilet. I've seen another one.

MT: There used to be a lot - I can remember when I was a girl - that was the fashion - mum and the children would go I think.

TT: Pretty solid stuff.

KH: The one I saw the other day was out near Nine Mile diggings - all it was, was just two pots with a seat on each one sitting next to one another, with no walls left, just these two pots sitting in the middle

TT:

of nowhere. All the hut and everything is gone ...

TT: The roof fell in with the snow.

KH: There is a bit of a stove still there. Big cast iron stove.

MT: I know where that is.

KH: The stove when we were there was upside down - where the iron is thin, it has rotted away but all the solid stuff and the whole frame is still there. You could fix it up, but it would be a bit of work.

MT: When Mr Spencer built Spencers hut, he built a sod privy - he built it out of sods - the flowers used to bloom in the spring 'tra-la' out of these sods. He built an ordinary wooden seat and put a tube out of a car around for a seat. I lived at Spencer's hut for 12 months.

TT: The first hut they built was over the hill, they made it out of mud - bit of a creek over there. They started that mine there.

MT: Somebody told him to put river gravel on the floor of Spencer's hut when he built it, it was dreadful, it just kept digging in and in. I spent all the time that I was there digging it out and putting one down with dirt and cow manure - that's the way I kept the dirt down.

[McNamara]
TT: Jimmy Mack - cut the feathers out off a hawk - he used to trap and a hawk would fly and get his rabbit - he cut the feathers off his wings and let him go and said 'you try walking now like I have to'.

MT: He really was a lovely character.

TT: He was fair dinkum' all the time.

MT: He couldn't do anything, he was hopeless, he couldn't even tie a bag on his saddle - I don't know how he managed.

TT: He packed for the Kings mine when they were working on the Goobarragandra, he'd have one pack up one side and down the other - one was wearing out on the ground ...

MT: He still didn't do it right did he.

TT:

TT: I went over the tops there - get so many horses ready - they thought they grew on trees I think - we're going up to Kosie - Dick planned a ski trip over the top. I got these horses ready - nine horses, three pack horses and six riders. Bruce Cottrell came - he had his own pack horse and his own rider. I had to take the tucker for the lot - had to raise a week's tucker for nine and we finished up I had one loaf of bread the last day - it wasn't a bad working out for nine. That was back in the 40s. He was from the Main Road's Board ... that was Park trust then ... Lands Department fellows did a survey generally.

MT: Sir Garfield Barwick, Sam Clayton, Byles ...

TT: Secretary for Lands too, Guest.

KH: What's your address here?

MT: Box 10, Adaminaby.

KH: What's your phone number here?

MT: Haven't got any phone number now.

KH: Currango is 42388 ...

MT: 'Heatherbrae' is 42361 but you never catch us there now because we stay here.

TT: We might be out there too.

MT: In the summer time Tom might be there.

KH: I'd be interested in going on a bit of trip with you some time Tom, have a look at some of the old huts and maybe even Coolamine.

TT: There used to be another hut down Coolamine Creek - Southwells hut. He had a hut on Coolamine Creek. In the early days when Coolamine Creek was going down there, Campbell had the lease of that. All that down there about 20,000 acres - he took it in right down on to Blewitt's country - Koorabri - joined onto Coolamine Creek and run down to Broken Cart, ran right out to Broken Cart down to Happy-go-lucky Break. Came up the Broken Cart road, was fenced in, crossed over at Wombat Ground, ran down Coolamine Creek on this side, out from the road. Had a wire fence - round up Gloria - Gloria wasn't fenced. Campbells let it go because it was too expensive to look after it - losing stock - stock routes and things coming through - never off their backs - wasn't much good the grass, wasn't worth having. Southwell had this hut down, he must have had there when they used to put cattle down in the summer to look after it. I don't think he did any gold mining there, he might have done. I knew where his hut was, I went down past it. I could find it - it's not far down from the letter-box

TT:

and how I knew it was Southwell's hut because it was the Franklins who told me - old Franklin was still alive. I used to ask him, and they'd tell me that was George Franklins hut. It was all ring-barked in there.

MT: Does that hut still exist where that old rabbit trapper used to stay at Yarrangobilly, is that on your list?

TT: I suppose it does.

MT: What did they call it Tom, it was down behind the old race course?

TT: It was there after he went that trapper, it must be still there. Is that old bus still up the creek? Pigram and this other fellow, they had an old bus there, we used to have that for a camp - up at ^{Bucket Flat} Cuckatoo(?) - walk from Long Plain, go straight down to it. Where that fire trail comes out, you turn around to go up - you don't go past that hut ...

MT: Long Flat hut is still there too ...

TT: ... you go in that way and go to Long Flat that way too. That hut is the first crossing on the Yarrangobilly, just this side when you come up above the old race course. It was a weatherboard hut, I don't know whether it had two rooms or one. Who built that one - Lindley or somebody wasn't it?

MT: It must have been?

TT: Who had the race course in there?

MT: I don't know who had it. Lindley had that country before the lease was sold.

KH: I've got Lindley's hut on my list.

TT: That's another one - that's at Long Flat and Lindley's hut - that other one is down at Boonoo - that's private property there.

KH: I'm mainly interested in the ones in the Park at this stage, but I'm also interested in the more outstanding ones that are outside the Park - like slab ones - ones that have potential characteristics or historical value.

