

A PREACHER'S PROGRESS



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AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

ROY RAYMOND

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FOREWORD

Churches of Christ in Australia have produced a number of great preachers including, without a doubt, Roy Raymond. Firm in faith, strong in purpose and lucid in preaching, his ministry in both South Australia and Western Australia has contributed greatly to the churches in those States and to the Restoration Movement generally.

And now we have this all-too-brief autobiography in which he writes frankly and refreshingly of his life as a preacher with its vicissitudes, disappointments and difficulties and also its blessings, rewards and compensations. It is the story of a man of clear faith, certain of his call to the ministry of the Gospel and deeply committed to its proclamation.

As a pioneer preacher in small country towns he endured hardships and overcame discouragements enough to deter any but the most courageous and determined of young men. Later, as a mature minister and preacher, he enjoyed success as an evangelist, satisfaction in ministry, and visionary leadership in brotherhood development and administration. Much later, as an elder statesman, he became the confidant, friend and encourager to many younger ministers (and others) who sought his advice and counsel.

This is a very readable book which I found hard to put down, eager to know what happened next in this remarkable life, the life of a man of courage and vision, undaunted by hardship and determined to obey his Lord's call in spite of any discouragements.

I only wish it could have included some of his sermons but I suppose one mustn't ask too much. At least I have been privileged to hear a few, to my own blessing and edification.

Gordon A. Ewers.

PREFACE

Before the end of his long years in the ministry Roy Raymond became aware that his former congregations, when inviting him to return to help them celebrate one significant anniversary or another, did so from a variety of motives. Whether the need was for inspirational preaching, an understanding of the particular congregation's history, or grim or entertaining anecdotes of the early days, Mr. Raymond would draw on his experience and give satisfaction. Long after his retirement he continued to be asked about his life and work. In his eightieth year, 1970, he agreed to set down his reminiscences. He thought a typed account with a few carbon copies would be adequate for his family and close friends. Then he repeated the process to provide more copies to meet requests. In 1979 he agreed to publication of a shortened version by the Australian Churches of Christ Historical Society. In 2002, some ninety years after Roy Raymond made his tentative and discouraging entry into the ministry, and nine years after his death, members of his family still hear from inquirers who remember him or know of his impact on the lives of people close to them.

Largely to meet this implicit need, and to inform a new generation of descendants, and others too young to have had the pleasure and privilege of knowing the author, his story is here published. This little book takes in his complete manuscript of 1970, with minimal editing, together with a brief epilogue summarizing events since 1970, and is further supplemented by relevant photographs.

Roy Raymond did not see himself as an author, and did not set out to write a book. Nor did he look on his life as a success story as judged by the usual criteria of wealth, fame and erudition. He had a different scale of values: he looked on life as service, and a difficult journey to a distant goal towards which each small step was progress. Like John Bunyan's Pilgrim, the Preacher was making his progress "from this world to that which is to come". If he had envisaged a readership for a printed account of his life, he might possibly have omitted some details and substituted others. Who knows? What is certain is that he would have wished his story to entertain and inform his readers, but, more importantly, to help and encourage them on their pilgrimage.

Among those who helped in the preparation of this book are: Mr. G. A. Ewers, historian of the Churches of Christ in Western Australia, who wrote the foreword; Hon. G. A. Bywaters whose photographs of South Australian churches are used by agreement; Mr. and Mrs. M. Lindsay, and the *West Australian* newspaper, whose photographs are used on the same basis; Mr. N. Aisbett who gave permission for a portrait by his late father to be copied; to Cathy Pinner, Rodney Raymond and other family members who contributed technical skills and advice. All are warmly thanked for their co-operation.

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

I first saw the light at Moonta, South Australia, where I was born on October 1, 1890. I was the sixth child and, so it proved, there were six to come. We were all born at home. The home where I first cried was in Caroline Street and has now been destroyed.

I went to my first school at Moonta, on the first day school opened after the Christmas vacation in 1896. I was five years and nearly five months. I recall that my most frightful experience on that day was when I was told to address the headmaster using his surname. I had the greatest difficulty in getting my tongue round it and cannot now say whether I succeeded. This problem was created mostly because of the name and partly because of timidity. The name Llewellyn (if that is how it was spelt) being Welsh was uncommon amongst the Cornish but should by no means be beyond the powers of a youngster's speech.

Although we left Moonta before I reached the age of seven I can recall many events that were crowded into those early years. The names of my playmates and the three different dogs we owned, as well as some venturesome fishing exploits are vivid memories. Until I left home in 1912 and by many for some years afterwards I was known by the name Roddie. It was generally thought this was my real Christian name. My brother Sid was always known as Squidder. These names were the result of events too childish to mention, which occurred before I was seven and while still living at Moonta.

We went to Wallaroo Mines to live. Things had gone against Father and we were certainly reduced to poverty. The cottage into which we moved was a very poor little place. We had to sleep on the floor for some time but gradually things improved. I think it was the bitterest experience in my father's life, as a result of which his drinking habits increased and our poverty kept to the same tempo. But Mother never lost her faith and I can well recall hearing her at prayer behind her closed door. She seemed to think she would impress the Lord better by praying aloud. She certainly impressed me. I shall never forget hearing some of the things said behind the closed bedroom door in the mornings after Father had gone out to look for work. There was no Child Endowment in those days. Government benefit took the form of "rations". It was not even the barest necessity. Some flour, sugar, meat and fuel — it was grim. There was no Old Age Pension, either. Grandma had to live, too.

When we moved to Wallaroo Mines, Sid and I went to the Kadina State School. We were there three days when the headmaster came into the class-room and looked over the top of his glasses and saw us. His name was Wiltshire, known amongst all the boys as "Bob-tail Wiltshire". We were called out and asked where we lived. When this was made known we were expelled from the school like kids with the smallpox. We were told there was a school at the Mines which was good enough for us. So we left. We got a great thrill a few days later when we heard that some of the big boys had attacked the headmaster and given him a hiding. We were only boys and after the way he had spoken to us we felt justified in the thrill we got out of the fall of the mighty.



Home in Caroline Street, Moonta.

We went to the Mines school. The headmaster was a Mr. J. J. Stephens, known to all the school as "Old J.J." He had a boy named Frank and we became fast friends. He let me into a secret. He told me that his father had a great weakness. He said, "My dad is afraid of everyone else's dad. If you get into trouble and he whips you, tell him you will bring your father up, and see what happens." And so it came about that we staged a fight in the school yard when we thought "Old J.J." would be handy. It worked. I was blamed as the instigator and taken to his office. I got a couple of stiff cuts and then I put on my little show. I bawled and told him I would bring my father up. "My father could fight too!" I was sent to my class. Five minutes to closing time I was told to report at J.J.'s office. He told me he was sorry he beat me and that if I promised not to tell my father he would give me 3d. That was no good to me. I wanted 6d. Finally he gave in and I got the sixpence. Frank was outside waiting for me after school to collect his share of the bribe. That was the first of many coins so extracted from "Old J.J.", but Frank never knew half the earnings I received in this way.

My schooling was cut short. I returned to school for one day only, after the long Christmas vacation in 1900. I could not see any writing on the board, nor could I see to read any printed word from the book. It was just as if the room was full of dust. Teacher put me in the very front seat near the blackboard, but I could not make out a word. That was my last day at school. Sunday school is the only school I have ever attended since that day. I have been in discussion groups and preachers' sessions, but have never taken a lesson other than Sunday school and I have never sat for any examination since I was in my tenth year. I reached the third class, as classes were known in those days. My schooling of four years was interrupted by changing schools and many set backs.

The pain I suffered in my eyes I shall never be able to describe. Many nights I spent hour after hour whilst in bed kneeling with my face in the pillows and trying to hold my eyes open with my forefinger and thumb. To close them was agony and sleep was out of the question. For more than two years they were in bandages. I went every Tuesday and every Friday morning (at first with my mother, but for many, many months by myself), to the surgery of the Kadina doctors. This was a distance of more than a mile. I felt my way as I followed the railway fence and then along the main street. First Dr. Letcher and later Dr. Powell attended to me. They would release the bandages and turn the lids back and (so it seemed to me), paint inside the lids. It was torture of the worst kind and, as a child, I felt it hard to believe I had the doctor's sympathy. One day, in 1902, I sat amongst the waiting people in the waiting room when my turn came, and the customary "Come in" was heard from the doctor. But this day it was a strange voice. I went in. I stood in the darkness while he scribbled away. Presently he said, "Well?" I replied that I had come to have my eyes painted. He asked me the necessary questions about procedure. I told him what the doctors had done. He asked, angrily, I thought, "How long has this been going on?" "More than two years," I told him. "Poor little boy, how you must love doctors. But there will be no more of this." He was a locum tenens. His name was Dr. Rome and he had recently arrived from Ireland. The pain I endured at his hands that day was such as to put all I had ever known before in the shade. It was agony of agonies. But it was the cure, or the beginning of it. When Dr. Rome finished with me I never looked back, so far as my sight is concerned. I have since consulted eye specialists and opticians but only for testing and never for treatment. The days of my blindness were over. It can be considered as certain that my sight has never been good. I have always been a problem for the opticians. But I have got by and have, I suppose, done as much reading, of a kind, as any other man in any profession over the past forty-five years.