TT: I'll tell you where there was ... I think they knocked it down, I haven't seen it there anyhow - it was down the Yellow Bog Road - the Snowy had a bit of a tin hut down there and when I first went there there were old slab - one room slab hut.

KH: I have two here - Yellow Bog No. 1 and Yellow Bog No. 2. I haven't seen either of them - one is aluminium, one is iron and fibro.

TT: The Snowy built those. The old slab hut used to be at the Yellow Bog. Real old it was. When I first went over there one August, I went down there, I camped at the Toolong hut - it hadn't been burnt down then, it was a big old slab hut, damn good camp, always clear.

TT:

MT: That was a good old hut.

TT: It got burnt - kids burnt it - they set fire to ... hut and nearly burnt it out too.

KH: Bradleys?

TT: No, Bradleys hut is a tin hut - they burnt that Toolong hut down - that belonged to Rial. That Rial who was there, sold out and is living over here on the coast - Percy Rial - Harold Rial.

KH: I've got Harold Rial, but he supposed to live at Tumbarumba.

TT: He sold his property there and is living over on the coast, last time I saw him - retired.

KH: Near Bateman's Bay or somewhere?

TT: Somewhere down there - Moruya ...

KH: I was over at Tumbarumba about May and a lady there told me he was living in Tumbarumba.

TT: He might have come back.

KH: He'd been overseas or something.

TT: He could have been. He was living over there and he might have come back because he's getting an old man now and he might have some of his family round here.

KH: They were the ones who had Farm Ridge - Rials?

TT: His father had it before Harold. Harold had it when I was there, he used to have a lease.

KH: Had Farm Ridge?

TT: Yes.

KH: But Farm Ridge is a very old place.

TT: No, he had Toolong.

KH: I have two Toolongs here.

TT: Brian used to be up at Farm Ridge in the very early days, his father, Harold's father.

KH: I was under the impression that Farm Ridge hadn't been in use for a very long time, it was in its hey day at the turn of the century, 1910s and 20s.

TT: It used to be a big place - 6-12 men working for Rial. They grew tomatoes there and they left them there, they rotted away, the ones they left on the vine. The seed grew up and they had tomatoes the next year. The sun shone in there in the right place and less frost there at the high altitude. I've left here and gone out there, there was frost here a week before there was any out there.

TT

KH: Was the hut still quite substantial when you went there first?

TT: No, it was deteriorated. The big old house had had it. It was starting to fall down - part of the verandah had fallen down on the hut - a weatherboard place. That weatherboard place had been built since Rial had it I think. Old back ovens and things - ranges ...

KH: Had a beautiful chimney - that's all collapsed now.

TT: Yes. Part of that weatherboard place has fallen down, its a shame to see it going to bits. The last one who had it there was Amos Hedger. He had it for about seven years. It was colourful - the world's filled with colour. It ... 20 years I reckon to put on a thinkin' cap - world exists at all. In fact I'm sure before 20 years are out, there'll be an atomic war and a hell of a turn up, it will be better afterwards - the ones who are left. What they might be doing then is fighting the fall-out - not worrying about sheep and cattle.

KH: But the Rials must have lived there all year round because they had a telephone line in there.

TT: That telephone line ran into the Grey Mare mine. They hooked on to the one line.

MT: They used to be all party line up at Long Plain. We all had telephones. When they put the power line on we had to do away with our telephone because people who were parallelling the telephone lines - used to go to Coolamine.

TT: They had a job to keep it up in the winter time - it ran right through the Grey Mare mine ...

MT: We ... at Currango because we went under the power line ...

TT: The posts were still in there, across there they had posts in for skiing back to Adaminaby - short cuts.

KH: There's still one or two up near Doubtful Gap.

TT: Doubtful Gap - that's the telephone pole.

KH: Yes to Farm Ridge.

TT: They also had from the Grey Mare mine, poles stuck in for skiing back in the winter. I can remember they came out on Strawberry Hill and left the Bogong on the northern side, they came around the back and down near the Tin Hut we were talking about. They might have shot down the Gungarlin, in that way - never came to Adaminaby - go to Jindabyne.

MT: When did you discover Coolamine Klaus?

KH: I only went there for the first time last October. I've read about it and heard about.

MT: Were you the one who started the working on it or were they working on it then?

TT:

KH: It was the Garran Venturers that came across it some time before that and there was another guy - Hut's Maintenance officer and they were in the process of getting something going when I came in.

TT: I wonder what happened to Blewitt's hut.

MT: They got rid of that tin from around it and put slabs back where the tin was or not?

KH: No. I think that job is possibly too big.

TT: They ought to take the slabs out of that other old place.

MT: That's the easiest thing in the world to build slab huts.

KH: Yes, but we have to get permission from the Park...

MT: Aren't there slabs left?

KH: No, the slabs that are there are very rotten. The other old house - they could be modified - there aren't many left, they're going up the chimney very rapidly. The old hut to the east is going very quickly. What we are involved with, we not only have to renew the slabs, we also have to renew the piers underneath.

MT: Tom and I didn't do that part.

TT: ... you'd go up the hill there and drag a big log down with a jeep and put some stones under to keep it up level, then stick your slabs into that and you'd have it going in no time - a bit of sawn timber.

MT: They must have burnt all those slabs out of the old places ... must have carted them away for decoration.

KH: I don't think so.