I was never a bad boy. But I was often discovered in some silly, boyish prank. One or two of these may be mentioned. My father was on speaking terms with

the local policeman, Mounted Constable James, a big, bearded man, kindly enough, but a real terror for naughty boys.

One day Sid and I walked to Wallaroo, a neighbouring town about five miles away. This was after my sight was restored. We were not bent on mischief, but just honest sight-seeing. But the return journey was not anticipated with pleasure as we were very tired after having walked round the township and along the Wallaroo jetty. So we hit upon the plan of stealing (borrowing was our idea, being sure the animal could find his way home) a big billy-goat. We found one with a bridle on. We mounted him in turns and made good progress, unaware we were being followed. Within a hundred yards or so of home we let the goat go and walked inside leisurely as though we had only been away a few minutes. There were questions, but nothing serious until a knock came on the kitchen door. I looked out and saw a spring cart with some men in it. These were the men who had followed us. This man who came to the door made us tremble. He reported to my father that they had been trying to catch the goat thieves for some time. Now they had at last succeeded. My father, anxious to give us the scare of our lives, reported us to P.C. James. He put us in the local lock-up. Jail, that's what it was. And our own father did it. Sid suggested it was not lawful without a trial. We had no hope of getting out. But P.C. James had his harness hanging in the cell. This we took to pieces bit by bit and buckled the straps to the wrong pieces and put this harness into such a shape that we reckoned it would take him a merry while to straighten it out. We had no sooner completed this unholy task than we heard the key inserted in the huge padlock and Mr. James ordered us out and told us to go home to bed. We wished him goodnight with fear and trembling. We never heard another word about the harness. He must have been a good sport.

Only on one other occasion was I in trouble, or in the hands of Mr. James. Dr. Powell was never regarded by me with friendly feelings. I think it was mutual. I felt I had suffered much at his hands. And he had never shown me great kindness. Twice after my eyes were healed I saw him in his surgery. Once to have a tooth out. We were too poor to pay the dentist 2/6 for the extraction. The doctor never charged us because we were paying into a miners' club. But when he pulled (a fair word to use) my tooth he did not use an anaesthetic. It seemed ages before he finally had it out of my mouth. I felt as if all my jaw was gone. That was more than half a century ago and I can still sense the pain, when I try. The other time was to have him examine me medically for the purpose of joining the I.O.O.F. He rejected me on the spot and said he could not possibly do anything about it. He did not make the slightest attempt to examine me. My anger that day was very real. I vowed under my breath I'd get even. This is how it happened, and the result was I got back into the hands of P.C. James for another correction.

Dr. Powell was the first, and at this time the only person in our part of the known world, to own (we presumed) a motor car. It had wheels like buggy wheels, with iron rims. My memory of it makes me think it had for steering purposes what may be called a tiller rather than a wheel. The doctor started and stopped frequently in his calls. So we (Sid and I) hid under the car and when he got down to crank it up we also got our heels firmly grounded. When he took his seat to resume operations we stalled it by no other means than our puny strength. This kept on for a while. Finally we let him get started and we took our leave. As we had now discovered our powers and a means whereby we could take it out on the doctor, we were not slow to try again. Ultimately, having had enough ourselves, as before, we would let him go. One day when we let him go Constable James was getting off his horse right there. So off to chokey we went again. But this time there was no harness in the cell.

I was never before the court on any charge and nothing I ever did as a boy was ever regarded by me as being really bad. I loved my mother too much to do anything that I regarded as criminal.

We were enterprising as boys. Sid and I had a friend who had a toy magic lantern. He also had about two dozen little slides. So we organized a children's concert and held it in our little back bedroom. We charged a penny admission. Perhaps fifteen would be crowded into the room. One boy we would never permit to come inside as he was well known amongst the boys as a little thief. The second time we held a concert we had trouble. We used one of Mother's good bed sheets for a picture screen. This "thief" had gone to our garden and pulled a beetroot. This he chewed until he had a mouthful, and opening the window very quietly he spat the lot all over the sheet. We lost all our profits in paying Mother for the damage done.

When we grew a little older and were in our mid-teens we organized some bicycle races. Sid and I chose the road and the distance and then called for nominations. All the boys about would pay the 1/- fee which we charged for nominations. After the closing date for nominations we would ourselves give the handicaps and these would be posted on our front gate with all details. Three days would be allowed for the acceptance of handicaps, and for this 1/- was again charged. Not all would pay the acceptance fee so their nomination fee was retained by us. The course would be on a main road and would extend for two or maybe three miles. We would hire for a couple of shillings two independent men to act as starter and judge. The first prize was often a bike lamp and the second prize a bike pump. These would cost us about 10/- or 12/- and our receipts would be about 35/-. We did well with three or four races and then others began to get busy and offered better prizes. Finally the police came down on the scene and we were all stopped from organizing such events.

I can well recall the visit of General William Booth, of the Salvation Army, when he was in Australia. The Kadina corps of the Salvation Army was very strong in the early years of the twentieth century, and before then. It was nothing unusual to see a congregation of five or six hundred, even on a Sunday afternoon. The General's visit was during the time of my affliction. I used then to attend the Army Sunday school. I have no recollection (nor record) of the year. I do recall that until 1900 we attended the Bible Christian Sunday school. It was in that year the three branches of the Wesleyan Church united, outwardly at least. The Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists went over to the Wesleyans and became the Methodist Church of Australia. It was not a universally popular move, and the Army and other denominations had not a few additions. We went to the Army.

I was a listener in Sunday school, a real listener. I could not see to read and I was desirous of learning all I could to keep up in general knowledge with the more fortunate boys. I was thrilled when I was asked to have part in the great gathering to welcome the General. He was then an old grey-bearded gentleman. I remember him putting his hand on my head and enquiring about my eyes. I remember his hearty laugh, too, when I had sung my little piece. So far as I remember, the words of the thing I sang were:

*I am right down glad my father joined the Army,
I am right down glad my mother joined them, too;
They used to be so snappy, but now they are so happy,
And I'm a little soldier determined to be true.*

My parents, so far as I know, had never joined the Army, and my father was by no means as appreciative of my efforts as was the great General. And he was great, by whatever standards you measure him.

My memories of the days of the Boer War are very vivid. I can recall now hearing my father read aloud from the *Adelaide Advertiser* the doings of our men in South Africa. The Relief of Mafeking in 1900 and other historic happenings in those war years can be readily recalled. Colonel Baden-Powell, famous as the founder of the Boy Scout movement, and raised later to the peerage, was one of the heroes of the ten-year-olds of 1900, of whom I was one. Then there was the great Kitchener, dark complexioned with his handle-bar mo', and General Roberts (Bobs) and General Buller, after whom Claude (baby brother then) was nicknamed. We had them all strung across our chests in the colourful little buttons so dear to boys as worthy decorations. The names of Kruger, Cronje and Smuts were the names we gave to effigies on Guy Fawkes night. When peace was celebrated I was a proud little boy because my brother Frank (then about 16) was one of the "troopers", of whom there were about six of the same age, who were dressed up for the occasion and wore helmets. These were chosen to ride the

draught horses which drew the huge "cannon" in the procession through the streets, after which followed the sports carnival on the Kadina Show Grounds.

I well remember Mother had made me a pair of knickers from Father's castaways. They were neat and well-fitting. They had the original pocket. As I had a few pence to spend I bought some "conversation" lollies. Old Mrs. Trustcott made a huge paper packet, to do which she twirled some newspaper round her hand in a way which was as amazing as the trick of a magician. Because of the celebrations, I guess, she felt generous. However, I emptied the lollies into my one and only trousers' pocket. I then discovered that this pocket from Father's trousers reached to my knee and I was overloaded with sweets.

I recall very well the death of the Great Queen. She was always an old woman to me. My paternal grandfather used to give us a little peppermint lolly on the rare occasions of our visit to his place, and from this we gathered, more so than from any coin, that our Queen, whose image was on these lollies, was an old, old lady. Such was the impression made on a boy.