MT: I wouldn't be surprised - well it's possible. I'd like to go and look at a couple of places.

TT: Look, there's enough slabs there, this bloody red-tape business - you get over that - pull the other down, put this up, you'd have ...

KH: If you rationalised it ...

MT: Have you looked at those slabs on the verandahs?

KH: The verandah ones are fairly narrow and the ones on the walls were those beautiful ones.

MT: I would have given the world, when Bob Legget said to me ... vacate that and build myself a slab house, I would truly have loved to have done it. Wouldn't it have been beautiful.

KH: The problem we seem to have, even if we get all the resources together and beat the red tape and fix up Coolamine, it still doesn't guarantee the future of Coolamine, given the fact that it is so isolated up there and we don't have the resources to put in a caretaker. We put a bush saw in for instance to encourage people to go and get their own wood in the bush - the bush saw went within a week.

TT:

KH: Other huts that we have got in the rest of the Park that are off the beaten track, you can only walk into or ride a push bike, or ski too, we put axes in and shovels, buckets, first aid kits, extra food and it stays - people look after it. But Coolamine and a few of those others right on the road ... you're really pushing ...

TT: A bloke put a fridge in at Murray Creek hut and they took it.

KH: The fellow who was looking after Oldfields, Mike Gore from the University - he took some squatters chairs in there about 10 years ago, they're gone now. At Boobee's hut below Far Bald Mountain, they went to all the trouble to get a slow combustion stove, so they wouldn't cut down so much timber around the park, put it on a trailer and dragged the trailer by hand, along the Happy Jacks Road - 2-3 kilometres - took them all day, 8 or 9 of them, to get this slow combustion stove installed and then we heard last summer, apparently somebody had driven right to the front door with a landrover and a trailer and had knocked it off.

TT: The Boobee hut is a tin hut is it?

KH: The old ones gone - it was burnt down at some stage.

TT: The tin hut?

KH: No, the one that was next to the tin hut.

TT: The Boobee hut, of course it is - I stayed there one winter mining down there. How that got burnt down ...

TOM & MOLLY TAYLOR

CASSETTE FOUR - SIDE ONE

TT: ... it was a good hut too. That tin hut was a salt shed.

MT: I didn't know whether you wanted an original version - looking into this business of Coolamine or not.

TT: I knew where all the huts are ...

KH: What we usually find is that people are out in the bush looking - and then they discover a place that is fairly delapidated and think it's terrible going to rack and ruin and so they want to do something and that was the case with Garran Venturers. They heard about the Kosciusko Huts Association, we liaise with the Park and we arrange with them to start to do some work on it. We are now in the process of taking it a bit further to see whether the Park will come to the party to possibly replace some of the slabs and do a proper job.

MT: I don't think they would have anybody who could cut them for a start.

KH: We are prepared to do it. Some of our blokes have got wedges - some of us are very keen about making slabs.

TT: You don't have to adze them if you get good trees - they split out as neat as anything. You can split them out pretty good if you pick a good tree. I know where there is plenty of ash up there. There are trees that fall over every year - what you take out for a few slabs, they wouldn't miss them. This is all too silly - you can't cut this and can't cut that, they're growing up by the millions, getting killed by bush fire. If you don't use a thing, God will destroy it on you sooner or later. I know a place you could find trees, I know how to split them.

KH: If the worse came to the worse we would have to go to a saw mill.

TT: A saw mill would cost you a fortune.

MT: You'd go outside, you wouldn't take it from the park at all - take it from the forest.

TT: There's enough trees falling in the Snowy to build a house.

MT: You want to go out where Ted is, he's just knocking them down, clearing the country. He's clearing for "Timberlands". He's always collecting little animals. I don't know how many he's brought back and let go in Tumut.

TT: Until they start putting out the 1080 - away goes all the possums.

KH: Can we go back to Boobees - the old hut was a weatherboard hut, lined with ruberoid was it?

TT: Yes.

KH: Why is that called ruberoid?

MT: I think because it's rubber.

TT: It's terrible stuff to put on because it tears at the fall of a hat. When it was cold you couldn't roll it out, a hot day and the tar would come

TT:

out on your fingers.

MT: It was terribly hot in the summer time but it was a very good hut, Spencers hut.

TT: It made it airtight.

KH: Spencers was lined with it too?

MT: Spencers is made of it.

KH: Outside and in?

MT: No, inside.

KH: Boobees had iron roof, wooden floor, 2 rooms, verandah along one side?

TT: Yes, and when the wind would blow it would move like an old boat in a rough sea - you'd hear squeaking and going on and thought it would fall over.

MT: What did they call Boot's hut?

TT: Tin hut, under Arsenic Ridge, just over the top.

MT: It always seemed to be down in the gully to me, didn't seem to be up on anything.

TT: Its on a creek, of course it's in a gully.

KH: Which hut - Boots.

TT: Boots hut - Len Boots used to live there and look after sheep, recent years.

KH: Spencers Creek, you mean Moulds?

TT: No, it's a good hut, it's still there.

KH: Just off the Happy Jacks Plain Road? You call that Boots?

TT: Yes - the tin hut they call it.

KH: A dirt floor, pretty rough.

TT: It shouldn't have been.

MT: Why we call it Boots is because this fellow used to stay there while he was looking after sheep

TT: ... it used to have boards in the floor. Boots used to live there for the summer with Glynn. Looking after Montague's sheep.

KH: Is it under the power line? Not Brooks?

TT: No, Brooks is out on the Plain under here.

KH: Not Happys?

TT: Yes, Happy Jacks hut.

KH: Happys hut is weatherboard.

TT: Yes, its weatherboard with a tin roof on it.

KH: Did you mention Montagues?

TT: Yes, Montague and Waite. The old bloke who used to look after that is Len Boots and he's at Blakeney Lodge in Tumut. He's older than I am and he knows all about the old gold fields and all these old hands and I think

TT:

he's got his faculties about him, he's really worth meeting.

MT: He lost his wife about a fortnight ago.

KH: He had something to do with Happys did he?

TT: He used to come there with Waite and Montague.

MT: Only during the years of ...

TT: He was there before the Park ever started.

KH: Happys seems to be quite an old hut?

TT: Yes, it's a fairly old hut, it was there before Boots started up there.

MT: We were just calling it Boots hut ...

TT: Len Boots was there for about 5 or 6 years I think.

KH: Why is it called Happys? ... because of the Happy Jack Plain?

MT: Yes. It's where Happy Jack the miner lived.

TT: Brooks hut has a board floor hasn't it?

KH: Yes.

TT: They got that there after the leases came out. They were there 2 or 3 years before they built that hut.

KH: Brooks is about early 50s.

TT: Yes, somewhere between 40s and 50s.

KH: Happys - could it have been called Montagues?

TT: Yes.

KH: ... and built by Montague maybe?

TT: Could have been because Montague had the lease long before the leases came out in '44.

KH: I know it was there in '35.

TT: Some used to call it the Tin hut in the early days, they might have modified it and made ... there was a bit of a tin shack along side of it.

KH: Yes, a wood shed. It was also called the Dip. Does that ring a bell?

TT: No, I don't know anything about a Dip. They did have a dip there didn't they? It was a sheep dip out the back on the hill there somewhere.

KH: That could be.

TT: There were big yards over the back, they could have had a dip in those yards, I don't remember.

KH: It's just off the ridge, off part of

TT: Yes, just off the road it is. Down the gully and over the creek ...

KH: On the edge of the Happy Jacks Plain?

TT: Yes, right at the head of the creek. Used to fish right up near the hut, hundreds of fish there - they were there for years - can't see any now.

KH: Boots used it for a while did he?

MT: He looked after Montagues and Waites' sheep, he used to be their stockman. They would go down to the Riverina for the winter and come back up for the summer.

TT:

TT: He drove the sheep up and back again and he'd come about - I don't know what sheep he had there - 11,000 he came up with. They'd cut his stocking capacity down on the block when the new leases came out and he still sent the same amount of sheep up. I had to go and count 1500 out of them. It's a funny thing in the count out. Peter first met them at the fork, he said 'want you to go out and count those sheep'. He had a crack at them at Rules Point but he lost count and he wasn't sure. I had to go out and count them and make sure they were here - not 5 sheep over the count - on my own - because they're all hostile to this stocking business on the mountain, especially them - they were up against it. Boots was a good counter, very good. I put so many stones in my pocket, according to the amount of sheep that was on the permit - as I'd get a hundred I'd put a stone in the other pocket, that's how I used to keep tally. We finished up we were two short, the difference in the count - 11,000 without a break is a fair count - I was only two sheep out - I wasn't worried about two sheep. Anyhow I had to take 1500 out of them - Mick leased them some ground there on the Eucumbene and they left them there for the summer. My boss told me to be sure you see them counted in when they're ready to go. I had to count them further up the road when they left to make sure they didn't take any sheep in they didn't have to take. I counted them and there was two sheep short in the count that I had counted out down in Providence. The funny thing was there was still two sheep in between our count. I told him he was two sheep short, and he said 'one broke its leg and we killed it for mutton and killed one for the dog'. I never forgot that - it made the count right.

MT: It wasn't an easy job when it first started.

TT: I used to try and help everybody and put up with the back lashing.

KH: You were sympathetic to them ... doing a job for somebody who you weren't sympathetic to.

TT: Getting back slaps and that sort of thing, it was a bit hard to take. I used to say just take them and say nothing - they come out on the right side. Everybody was friendly and I was friendly with everybody and that's the way to go through your life. There's no need for that stand over stuff, I got on better the other way. You finish up with war and jealousy and you finish up on your head in the end.

KH: With Boobee, when do you think it was built?

TT: I think Boobee hut might have been built in the very early days, not for sheep - Bill Byatt worked there for years down mining with a hydraulic thing, down in the front - down in the creek. He was there a couple of winters for 2 or 3 years and I think he might have built the hut that got burnt down. It was really a miner's hut. A lot of miner's huts were put up by miners and then the squatter came along when there wasn't any mining done and took it over

TT:

like he did down at the Tin mines - they tried to put old Charlie out.

KH: Boobees you think was built by miners?

TT: I think it must have been because Byatt must have had a hut somewhere to live in for the winter and that would be a good hut he'd put up. He might have brought it from Kiandra and rigged it there anywhere.

KH: And then the stockmen built the tin one?

TT: Yes - I don't think he put the Tin hut up because it had no chimney in it. I think that hut was put up by the miners to mine the place for gold.

KH: The old Boobee hut?