1902 was one of the great years of my life. So many things happened that were far more important than the accession of Edward VII; more important to a boy, that is.

Fever. Frank was the first to go down with fever. He came home from work mid-morning on a Monday in March. It was a sultry sort of day. He said he was so tired he must go to bed. He was delirious before the doctor reached the house. He never regained consciousness. He was buried the following Monday. The officer of the Salvation Army conducted the service, one Adjutant Burrup. Sorrow filled the home. Strange how one can feel important in the fact that he is the centre of attention. I, as a lad, got some satisfaction from the fact that it was my brother, and a funeral going from our place. Strange creatures.

I can recall two earlier funerals in our family. Hilda died when I was six years old. It was at the very time Harold was born. I never remember my mother being "hard of hearing" before that. I remember how Father (Papa we called him) was absolutely broken by the passing of Hilda. But before that, little Ida was taken. I remember being sent away with a penny to buy lollies while the funeral service was held. I was three then. But Frank's death came as near to breaking Mother's heart as anything could ever do. Only one greater sorrow clouded her life and that was the blindness of Harold. She wept herself asleep many nights over many years for the sorrow of her heart regarding Harold's blindness. When Frank died I recall my father saying with an ugly curse that he would never put another nail in the place nor would he ever try again to make a home. When I recall the sorrows of my parents I feel some little tenderness for Father in his weakness. He did give



Roy's parents, Caroline and John Raymond, c. 1907.

way to drink. But Mother “took it to the Lord in prayer” and she was always the stronger. We all went down with the fever, except Harold. Aunt Lucy cared for him during our period of isolation. Annie was by far the worst. She had a relapse three times.

Fever was a common enough complaint, and no wonder. Sanitary arrangements were crude. We had no bathroom in the house. I never knew a house that did. We used to bathe in a tub in the kitchen on Saturday nights. Only once a week. We had to buy water and cart it in “kerosene buckets”. I well remember my

mother bathing the lot of us on a Saturday night and trying to get us off to bed before Father came home from the “pub”. Then she would mend our clothes, wash them and dry them in readiness for Sunday school next morning. We went to Sunday school twice on the “Sabbath”.

One of our games as boys was with a hoop, a large iron ring made for us by the local smith. With the use of a little iron or wire crook we would run this hoop for miles. It was useful for many purposes. It was about three feet in diameter, sometimes more, depending on the size of the owner. Such a hoop came in handy for making crab-nets. At school we were taught to make the mesh for crab-nets and soap-bags and anything else for which this kind of netted work, made from twine, could be used. With the use of crude implements, any boy I knew could make a mesh net.

This hoop was also a great help in carrying two buckets of water. It was my duty, shared by Sid, to carry all the water ever used for a long time in our home. We had two 4-gallon buckets and we would fill them at the public tanks (tanks were open at certain hours and we would pay the man in charge the sum of 3d. per bucket) and place the buckets on the ground as far apart as the width of the hoop and then place the hoop on the buckets with the handles on the outside of the hoop. Then I would get inside of the hoop and lift the buckets. The reason for this was that it kept the weight of the loads off the person and gave one greater freedom of movement. We had almost half a mile to cart the water. We sometimes used a rope tied to the bucket and over our shoulders crosswise. Grim days for a boy. Grim for parents, too, when wages for a man were five shillings a day for six days a week, if he could get work.

As a child I was very religious. I think I can say with confidence (notwithstanding the rich experience of the intervening years) that I never have had a purer faith, and one more beautifully simple, than when I was ten years of age. I literally walked with the Lord. I knew no fear. I used, when sent on errands, to seek any secluded spot, a bush, an abandoned quarry or any place free from interruption, and in these places talk with the Lord Jesus as friend to friend. I felt His hand upon me and I had no doubt ever, but that He was protecting me. Is this boasting? This experience is common to childhood. No wonder our Lord said, *“Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God”*.

But the time came when I was thrown amongst the worst of companions and I certainly degenerated. But even when I was in the “far country”, He had not forsaken me. When I did come back, my welcome was as real as that told in the immortal story of a prodigal’s home-coming.



Roy and Sid, November 1907.

On this note I shall leave the story of my childhood and pass on to the story of my youth. I have only dealt with some of the things that made childhood and boyhood days what they were to me. There is more to be told in the next chapter that could fit into this recounting of boyhood days. We will leave it at that.

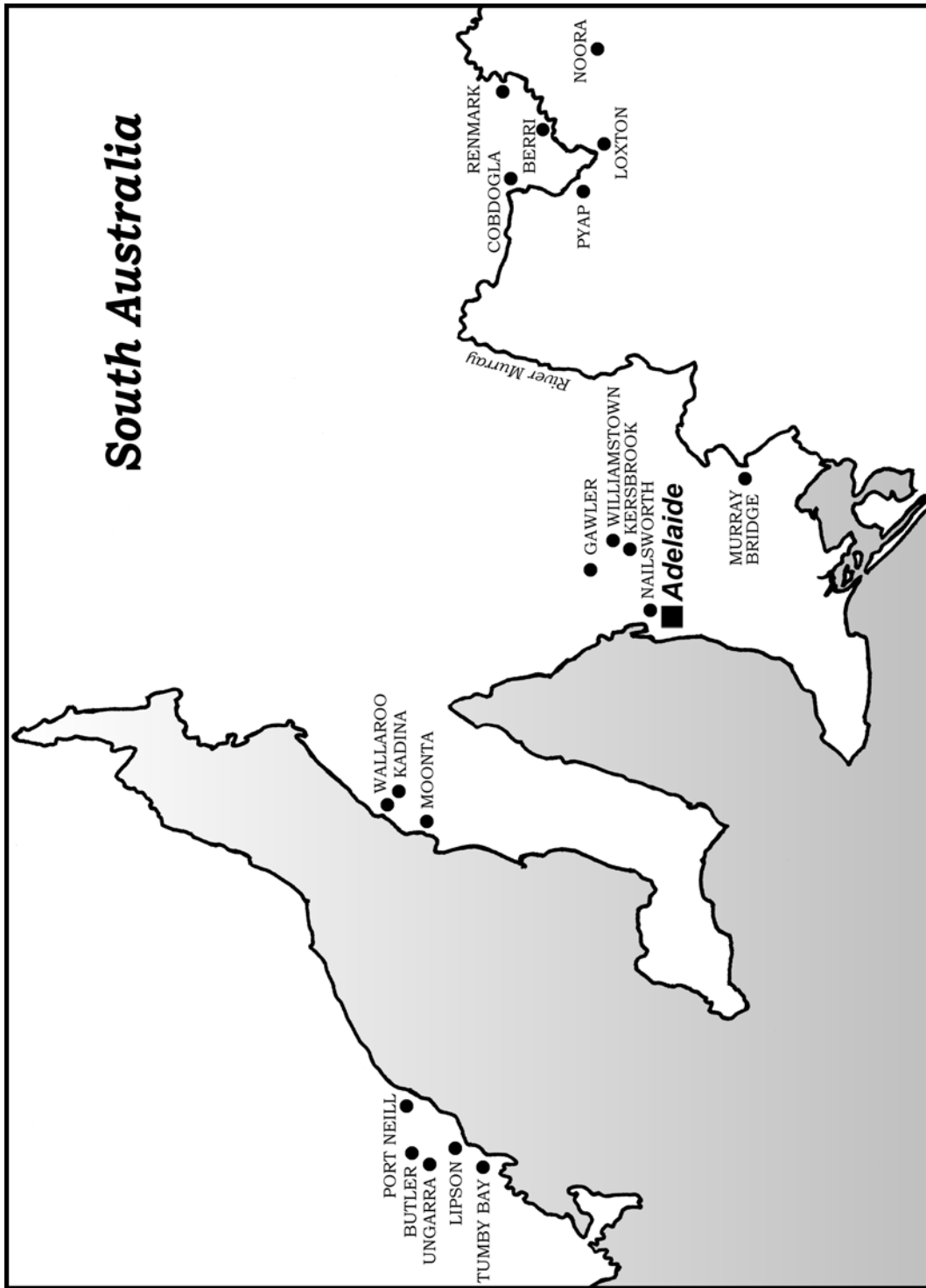
But can we? One can never leave his childhood "at that", as though it were a thing to be buried and forgotten. It would not matter how much we had recorded, there is much more not recorded. And whether we look back with joy or with

tears, and for most of us there is something of both in the vision, there is something fit and beautiful in the attitude. This looking back, living over again days of boyhood, of childhood, is not mere sentimentalism. Sentimentalism talks about 'dear old days beyond recall'. But that cannot be, for normal men. The days do not die. They come back to us. They keep coming back. We would not have it otherwise. The dearer they were as we lived through them, the more fresh and vivid are they as we creep back with them again.

Think of that matchless Old Testament story found in II Samuel 23. Here is a man, a great man, David, now a fugitive, standing amid the dust and peril of life looking back to a happy childhood (am I right in so reading this story?), thinking of the hot tiring days when as a lad he refreshed himself with a drink from the well near his village home, soliloquizing as he longed again for such a drink. He spoke louder than he knew and was surprised when his brave men returned with the water. But boyish moods had disappeared when they placed the water in his hands. He was a man again, and a man of great insight and religious discernment, a man who with a swift flash of insight could behold the sacramental value or meaning of such a simple and heroic deed. The water had become wine, the real red wine of the sacrifice of selfless love. He could not drink it. Not David. Let selfish and soulless gluttons drink of such water. To him it was blood.

And so I leave the tale of childhood days, so far as anyone who reads this is concerned. But for myself, they can never be left, but shall accompany me down whatever years remain, ever reminding me of the care and love that was bestowed upon me by those whose love counted not the cost, who were always so patient and kind, and above all, of the One who has ever been the Friend of little children. He was my Friend ...

... And as life drifts on to the western horizon His presence is real to me again. And the nearer I get to the west the more time I expect to have for the enjoyment of His company. I have been too busy over so many things that never really mattered, to make the best use of such holy companionship during the careless years of adult life. I have known He was near to me in all the years and such knowledge has been my greatest possession. But childhood days will return, and I shall, as of old, go hand in hand with Him in a way I have not known since the days when we talked as we walked and I knew that He was "*ever near to bless and cheer in the darkest hour*".



CHAPTER 2

DAYS OF YOUTH

It was in September, 1902 that, unknown to my father, I went to see a Mr. Dunstan. He was foreman (boss) on the surface workings of the Wallaroo Mines. He was a typical Cornishman, and, of course, a Sunday school teacher. The mine manager, Captain Lipson Hancock, was a grand Christian gentleman, an enthusiast in Sunday school work and methods, and the author of a very useful handbook describing the work of the Moonta Mines Sunday school of which he was the superintendent. This was the best organized and perhaps the largest Sunday school in South Australia. I have digressed thus far to say that most foremen and petty bosses on the mines went to Sunday school. It was generally believed amongst the men that these bosses did so with a motive and so they were named "crawlers". Well, Mr. Dunstan may not have been a crawler, but he was not popular with boys. He rebuked me at once and told me to go back to school. I had not been to school for almost three years and did not want to return to sit amongst boys three years my junior. I told him this. He yielded and I started to work. Father was not altogether displeased. He felt that "Satan finds mischief for idle hands" and so it was best I should do something.

I started on the picking tables. There were many, very many boys employed on the "picky" tables of whom I was the youngest and smallest. My pay was 1/1 per diem. From this was deducted 1d. for sick pay and 1d. for "doctor's club". This left me with 11d. per shift and the satisfaction of free treatment and medicine, if and when sick. Five shillings and sixpence per week was welcomed in our home. I handed my pay over (and continued to do so till I was 21, as was the custom in those days) and received 3d. for pocket money. Bloated capitalist, I was.

I was not on the tables for long. A cousin of my father, a Mr. Will Yelland, was in charge of the concentration plant at Devon, part of the same mine. He wanted a boy and came to the tables to get one. He saw me, and lifted me out of my seat and put me on his shoulder and carried me the half-mile to my new job. Before I describe my new job, let me attempt a description of the "picky" tables. I returned to this job several times in the next two or three years. It was a most revolting place and many nights I went to bed almost hoping the morning would never appear. But it did. And back again to the gruesome place.

The building in which these tables were housed was three floors up and reached by an outside stairway. The ground floor was used as a kind of a tunnel through

which the steam-engine and trucks would pass. The second floor was taken up with huge bins into which the boys would drop their "pickings", and from which the trucks would be filled by the lever being pulled back to open a chute.



The Devon Mine showing the tailings dump, with picking tables housed in building at right.

The top floor was the scene of activity. Two rows of endless belts were made by huge ropes bound together by hoop-iron bands bolted through the ropes and about three or four feet wide. These belts, or tables, were conveyed on rollers with winding drums at either end. They were about three hundred feet long. On either side of these the boys sat. Beneath them were the huge bins mentioned above. From away down in the pit where the crude ore was crushed, men fed it into elevators. By these it was conveyed up to the bin from which the tables were supplied. The din of the rattling noise as this broken ore, the size of ordinary road metal, poured on to the tables from iron chutes was deafening. As it was conveyed along the tables we boys would pick off the pieces according to the bins we occupied. Some of us who were stupid would pick off the colourless stone known as addle (call it addle if you like, not because of the addle-brained boys who handled it, but because it was absolutely useless, having no mineral content of value). Others would pick off the firsts (highest quality stone) and others the seconds and so on. The bins beneath were used for the holding of the ore and were divided accordingly. The boys started work at 7 a.m. In the winter it was too dark to see, so we worked under artificial light. We had from 9.45 to 10 a.m. for "cribbo" and from 12 noon to 1 p.m. for lunch. Our next break was from 3 to 3.10 p.m. for "smoko" and we knocked off at 5. This time was later altered to 7.30 a.m. for starting. Saturdays we worked till 1 p.m. In the winter the stone fed to us was, being wet, almost too cold to handle. We had bosses standing over us and there was no let-up. We had to beg for permission to leave for a few

moments to go to the toilet (pardon the name for such a place as ours was). Some of us were too timid to ask and often were in great distress.

The place in which we were housed for this work was cold. There were no glass windows, but wooden shutters. These shutters had to be opened to give light and so we were exposed to all the cold winds. It was no use protesting, and striking was quite out of the question. There were too many to take our place, and so we endured it. Trade unions did come later and made some improvements. But, finally, the trade union, or miners union, over-reached itself and this resulted in disaster, both for the men and the company, as well as South Australia as a whole. But that was after my day and I may easily misrepresent the truth through my ignorance. The tables were a heart-break for any boy, and I was happy when Mr. Yelland took me under his care and gave me a better job at the Devon.

To relate the various jobs at which I worked after I left the tables would not be of much interest to anyone. I was employed on the concentration plant of the Wallaroo Mines at Devon. The work was not hard, nor was it skilful. It was shift work. For the day shift we commenced at 7.30 a.m. and were relieved at 3.30. If the workman to follow did not turn up we had to continue and do a "doubler". And more than once the third (or night-shift man) did not turn up and we had to do a "trebler". We could not leave the job unmanned. I can well recall working from Friday morning, 7.30 a.m., till Saturday noon. On Saturdays, when on day shift, we were relieved at noon, which meant that the man doing afternoon shift commenced at midday and worked till midnight. No work was permitted on Sunday, unless for urgent repairs, and so the whole plant closed down at midnight Saturday. The men who worked till that hour would follow through the next week doing night shift which meant that they would start at midnight on Sunday. There was no such thing as a "no work Saturday" or 40-hour week then. I continued at the Devon until I left home and entered upon my preaching career. It was while working at night on the Devon that I would practise oratory. Above the noise of the rollers and the crushers and the ball mills I would take up some place where I could neither be seen nor heard, and there I would preach to my heart's delight to my imaginary audience. I would commit long passages of scripture to memory and repeat them to the stars or the winds, or elements concerned. It was secret practice and this is the first mention made of my "college" days.

I was given many opportunities to talk to the local Christian Endeavour Society. I rarely spoke to any others except two or three times at the midweek prayer service. I had no thought of ever becoming a minister. Never do I ever remember aspiring even to local pulpit work. I was too conscious of my lack of education to indulge the thought of preaching; and yet there was the inner urge to carry on with these oratorical exercises at all hours of the night amid the din of the machinery and engine noises. Why? From whence came the urge? Was I being driven to do

for personal enjoyment what another meant to use in the years that were to follow?

The call that did come to me in my twenty-second year to leave all this and enter the ministry was so extraordinary and bewildering that I feel constrained to make the effort to record the experience. This experience will be related following further details of my adolescence.



Sid, Harold, Claude and Roy, c. 1910.

My first public responsibility came to me at the age of fourteen years. I was elected to the secretaryship of our newly-formed football club which had about 30 members, paying 1/- each. I was responsible for the care of the money as well as the arrangement of matches, the hiring of transport, collecting fares, paying expenses, etc. We did not at first know what to call our team. I spoke to an old Cornishman, by name Sam Adams. "Mr. Adams," I asked, "we have formed a football team; can you suggest a good name?" "Are you going to play in the team?" he asked. I expressed the hope that I might if picked. "Then," said he, "Call your team 'Narrowbacks'." And so it was that the foremost of the boys' teams in the countryside was the 'Narrowbacks'.