TT: Yes. Old Jack Cheney had the lease of it, I don't think he built it. Dick Haggard, the bloke who looked after it for Cheney is still alive. He was up there, living in Boobee hut for the summer. He was up there in 1932-33 when I was mining there. The hut was old then - he might know when it was built, I don't think Jack Cheney built it.

KH: When do you reckon it was burnt down?

TT: I'd have it in the old field books when it was burnt down - in the 60s.

KH: As late as that.

TT: Yes. I came there the day it was real hot and burning. I was digging in the ashes.

MT: Who were you with?

TT: Jacky Quinn.

That's how it was burnt down - the top was off the chimney, he'd light the fire with a lot of old newspapers and things - would blow up and blow back and light the ruberoid stuff up on the top.

KH: You reckon if Boobees was a miner's hut, then possibly Montagues or Happy Jacks could perhaps also be a miner's hut?

TT: I don't think so, that's a stockman's hut. Bill Byatt must have had a hut to stay the winter in. There is no skeleton of a hut anywhere else. They cut races in there and put a big dam on top of the hill, must have held 10 or 20 acres of water - dead flat. I had that race line working when I was there.

KH: At Mackays?

TT: Yes.

KH: Did you build that race line?

TT: No, it was in - I cleaned it out. I worked down Digger's Creek opposite Boobees hut - between Mackays and Boobees. There's good gold in there. The top end of that creek, they took 2,000 or 3,000 quid off the side and then shut it down.

TT:

KH: Where did you mine it?

TT: I started just above where Byatt knocked off.

KH: Did you get any gold?

TT: Yes. When I was working there I was on good gold if I had enough pipe line in for the winter and the first three days I put in 480' of pipes and the dredge, everything in ready to go and the hydraulic jet and we worked out a fair bit. I had 3 ounces in two weeks of gold. It snowed over during the winter - the race - we couldn't dig her out - too much snow - took us a week to dig it out. I came into Adaminaby and found my father was sick and I had to come back.

KH: How long did you work on that?

TT: Three weeks altogether - I got another 2-3 ounces of gold out of it. I tried down Broken Cart, it was no good down there.

MT: How would you get in there - you can't go up the Tolbar, how would you go in? You'd have to go in from Jimmy Pattinsons.

KH: You can go in the Happy Jacks Road if you get a key to the gate.

MT: You're coming in from the other end - across Eucumbene Dam - coming from Round Mountain.

KH: We can come in from Providence Flat if the lake's low. The bridge is still there I believe.

TT: There used to be a good old hut up at the Broken Dam, is that still there?

KH: Yes, we are going to do some work on Broken Dam.

TT: There was another one underneath, they called it Nixon's hut, it was under Tabletop - it fell down. It was weatherboard, all rotted I suppose.

KH: The roof is still there and some of the piers. The roof is sort of intact and has just fallen down onto the floor.

TT: Is the floor any good?

KH: Not really.

TT: Isn't that a shame, that's been down for years, it was a damn good hut there.

KH: The iron keeps the snow and water off the floor.

TT: Nixon used to take his sheep up there in the summer. Jack Waugh had this side - the Broken Dam hut.

KH: Tom Yan used to work there I think. Jack Waugh from Hay.

TT: Jack Waugh had it back in the 30s.

KH: Apparently that hut was shifted then.

TT: I don't know how the hut came to be there - it might have been a miner's hut.

KH: According to Tom it used to be at Nine-Mile and they latched three poles

TT:

under it and he went out there with his bullock team and dragged it across country.

TT: That could be. The old Nine Mile hut was still there on the side of the Dam. It was all eroded away on the side of it where the race came down - it must have fallen down.

KH: It's fallen down now - we took some of the timber from it.

TT: It was liveable when I first went there - you could go in.

KH: Near that little dam on a steep slope. We have used some of the timber from it to fix up Four Mile.

TT: On that hill there, there's fifteen acres of ground taken out in the tunnel - the tunnel fell in - there was good gold in there. It paid about 3 ounces to a set of timber and a set of timber was about 3' wide and 6' long. They tried to build on this side, to get into the solid rock so they could hold the sand up - never got in.

KH: All the huts at Elaine are down now - all the stacks of timber are still there the Alpine ash slab is about 4' long.

TT: They would be rotted wouldn't they?

KH: No, only the tops. They were six foot high those stacks and the weather has only got into the top foot or so. Underneath they are very good and there is still a lot of old skips and rails and bits of machinery - the steam engine is still there.

TT: It would be gone to bits - is it in a shed or something?

KH: No, it's out in the open - all the fittings are brass.

TT: It's a portable thing isn't it?

KH: One you could tow along if you had to - very small little job.

TT: Is it steam or oil?

KH: Steam engine. They did have some other machinery in there afterwards. They had a steam engine originally and then replaced it with an engine.

MT: Getting those things in those places wasn't easy in those days.

TT: I was there when they were working it. Dicky Cook, Bill Hughes ... Bob was in it too.

KH: Bob was the manager I thought. Somebody told me Gavin ... Cec He_therington ...

TT: Cec it would be - his old man it would have been.

KH: A fellow called Harry Burgess who was the cleaner at the Forestry Department and it was talking to him that started me off on a lot of this about four years ago.

TT: Anthony Hordens' was backing them up for a while. They couldn't keep the drills up, the rock was too hard. Bill told me that that rock they were taking out had gone four weights to the ton - the stuff they were digging out -

TT:

four weights of gold. When the volcano blew up there and burnt all this mud rock, it melted the gold out and all that country rock, that slate was carrying gold. In Canada they are working two weight and they're getting nine ton a year.