My next public office was secretary of the Christian Endeavour Society. I then became treasurer of the Kadina Church of Christ Sunday school. To a lad who had no more schooling than I could boast of, these were indeed responsibilities. I have carried with me all the years the consciousness that I was ill-equipped for any office. It was this lack of training that embarrassed me in every public office. But, notwithstanding that, I have never been able to say no to what have in so

many cases been urgent and earnest appeals to me to fill the offices that have come my way. The greatest of these was, of course, to fill the office of secretary of the Federal Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia.

It was during the days of my youth, July 1908, that I was baptized. I had strayed badly from church and Sunday school. So far as I was aware no attempt was made by schools of any denomination to cater for young people. There were Bible classes, but the leadership of these was often of such a kind that young fellows were simply not interested.

Originally we were Bible Christians, a Methodist sect that was formed by a Mr. Brian, of Irish stock, and that appealed to the Cornish. When the Brianites, or Bible Christians, united with the Primitive Methodists and the Wesleyans in 1900 we felt homeless and drifted along to the Army. This entertained but never satisfied. Then we, my brothers and I, just drifted right out of touch. But I was sure I never drifted beyond His love and care. I got interested in some friends who were members of the Kadina Church of Christ, where at that time E. G. Warren was doing a magnificent evangelistic work. The services appealed to me. I joined the Bible school, as their Sunday school was named. Then I responded with a couple of others and made a public confession of my faith. I was very happy among the young people of this church, and the enthusiasm of the members and their absolute assurance that they had the truth gripped the public. Progress was easy in such an atmosphere. And so I became a member of the church and a Christian worker in the local cause. I had opportunity for the exercise of whatever gifts I had and I was quite satisfied to limit them to the needs of the young people of this congregation.

But other forces were at work, unknown to me, and so I was called out to the fuller larger work which God had for me to do. I had to trust Him to teach me and to lead me.

I was convinced that whom He called, He could prepare, and He could provide. It was not much use believing anything else in my case. And I am forever grateful that I was compelled to recognize these facts so early in my experience. My boast must be in the Lord. I had nothing of which I could feel proud. In physique, stature, mental power, family connections, look where I would, there was nothing I could boast of and much to humiliate. But I was encouraged by the fact that in some of these things I stood exactly where our Lord and His chosen men stood. Everything in our Lord's life was spoken against Him.

“Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Is not this Joseph's son? Is not His father a carpenter? Whence hath this man wisdom, having never learned?”

These things were tossed in His teeth, and mine.

CHAPTER 3

THE CALL

Is there such a thing as a call to the ministry? I think the simple and extraordinary story of my call may help provide an answer to this.

I will start the story with a visit I made to Mr. Warren, my pastor, on a Saturday night, having learned that he was sick. He was so obviously glad to see me that I was perplexed. Finally he said, “You are to take my place tomorrow morning. I am too sick to preach and cannot think of anyone else whom I can contact in time. Besides, you can do it, and must.”

To say that I protested is putting it mildly. But finally he won, and, although I did not agree with him, I went away knowing that if anyone were to address the congregation next morning I would have to be that one. I don’t think I slept that night. I lay awake trying to get a grip of something to say.

I preached on the Sunday morning in May, 1912. I took a text from the last words of the 11th verse of the 3rd chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians: “*Christ is all and in all*”. There was a good congregation, the building being full as was customary in those days. I was fluent and flimsy, speaking out of a limited experience and with little knowledge. I set myself to convince the audience that Christ was really everything, that He was everything to everyone, whatever the circumstance, the class or condition. Old or young, sick or well, working or resting, in every circumstance our need was Christ who could fully satisfy. The remarkable thing is that that was the only sermon I preached before I was in the work as a full-time preacher. I think this experience must be unique. It is almost unbelievable.

It was something like a couple of months after this preaching experiment that Mr. Warren called me aside at the close of a mid-week prayer service and showed me a letter he had received. It was a personal letter to him, but it concerned me. It was written by someone on Eyre Peninsula in South Australia, Mr. T. Pedler, I think. Mr. Pedler, it so happened, was with another visitor from his district in the congregation the morning I preached in the Kadina church. He must have been pleased because the letter Mr. Warren was showing me was an inquiry as to whether he thought I would accept a call to the home mission work on Eyre Peninsula and whether he could recommend me. Mr. Warren went to work on me at once to convince me that this was something I must think about and act upon

with a view to accepting the call. I had never until that moment ever dreamed of being a preacher in the sense he was now suggesting. The idea to me then was absurd. I said no, and meant it. But I received a letter from the same source urging me to help them. There were members at Ungarra and Butler who wanted me. Mr. Robert Harkness, B.A., was finding the work too much, and the number of members moving into the district was increasing. If I would come I could be assured of support, etc. I said no. I talked with my parents about it. Mother was all for my going, but my father said I would be a fool. When finally I did go, he said I would be back looking for a job within three months. I might have been doing that, too, if he had not said so. I fought against going, conscious of my limitations, but letters of appeal kept coming to me. I spoke to one of the heads on the mine, a Mr. T. Skinner. He was a Methodist school superintendent and had never quite forgiven me for leaving the Methodists to join the Church of Christ, but he was nothing but keen for me to take up this work. He saw it all so clearly as a call from God. He reasoned with me, pointing out that the job I had would lead to a dead end, and that soon I might be out of work altogether. I felt he was trying to frighten me or threaten me. As a matter of fact he was right. In less than six years or thereabout, all the mines in that area were closed down and thousands were thrown out of work.



The old Kadina Church of Christ building.

Finally I decided to go. I took with me a Bible, a Cruden's *Concordance* which my mother gave me for my eleventh birthday, and two or three books which I felt might help me.

I was given a hearty send-off by the Kadina congregation and left for my new and bewildering experience in September, 1912. I left by boat from Wallaroo and

arrived at Tumby Bay the next morning at day-break. Not a soul came to meet me. Mr. Harkness who lived in the township was out in the country playing in a cricket match. I walked round the streets of Tumby Bay for hours without meeting a soul who was interested in me. I felt utterly forsaken and unwanted. It was afternoon when I met a Mr. Williams, a local chemist, who was a member at Tumby Bay and he took me to his home. At five o'clock in the afternoon Mr. Pedler came to meet me. He had no apologies and acted as though nothing untoward had taken place.

When he was ready we lifted my luggage into his buggy and made our journey to his home at Ungarra, 17 miles away. Such was my first day away from home. I was already home-sick and wishing I had taken my father's advice. Arriving at Mr. Pedler's home, where I was to live, I was shown into a room which I was to share with the farm-hand. This man was of questionable reputation and for me a most undesirable companion. But I was told that I was to "*endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*" and so I determined not to complain.

Before I left Kadina, Mr. Wright, a most respected elder of the Kadina church, came to see me. He did not ask me to reconsider my decision, but, as though he was preparing me for what he thought was the inevitable disappointment coming to me, he reminded me that one so young and so small of stature could not expect to succeed. The first welcome given me was to remind me of these two difficulties. Mr. David Butler, on behalf of Butler church, spoke words of welcome in which he expressed great disappointment because I was so young and so small. I assured the meeting I would grow out of the first, given time, and with regard to the second it was better to measure a man from the shoulders upwards. "The mind is the measure of the man", I told them. I was not then thinking much of my mental powers, either, as no one in that gathering knew better than I how little I really knew.

The question of stature has always been made a joke concerning me. I made one of the first jokes on this issue myself in the Adelaide Conference in 1913. I rose to speak at the C.E. rally. I was a stranger to nearly everyone, and when I rose to speak there was an audible exclamation of surprise. It was from the pulpit of the old Grote Street, Adelaide, church that I was speaking. James E. Thomas, the pastor-preacher of that church, was more than six feet in height, and to suit him the pulpit was an extra high one over which I could barely see. When I started to speak there was what I interpreted as a pleasant surprise for the congregation in my voice and delivery. This so pleased me that I felt happy and made fun of my size. I told the people of that audience, mostly young Christian Endeavourers, that they might recall that in New Testament days the Apostles were sent out by twos, but here were we, claiming to practise New Testament teaching and sending out our preachers by one and a half. The reference was to Robert Harkness, with

whom I was associated in the work on Eyre Peninsula, and who was also over six feet. As he had stood beside me earlier in the meeting the crowd instantly saw the joke, and from then on my popularity as a speaker in our conference gatherings never diminished. More than forty years after this meeting of 1913 I was reminded of this "one and a half" joke by one who had been there. Indeed, often during the years, have people reminded me of their presence at that service, and it would seem that the only thing I had said was that particular witticism for it was all that any one ever reminded me of. On another occasion, when I was to make an appeal for funds, I was introduced as Zacchaeus "up his 'seeking more' tree." Clever, I thought, when I was sure the chairman wanted to have a hit at my stature without giving offence. So it has been all through life. But who has ever accomplished anything for God and in doing so has not known some handicap or limitation? I have always taken courage by reading I Corinthians 1: 27-29.