KH: They couldn't get the gold out of that rock?

TT: Of course they could, as easily as they did in Canada.

KH: They didn't.

TT: They reckon it wasn't rich enough. But now its rich enough at four weights. There are millions of tons of it. If they got that tunnel and got into the alluvial underneath they'd get to the gold. Most of the gold in America at Eldorado and these places come out of a volcano - throwing out alluvial gold in the creeks and it washed away down the rivers and so forth. Most of the gold they got from that Cumberland work - the tube itself. They opened up the tubes - I had the books on it. A stupid bloke burnt them all - had a kerosene tin - 'Popular Mechanics' I think it was - all this was in it.

KH: What were the books about?

TT: On this gold in America - working these tubes. They work the volcano tubes and they got more gold out of the volcano itself, but it was forced back in the sheaf rock - they got pure gold.

KH: They reckon a lot of the gold is locked up in the dam walls, with all the sand they took from New Chum and other places.

TT: There's a lot of gold in the sand. A Frenchman is supposed to have got \$60,000 out of that. Underneath the washer there, I was there looking because I was a ranger at the time - I used to inspect it and underneath the washer there's an oval thing - heavy material had fallen in it. These rackers went up, racking the sand up and putting it over into the trucks - all the heavy stuff fell down into that.

MT: There were two of them. One of the first caretakers in the dam wall - he knew them. Two Frenchmen - one used to work day shift and one used to work at night. They didn't care - when they put it up first, they got a quote on it and he said there was enough gold in it to have paid for the Scheme. The Snowy hushed it up and they wouldn't let him do it.

TT: This is silly rot - they should have been working that mine.

MT: They reckon the men would have gone gold-rush mad.

KH: These two Frenchmen were on to it.

TT: New Chum went up - they call it the ring rock - it was a prehistoric riverbed. God knows where it started and where it came from - its been running for millions of years and thousands of miles. It came down from the Tabletop and round there. The earth had cut in two and shifted - the capping was

TT:

bounced off and harden anything else around it like cement. When it was cut off at the end there, would come across the plain, 200-300 feet high, ran away down the Eucumbene and fed the gold into all down there. It went into the hill again and went underneath again and came out the Six Mile this side - just below the Six Mile diggings - worked out like a ploughed paddock - $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide $\frac{1}{2}$ mile long, then it went under the hill again, came out this side at Eleven Mile and they worked it there the same - then it went down where Murrumbidgee cut through and came on the other side of the Murrumbidgee ... the Yorkie gold was getting up there, probably been a part of it.

In the deep country it didn't have much gold, where it was shallow it was going 18 ounces to a dish of dirt - that was a prospecting dish. Where they worked that sand around the plain, the rim rock was up above it, it slowed and came down there, They touched a bit of the rim rock above where they were getting the sand. There was no trouble getting 60,000 out of it. At "All Nations" claim there was 3 or 4 killed in that - it fell away from the sand and was 40' deep, the water race along the back got down there and cut a well.

KH: This was back in the 1880s.

TT: Yes, there was Chinamen and whites all working and they got three - they only cleaned a bit of the tail race out of it, they never cleaned the bottom up. They hadn't got it into the tail race off the bottom where the gold was. They only got 17 ounces out of the race. Of course I couldn't do it when I was mining because we didn't have the dozers or the money to get them going. What they could open up around there in a week with a dozer, it would keep 1,000 people prospecting. You just follow that ring ... round and find where she went over, sand in there, scoop her out so the water would drain out of it and the creek that runs up ... the bottoms all been worked and when they got up with a tap they couldn't drain it. George Hancock went up there to put in a plunger pump - just working with a little waterwheel and get in there with a shovel and dig a bit of dirt out of the bottom - worked there for three years and took 700 quid out of it. He had a bit of an old hut up there made out of sticks - old Cornish miner he was. He got a 12 ounce nugget there - it was a bit of dirt not as big as this house.

I was short of meat one day and I turned the water off quick - I was going to go up the point and get some meat off Mrs Cook - I turned it off quick - fish bucking everywhere. The water ran away quick on the shallow bottom - dropped the bag in and turned the water down - I picked up eleven fish and the mud was coming away from soil this deep. They were up there for the worms.

This is what people can't get into their heads - they don't know what pollution is. They think they see muddy water they've got pollution. If you've

TT:

muddy water from pure loams and no humus in it, you've got pure water when it sets. The clear water you have got humus in it from grass and barks and stuff.

...

TT: We had a fellow up there - talking about mining - we had a bloke up there - Gavin - called him the ^[Radium] Uranium King. He knew all about uranium in this country before they ever found out about it. It was back in the 1930s.

MT: He was there before we were married.

TT: He was a poet - George Thomas Gavin. He went looking for uranium - 1928 - he had holes dug all over - we call it Radium Hill.

KH: Had uranium been identified then?

TT: He worked for us in 1913, he was only a young fellow. He and Tom Cohen was on the job, he went down fishing with Tom Cohen's rod - he lost the tip out of it. Coming back he saw the glow from the ground - he brought a bit of the rock back - anyhow he went to the First World War over in France - found out something about this pitch blend, uranium, x-rays and so on. He thought that's the thing I've seen coming up from the river. Nobody in the Mines Department knew anything about it - he can talk about it right up to the present time - what they've got now and found out - the colour of it and what it did. He reckons the fluorescent glow that was coming out of that ground - the water must have got down from the storm, uranium deposit underneath dissolved it - gas coming off it - helium gas. He kept looking for this - he dug all over the hill ...