The present Kadina Church of Christ building erected in 1920.

CHAPTER 4

EYRE PENINSULA . . . BUTLER AND UNGARRA

I was sixteen months in the district. To say I was raw was to put it mildly. I have already said that until I arrived at Ungarra in September 1912, to “take up the work”, I had never conducted an evening service nor had I ever preached a gospel sermon. Had I known how hard it was going to be I would never have begun. My greatest worries and disappointments, my discouragements and my sorrows have come from the hurtful and often cruel conduct of church members. Before I say another word I must hasten to add that the converse of this is also so wondrously true. For that reason I wonder if I should say one word about my discouragements. If I do not this will be a very short story.

When I agreed to accept this work it was made very clear to me that no guarantee of salary could be made. It was promised me, however, that all the members of Ungarra church competent to do so would reap for my benefit absolutely seven acres of crop. It so came to pass that only one man had a crop. His was not a big crop, but it was up to expectations. However, because the others who made promises were unable to keep them he declared, to my utter amazement, that he could see no reason why he should do so. He was, as I had cause to find out later, one of the meanest men I ever knew. One man came to me, with tears in his eyes, and offered me a one pound note, which he said was all he could give. And he could ill afford it. So I had to continue to draw on my little savings bank account. I arrived at Ungarra with £89 to my credit. I was paying one pound per week for such board as I was receiving at Ungarra, so I felt I could carry on a little longer.

The South Australian Home Mission Committee would not subscribe to my work. The committee members made it clear that because they had no say in my appointment and did not know me, the church at Ungarra could not expect a subsidy from the Committee. Robert Barr, a member of the Home Mission Committee, whose son was working his farm, came on a visit. Following his return to the city we were advised that I was to receive a subsidy of 15/- per week. This was a great uplift. It meant to me that I must have been favourably spoken of by Mr. Barr, and it meant that I could now keep a pony. Up till now all my travelling, and there was much of it, mostly over unmade roads and sand hills, had been done on my bicycle. The first subsidy arrived in February. By then I had left Ungarra and made my home with Mr. and Mrs. George Young at Butler.

Board was cheaper and friendship, for which my young heart was starving, was offered to me in this family.



Ungarra Church of Christ chapel.

My first church row was at Ungarra. I came out second best, as the preacher always does in a church upset. This may be explained on the ground that in so many churches family ties and other established friendships are often stronger by far than the demands of simple and unvarnished truths. The first disagreement I had was concerned with my purchase of a pony. In 1913, as in all the years preceding it, and in some few places even to this day, men had unscriptural and Pharisaical practices concerning Sabbath keeping. It so happened that one Sunday morning a man, a stranger to me, came to ask if I was wanting to buy a pony. He said he had one to sell and that he wanted £11 for it. He did almost all the talking. I finally told him I would come over to his farm on the morrow and see him. This I did, and I bought the pony. As I knew nothing about horses and was not a practised rider, I walked home three miles leading the pony by the bridle. When I got home I put the saddle on him. It may be that I tried to mount from the wrong side. I just don't know. But the next thing I did know was that the pony was trotting back where he came from. Later that day I walked the three miles for the third time. At the next meeting of the "officers" of the church, of whom there were three, a charge was laid against me by the man who refused to pay his seven acres, and from whom I had never had any sympathy, even though he was the prime mover in getting me to take up the work of the ministry. If none better can be found, so does God sometimes use evil men to fulfil His purposes.

The charge against me was that I bought a horse on the Sabbath. Imagine men making that the cause of a church quarrel and almost breaking the spirit of a young and inexperienced missionary. And so I left Ungarra and went to live at Butler.

I had a little trouble at Butler in my first few weeks there. This was because certain parents would not restrain their children from running all over the place during the service. I finally asked a certain father to be good enough to take the child to his seat or take him outside. He took him outside and never returned nor did he speak to me again. He was the church secretary. I claim that I spoke kindly, but no explanation was ever good enough; I was under a cloud. In later years in Western Australia this man was one of my greatest admirers and warmest friends. Maybe we had both grown in grace.

Mr. Harkness was a Bachelor of Arts. He promised me that he would tutor me if and when I could make it possible to visit him. I took the first opportunity of pushing my bike into Tumby Bay. Mr. Harkness was a gentleman and a kindly one, but he nearly broke my spirit. On about the second occasion I was to take lessons at his home he set for me some exercises in parsing and analysis. I had never done any of this type of work and knew nothing about it whatsoever. He simply placed the exercises before me and asked me to have them finished by the time he returned when he would correct them. He was away for a couple of hours during which time I simply sat, stared and trembled. It was an impossible situation. He might as well have put exercises before me in Hebrew. When he returned I had done nothing, absolutely nothing. He was amazed when I told him I did not even know how to go about it. He said, "I think you are only wasting your time trying to be a minister, and it would be kind for me to tell you that in my opinion you ought to go back home."

I was to have stayed there for the night. But I got my bike and started out of town. I did not know where to go and so rode out to Butler, over 25 miles of sandy roads. It was early morning when I got there, but I was made welcome. Next day Mr. Young said to me, "We had a meeting last night, and we decided you were to be the preacher for our two anniversary services." I explained that I could not do that because I was finished and would be leaving by next boat. He demanded to know the reason why. I finally told him. Then he simply laughed and said, "Fancy Bob Harkness saying that to you. Why, here last night these men agreed that Harkness could not hold a candle to you as a preacher. No, if any one is to quit it had better be Harkness. We want you." And the encouragement was so obviously genuine that I survived another crisis.

It was impossible for me to keep a record of the miles covered while in the saddle of my little chestnut pony, named Monny. When I think back and recall the

distances it is hard to believe that either man or pony survived them. When I visited the area 44 years later for jubilee celebrations some friends asked, "What does it feel like to you to see the present young minister with the latest model Holden car provided for him when you did the same distances on a pony?" My reply was that I felt, possibly, the same as he would feel if he came back in 45 years and saw the young minister of that day doing the same distances with a helicopter. It could be. But my feeling concerning the methods of travel of the present young men is one of rejoicing.

If the men of my day could have made it possible for me to have a car they would have. I have never, in nearly fifty years, had any kind of transport provided, but have always provided my own, and the means to keep it going. I remember reminding the board of church officers in one place that every butcher and baker was expected to provide the means for the delivery of goods, and not the cart-hand, but in my exalted work I had to get where I was expected to go the best way I could. When at Butler I used to ride my pony to Ungarra on Saturday evening so that the pony would not be too tired for the big day ahead. I recall that on one occasion I had worked my pony rather harder than usual and he was in no fit condition to do the work. I walked to the farm of a church member and asked him if he could lend me a horse for the Ungarra trip. I gave him my reasons. He asked me how far it was (not that he did not know) and when I told him it was 14 miles, his never-to-be-forgotten reply was that, "When I was your age I would think nothing of walking that far." I never got a horse, not from him. But his kind were, fortunately, few and far between.

One Sunday in every month my programme was to leave Butler for Ungarra on Saturday afternoon. It was a two-hour ride. I would speak at the service there on Sunday morning and ride back to Butler, eating my lunch while riding. I would be at Butler in time to conduct Sunday school at 2.15. This was followed by the preaching service at 3.15. At 4.30 I would change my pony and ride to Port Neill (or Model Cove) for an evening service. On rare occasions I was invited to stay for the night. When not so invited I would ride back to Butler, a distance of 14 miles. On this Sunday I often did 42 miles in the saddle and conducted three services and a Sunday school.

At Port Neill we met sometimes in the goods shed. People would sit on packing cases or bags of wheat and I would take up my position standing on a small case. There would be no instrument and poor singing. The shed would be only dimly lit by means of a lantern. There were times when we met in the home of Mr. Burt, but as his house was so far from the centre of the little port township we chose rather to meet in the goods shed. I can well recall 1st June, 1913. I have never experienced colder weather than we had that night. My limbs were frozen stiff as I sat in the saddle on my return trip to Butler sometime after 9 p.m. I was

as tired as I was cold. Finally I decided I could not go further until I got some warmth into my bones. As I dismounted and my feet hit the ground I felt as if my feet would break and I fell forward on my face. I was wearing, in addition to other things, a little straw hat. I tore the paper lining from this and lit it to start a little fire on the roadside. I soon made a blaze with a few sticks and got a little warmth, but had hardly travelled on for more than a mile when I was as cold as before. On these trips I would reach home about 11.30. Everyone would be abed, which meant that I went supperless and cold to my bed. Once in the month was enough for that trip.

One Sunday in the month I would be at Tumby Bay for the afternoon service (there was no morning service there) and preach at Lipson at night. Frequently I would ride the 18 miles to Butler after the Lipson service. Sometimes I would be made a welcome guest in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Nankivell, one of the loveliest families I have known. One of the boys, Joe, was a great friend to me. He was a huge lump of a man and in his day was the outstanding sportsman of Eyre Peninsula. Joe went to Glen Iris College before I left the Peninsula. When the World War I broke out, Joe was one of the first to enlist. He was (to his parents' heartbreaking sorrow, and the loss of all who loved him, as I did) killed in action. His younger brother Wilfred took his place, and is to this day one of the most respected and scholarly preachers in the Australian Churches of Christ.

One Sunday in the month I was at Pillana. This was an easy and a delightful Sunday. Always the guest of Mrs. Black, devoted mother of George D. Black, one of our preachers, I enjoyed the company of Boswell and Will. Sometimes I was guest of Mr. and Mrs. Ira Durdin, a young couple in Cummins. Ira afterwards went to Glen Iris and studied for the ministry, and is still an esteemed minister in South Australia. I left home any time mid-week to make my way to Pillana, visiting en route and usually arriving about Friday night. Saturday we had sometimes the fun of a day's shooting. But the 45 miles or so to get there and back were a bit of a nightmare. Roads were poor and sometimes nonexistent. Twice I was lost. That is to say, I lost my way.

I well remember one afternoon riding along in the heat and dust of a February day on my way back to Ungarra from Pillana. It seemed to me, long as the days were, it would be impossible for me to reach my destination before nightfall. If I was going in the right direction, I said to myself, then the afternoon sun had got round to the wrong side, for it was in the northeast. I took out my watch and, using it as a compass, soon persuaded myself the sun was right and I was wrong. The watch can always be taken as a safe compass if the time is correct. The method is to hold the watch in the hand so that the direct light of the sun falls on the 12. Half way from the 12 to the little hand is always and unmistakably due north. It matters not the time of the day, this is always so, provided the observer is in the

southern hemisphere. So, the sun being right, I was clearly going the opposite to the way I should. Presently I met an old bearded man on a bony mount, driving a few scrawny sheep. He looked lonely and obviously wanted to stop and chat, but I was impatient to be going. He asked me where I was going and I told him Ungarra. He looked at me in amazement and said, "You're lost, ain't you?" No one likes to admit he is lost and I said, "No, not yet." He then enquired if I knew where I was. I replied, "No, I don't." "Then," he asked, "What's the difference? If a man doesn't know where he's at, he's lost, ain't he?" And he showed me my true direction. How many times since I have been reminded of this when men have told me that they were not lost. I talked to them about God, and when they acknowledged their complete ignorance of God and His ways, I would ask them what was the difference between being lost and not knowing the way.

Before I take my leave of Eyre Peninsula I shall set down one or two items that stand out as of unusual interest as I review the years.

It was at Port Neill, otherwise called Carrow, that I had my first wedding. Fred Burt and Annie Hunt were married there in the Burt home in February, 1914. I rode 12 miles from Butler for the occasion. There is no need to say it was hot. I remember the difficulty the guests had in getting inside the small room. It was suffocating. Many stood outside. After the service at 4 p.m. Fred and Annie went for a walk down and round the block and along the road into Port Neill. It was impossible for them to be out of sight of the onlookers, as the house was on a hill, and the countryside was cleared of all scrub. When they returned the entertainment took the form of games such as "Drop the handkerchief" and "Touch and go". And these were played in the appalling heat of a February afternoon at 5 o'clock. Fred, a little embarrassed, came to me and said, "That is not much of a saddle you have for your pony." I admitted it was a bit rough on the pony and not comfortable for me. Then he said, "I am sorry I can't pay you anything for all you have done for me today, but I will give you a better saddle and you can leave the old one here." I agreed. I hate to record that I felt more comfortable in the saddle I came in than the one I went home in. I am sure the pony felt the same. I fancy Fred got a wife and a good saddle the same day. But Fred was a great friend of mine and a man who was popular with many because of his sterling worth. They were grim days for others besides me.

It was at Port Neill cemetery that I had my first funeral, that of Mr. Jack Easter. I met Jack on the Monday night at the annual fruit social at Butler. Once a year we had as much fruit as we could eat. It was the only time some of the people saw fresh fruit for a whole year. Jack asked me if I would call and see him sometime. He reminded me that I had never called at his farm in the Hundred of Dixon and I need not keep away because he was a Methodist. I promised to call on Wednesday when passing on my way to Port Neill. He invited me to stay for

lunch. Although his wife was away with her people at Kadina, he and George would promise me a good meal. George was a young English immigrant with whom I was very friendly. He was about my age and a real pal. He was later to fall a victim in the World War I. As I rode into Jack's farm on the Wednesday, I met George riding at breakneck speed towards me. He told me Jack had fallen in the paddock and that he was riding for help. I went to the place where Easther was while George rode to Mr. Bawden's place for help. I saw that Jack had fallen beneath a bag of grain which he had been attempting to lift into the wagon. It seemed to me that he had a bad heart and so it proved.

When George returned without help, not finding anyone at Bawden's, we did the best we could to get the body to the house. Jack was a big man. The nearest police officer and the undertaker were at Tumby Bay, 25 miles away. I got a length of string and George and I used this to measure the body. I held the string to his head and George to his feet. We cut it off to the right length. Then we repeated the action. I sent George off with one to the grave digger at Port Neill and the other was for the undertaker. So the day for the funeral came. When we tried to lower the casket into the grave we soon discovered the grave was not long enough and the coffin stuck less than a half way down and we could not then get it up or down. That was the grave digger's job later.

I recall the 1st of January, 1914. We were holding a countryside picnic at Port Neill, a lovely beach. The sports programme, in which I was then, at 23, quite competent to take part and win a few prizes, was quite a good one. At lunch I shared the provisions provided by Mrs. Bawden. These Methodist friends were most kind to me and I often was a welcome guest in their home. During lunch Mrs. Bawden said to me, "You know, Mr. Raymond, I am not superstitious and never was, but I am glad 1913 is over. It has been an awfully hard year for all of us, and not without its tragedies. I am glad 1914 has come. We can now breathe a little more freely and look forward to a better year." 1914 saw one of the greatest droughts ever known in South Australia. And what was even worse, the outbreak of war, World War I.

At Butler I first tried my hand at farming in earnest. Mr. Young was ill during the seeding time of 1913. It was impossible to secure labour, and if it were available there was no money to pay for it. Mr. Young was making himself worse by worrying about his seed and "super" being out in the field and every day he was sick was so precious. In real desperation I promised that I would put in his crop for him. He was amused and a little sarcastic, but finally agreed that I could not possibly make matters worse. George, who was then about ten years old, came to the sheds to help me harness. I had been out a couple of hours earlier to feed the horses, but had never harnessed a team and anxiously watched George. I did exactly as he did. He was quite unaware of my ignorance in this matter and I was

determined he should remain so. What a time of it, he and young Bob would have given me if they had known I could not harness a horse. When all was in readiness I drove the team out to the paddock to the drill which was standing where it had last been used. I had already ridden around a field on a seed drill, two days before, having asked Charlie Humphrys if I could go with him. He had not been able to see the sense in this. Little did he know that I was keen to learn how the horses were attached to the drill and how and where the seed and super were loaded into the drill. These things I learned from Mr. Humphrys. I also learned from him how to distinguish wheat, oats and barley which before this had all been the same to me. And so, with this limited acquaintance with the seed drill I drove my team to the job. From this distance in time my most vivid memory is that of the frost. It was at sunrise and the cold was biting into my hands and feet. I hooked the horses to the drill and unhooked them. If horses ever considered people and their strange ways these horses must have considered me to be a new variety of humanity. But in reality I was practising harnessing horses. I was not again to be caught putting the collar on a horse the wrong way up. Finally, we got going. I rather enjoyed covering so much ground. When Mr. Young asked me the first night how I had got on and I told him I had covered so much ground and had used so much seed and super he thought there was something drastically the matter. He reckoned I was only wasting his precious seed. Mr. Humphrys came out to see me early the next day (bless him) and told me that if I tied some bushes on behind the drill I would cover the seed a bit and would be helped to see where I had gone up and down. I finished the 300 acres and felt proud of myself. About September I rode over to Mr. Young's (I was at this time living with a Mr. and Mrs. Jericho at Butler) and he suggested we go out and have a look at the crop. We got into my sulky and drove across the paddocks. I suggested that we tie the pony to a tree and walk through the crop but Mr. Young said no to that: we could drive through the crop. I asked if that would not damage the crop. "No," he said, "We can drive between the rows." And we certainly could. I had missed enough ground between the rows to drive a wagon and team. "Now you see why you covered so much country in one day. I thought you must be a mighty fast worker, or something was wrong," he said. However, he had plenty of country and so long as I did not waste the seed he was pleased. As a matter of fact, he was delighted with the crop and reaped from my sowing an average equal to any reaped by experienced farmers of the district.