CASSETTE FOUR - SIDE TWO

TT: ... in the War Museum, he made up that.

MT: He went to the war and he thought everybody else owed him a living afterwards.

TT: He was like that before he went to the war.

MT: I didn't know him before the war but I knew him in 1934.

TT: He lived at Coolac - his people lived out from Gundagai. He went back there to see his old man, his mother dead.

KH: Do you know of any blokes like Charlie Carter who recorded some of their thoughts and philosophy on life, wrote any poetry, especially amongst the stockmen.

TT: Buntly Morris was always doing that. I knew Buntly Morris well - I liked him. Last time I saw him I was going down with a mob of sheep and he followed me from the house at Springfield where he lived - not Springfield, Spring Flat - and he walked with his sheep right down to Bowlers Flat - had tea with me at

TT:

Bowlers Flat and came back again. He used to work for us when he was a young man in 1913. Then he came back in 1916-17 and worked again. He used to take contracts digging out seedlings. He was good with kids, a good fellow, a good meaning bloke.

MT: Don't forget people who were kind to you when you were a child do you - you're interested in them ...

TT: He'd make up anything - he made a poem - he was driving his sulky one day - he got out, it was cold - I was only a kid and wanted to show off - trotting along, it was snowing - Mrs Cook, she had a pub at Rules Point - I turned it over - I fell and busted my hip. Hal Hitchcock came along a bit afterwards - took us back to the hut and we stayed there for three days - it was snowing and we couldn't get out because I couldn't walk.

KH: It seems as though a lot of the history of the mountains is mainly in people's heads and once the people die its gone unless someone comes along and records it.

I thought there might be some who used to keep a bit of a diary ...

MT: I don't know anyone - I was always sorry that I never kept a diary.

TT: Buntys brother has only been dead a few years - great singer he was Billy - should have been trained, never heard a better voice since. He was married twice - some of his family would only be young, after his last wife. I forgotten his first wife's name - she was a good pianist, she would play and they'd both sing, it was lovely, I could listen to them all night.

KH: Some of them must have had some sort of documents that they kept.

MT: You would think they would have but they never ever did.

KH: ... or old maps ...

TT: Things that you wouldn't want 20-30 years ago ...

MT: We went through some old photographs, it was no good us keeping them, we didn't know who some of them were - friends of mothers or fathers and we were the only ones left now and we were going through these things and decided we didn't want them any longer so we gave them to the man next door who had an incinerator - I believe it upset him greatly. If it had anybody's name on it we would have kept it and traced it back, but we didn't even know who they were.

KH: All the old photos I've collected from different people - I take them all to the National Library and try to find out who it is and when they were taken, they make a negative and then prints ...

If I write a book on the history of the huts - its going to be history, written according to the people I went to talk to, or the documents I was able to find - round the corner might be something new.

MT: The only other people other than us - the real old timers - was old

TT:

granny Harris - Irene's mother-in-law and then there's old Mr Hoad. He was interested in those sort of things. Still there was no records kept.

TT: You get philosophers and young fellows who want to tell a yarn about something that suits his own views ...

MT: Mrs Cottrell was interesting ...

KH: She lives at Tumut. Mrs Cottrell used to live at Talbingo.

TT: She would have a lot of information about Tumut.

KH: Also Mrs Prosser?

MT: Yes, she lived at Rules Point. She could give you a lot since she lived in the mountains, of the different ones that she knew and Mrs Quinn.

KH: Ivy Quinn has been very helpful. I went to see Ted when ...

TT: She has been sick, she had a stroke.

KH: I saw her since, she came to Canberra to her granddaughter and I just returning some of her photos too - she lent me about a dozen photographs of old Kiandra ...

MT: Did she tell you about the girl Meadham(?) she's in the caravan park - I don't whether she still stays in the caravan park or lives in her own house. Her father lived at Currango for many years and Mrs Wilson - her mother.

KH: Mrs Wilson died just recently didn't she?

MT: Yes, a few years now.

KH: But her oldest son is in Tumut - I've got him down.

TT: Is he still teaching - Roy?

KH: I think he's retired.

TT: Zelma is still alive isn't she?

MT: The girls are all alive.

TT: The old man would be fairly old.

MT: He knows a lot, he was an interesting man - Mrs Quinn was very interested.

TT: He knew all those old people around Kiandra.

MT: Mrs Quinn can tell you all about the Lobbs Hole area, all that mining and that sort of thing down there.

KH: It sounded as though Ivy was better on the Lobbs Hole stuff, but I'm not so interested in that, I can't spread too widely.

MT: There's not much left there now anyway.

TT: Lobbs Hole was a centre where they went to in the winter time and could live there all the year without been snowed right up. A lot of them at Kiandra went down there for the winter - get away from the deep snow and the cold and so forth - then when the copper mine was working there they came for that. The Thomas' originated down there, the old fellow is in Lobbs Hole. There was Jim, Jack and Mark - I knew most of the old blokes but some of them

TT:

died when I was a kid.

KH: I heard about the Quinns and I went to see them when Ted was still alive. I got a fair bit of information but always not enough but by the time I got there again he died and she wasn't very well. When I went to see her the other day, when she was in Canberra, it was hard to get her going.

MT: Edna only came into her life a lot later ...

TT: Mrs Prosser and Mrs Quinn are good friends ...

MT: Yes, they are very good friends, but Ivy only got to know Edna when Edna came from Talbingo to live at Yarrangobilly.

TT: Ivy is about the same age as me, she can't be much older. I remember Ivy when she was back at Rules Point.

MT: Ivy is about 76 or 77 years.

TT: She wouldn't be much older than me, I knew her when she was working at Rules Point with Mrs Cook and she was only a girl - that would be 1918-19.

MT: We are the last of them left in the mountains now.

TT: I never forgot the time I fell off a horse - I was sitting in the kitchen - sick - I had concussion.

(Looking at old photographs)

TT: Julius went over to New Guinea and never came back, he died over there looking for gold. He opened up the copper mine down at the Ravine on the Yarrangobilly first.

KH: Julius who?

TT: Julius Forstrum. He started down there with another German bloke. They found the copper and the German sold out and got 30,000 and Julius sunk his back in it again.

When I went to Kiandra first there was a fellow named Irwin - George Irwin had one pub, he had a store too. In the early days a fellow named Wesselman had the pub and the guy working the claim down in Bullocks Head Creek run out of wood and he tunnelled right up under the snow right up to the Wesselman wood heap - he was taking all the wood from the back of his wood heap. He would have perished to death if he hadn't got the wood from the back of the hut.

MT: The 1946 snow was about the nearest one to those days when they used to be able to look down the chimney of the other fellow's hut.

KH: There must have been some big snow years...?

TT: 1909 was a big winter.

MT: 50s was a big year too.

KH: There's that story about how they found - some cattle were missing in the winter - in the summer they found them hanging in the trees 20' above the ground.

TT:

TT: That was true too. It was on Bullock Hill. They walked over the snow and broke through when they got to the top of trees - it was loose - it was quite true.

MT: Drifts will do that.

TT: George Day fell through the top of a tree up on the range there on Mt Tate. We rode along the timber line and he rode over the top of a tree - it was loose and he didn't know - he broke down through it. He went straight down through it and broke both the ends off his skis - back to front. The fellows with him carried him back to the Chalet with a broken rib or two. If he had hit a limb it would have killed him - he went down 50'.

MT: One year in the 50s when the Snow was on, our two boys had been home for the weekend and they were meeting up with two more boys from Yarrangobilly. Clive only had a utility, Teddy had an old Landrover, and then the other chap had a big utility. Teddy went in the lead, they all met up together at Rules Point on the road, they put Clive in the middle and Graham came behind. They got themselves through - they didn't think anybody would come behind you see, but unfortunately people did come behind them. When they got to Kiandra there was a chap coming along in a little motor car. He said he was going to Tumut - he couldn't turn round. They said that's the least of your troubles, so the boys got out and picked up the little car and said 'now you get that way and don't attempt to go that way' and they sent him on his way. They were the last ones through. A lot of people attempted to, some boys were holed up in a hut which is now gone ... somebody came along, they wanted him to go and he said he was going to stay with his motor car. It ended up that Jimmy had to go out with him the next day - this old bloke wouldn't ski. He said 'well you have to leave your car' - it's a wonder he wasn't dead - so he stood on behind Jim and Jim skied him all the way back - somewhere out Kiandra Creek he was - that's as far as he got. That must have been 1953.

I know Don and Clive Bush working for the DMR, they were starting to put this road in through here - they were somewhere up here - they had their camp up there - it was snowing and of course, they were two boys who knew how to manage in the bush. They got out and packed snow around their tent and made it waterproof-airtight. They put up with a couple of nights in that and no DMR men came out, they'd had it - there was a bulldozer there - he got up on this thing - she had enough petrol in her and away they went.

TT: When they first started the Three-mile dam, they rigged their tents where they were putting the road in - they put one onto the other - side by side. I came up to have a look one day, I went up to the cook house and I said 'if it snows those fellows are going to be under the snow in the morning, the tents will break down on them - the cookhouse won't hold them or even look

TT:

like holding them - they were on shifts. Anyway they started shifting and building something but I think some of them were trapped in it. The snow would go right over the top - it was right in a big drift.

MT: You know the Three-mile Dam snowed over again this year - the other day when Ted was up there they could see where it was broken away and it was all iced up, you can imagine how thick the ice would be ...

TT: Practical men are pretty adaptable and they adapt ...

MT: They were on that Scheme. I said 'why didn't you say something to them' and he said 'no use saying anything to them, they go and answer me back' so he went up to the policeman and said he was on his way out but you'd better go back ... He told him they were skiing on that lake, you know what will happen ... There's two people in it now, they never found them.

KH: When did they go in?

MT: When the Snowy was being built. One fellow went down ...

TT: The ice broke off and slipped in and it shot him right under the other lot, then the ice came up and trapped him, he couldn't get through the ice. One got drowned and the other fellow got out I think. It snows over - you get ice then snow then ice again and it will be 3' thick. You could go over it in a tractor but then when it comes to thaw and there's rain around that snow gets soft and it breaks - it won't hold you.

KH: It's not too bad on skis because your weight is distributed.

TT: I skied over to Currango for mail - back in 1929 I think.