The building in which we met at Butler was owned by the church. It was built by voluntary labour and certainly by unskilled workmen. It was a little building with the roof so placed that it could not be called a skillion-roof, nor a gable, nor a hip-roof. It was made of galvanized iron and the walls were low. The platform was only about 12 inches in height, but nevertheless too high for a tall man to use. Mr. Harkness had to preach standing on the floor or he would be touching the

ceiling. But it served a useful purpose and was used for state school as well as church services.



Mount Hill, Butler Church of Christ chapel.

At Ungarra we met in the home of Mr. Tom Pedler. We had a membership of 12 when I arrived. Later Mr. Norman Lawrie brought his bride from Adelaide and a couple of others were added. The first baptism I conducted at Ungarra was in the creek near Mr. Pedler's house. I remember Miss Mary Lawrie was one candidate and I think Mrs. Gavin Lawrie was the other. We had to arrange changing accommodation behind the bushes. There was no township of Ungarra when I arrived. Where the township now is, there was a navvies' camp. The railway line was going through the district and the township had not yet been surveyed. I did my best to conduct services amongst the men. Some were appreciative, but not many attended, and I discovered I was able to do a more effective ministry by visiting them in their tents at night. Some of the men were lonely and some were glad of a little company. When the camp moved north a Mr. Parr, an Adelaide surveyor, arrived to survey the township. He stayed at Mr. Pedler's. I well remember that at this time the Pedler family were away from home and Mr. Parr assumed responsibility for what we were to eat. This was the most glorious time of my sojourn on Eyre Peninsula, from the viewpoint of food. How many of Pedler's fowls and turkeys we ate, I cannot say. But we had a great time.

When the railway from Port Lincoln to Darke Peak was opened, the Government gave a free ride to all who cared to use the line. What an outing. The train arrived at Butler, or Mount Hill, at about 2 p.m. and reached the Peak well after dark. We all scrambled out of the carriages and made our fires, cooked our tea and did our best to make ourselves comfortable in the open. The train left again for Lincoln at about 7 a.m. Few who were able to go missed this trip. It was a highlight in the lives of many of us.

Mr. Harkness suffered a physical setback in 1913. He was so reduced in weight that he looked a walking skeleton. He finally had to lay down the work and take a long sea voyage. I was left to carry on without him. Tumby Bay had some very good men, able to speak well, and good business men as well as successful farmers. Outstanding among these men were Mr. Joseph Nankivell, Senior and Mr. Gilbert Hammond. Choice souls, both of them. Jesus said, *Many are called but few are chosen*. I sometimes think many are chosen but few are choice. Some of these Tumby Bay men were choice amongst the chosen.

It was at this time the Tumby Bay chapel was being erected. The Tumby Bay church was most fortunate in possessing a block of land in a good spot on the sea front and one that had on it a quantity of good quality South American grey granite. How we secured this block and how the granite got there is a story worth telling. First, about the land. This block was granted to the Roman Catholic church. They were not quite satisfied with it. It was felt by the majority of that church that the Tumby Bay township would grow, not along the beach front, but out along the Port Lincoln road. So they chose a block of land away from the township on the low flat country in which direction they anticipated the town would grow. That was more than 45 years ago. Their little church building today stands isolated on a mud flat in the winter and a dusty plain in the summer, remote from any part of the township. Such a mistake is rarely made by Roman Catholics when choosing a church site. The township grew along the sea front and the Tumby Bay chapel owned by our people is well placed in the town and in a position that gives one a beautiful view when approaching from the sea.



Tumby Bay chapel.

The stone from which the building is erected was brought to South Australia as ballast in a sailing ship which anchored at Tumby Bay to load wheat. The

shipping company paid the Tumby Bay church £25 for the privilege of dumping this valuable stone on the vacant block. It may be worth noting that the seating for the Tumby Bay chapel, in 1913, cost £26 (£26/5/6 to be exact).

Arthur J. Fisher, who graduated from Glen Iris College of the Bible in 1913, accepted the invitation of the Home Mission Committee to succeed Robert Harkness at Tumby Bay and arrived for the opening of the chapel in January, 1914. Ira A. Paternoster, then president of the South Australian Conference, preached at the opening services. Both Paternoster and Arthur Fischer, as his name was then spelt, wore their frock coats and bowler hats. Preachers of our brotherhood have boasted that they never distinguished themselves from their brethren, and dressed accordingly. But this was not quite true in the days when we wore our frock coats. Ira Paternoster was a great sport in those days, and many hours we spent shooting. He had an eye like a hawk and could spot a rabbit squatting in places where no one else would ever see it. We became fast friends. But it is not true that our first son was named after him, except in point of time. Our baby was so called because his mother was fond of singing and could not imagine anyone greater than Ira D. Sankey. The 'D' was found for us in the name Doley, her maiden name.

Many of the people whom I knew, and who befriended me in those difficult days, have long since left us for the Unseen World. I think of Mr. O. Forrester who was sent over there as a home missionary in 1910. I never quite knew his story. When I arrived, the dear simple soul was doing odd jobs for anyone who would employ him. He was reported as suffering from sun stroke. He certainly was not, at this time, in possession of all his senses. He was a great scholar in his day, having his M.A. from some English university. I often found him along some lonely road sitting in the shade of a tree. On many of these occasions he would assist me with my studies and help me immeasurably without being conscious of it. I am forever in his debt.

Another dear friend was Mr. Williams, who was a chemist in Tumby and whom I have mentioned in connection with my arrival at Tumby. He opened his home to me quite freely. I think it was on the January holiday in 1913 that I was invited by him to be one of a party to go out for the day in his yacht. I accepted the kindly invitation with great anticipation, but because of an accident to a man in the Butler district was unable to be in Tumby in time to go out in the boat. I brought the accident victim with me to Tumby, arriving late in the afternoon. The first news that greeted me was that the yacht had capsized and Mr. Williams was drowned, trying to save others.

Ellie Young was a girl six years old when I went to Butler. Every Christmas since then she has remembered me. It was a great thrill to me to be in Tumby Bay and

share with her host of friends in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of her birth.

In March, 1914 my savings bank account was almost exhausted. Enough was left for a boat ticket, and I felt it was now time for me to resign and go back home and look for a paying job. I was at the time living with Mr. Jericho, who kept the local post office. I gave him a telegram to send to Mr. D. A. Ewers, acquainting him of my intention. He must have held it up. Before Mr. Ewers received my wire I had one from him inviting me to take up the work on the Murray River, living at Berri, at a salary of £2 per week. I accepted the invitation.

CHAPTER 5

THE MURRAY RIVER . . . BERRI . . . AND OTHER PLACES

I arrived in Berri the first week in April, 1914. All that I possessed in things that could be handled was packed into a wooden boot box, a soft wooden case about 30 inches long with handles each end.

I had taken the train, the only one each day, from Adelaide at 1 p.m., arriving at Morgan at about 5.30. That was the end of the line. The instructions I had were to have dinner at the hotel and then book a passage on the motor car service that was the only means provided for the Renmark passengers. The Renmark cars did not call at Berri in those days. I was advised that if I sent a telegram to Mr. Edwards, he with others would be on the Renmark Road (near Spring Cart Gully, I believe) to meet me. The car was due at that spot at about 11 p.m. It so happened that on the day I arrived at Morgan there were no cars going to Renmark. Upon enquiry I learned that the annual race meeting was being held at Renmark that day and all the motor cars were at that end. I did not know what to do as I had already sent a wire to Edwards to meet me.

Finally, it was agreed that John Smith, the mail carrier, would take me on his truck. It might mean that I would be a little later when we reached the place where I was to alight, but my friends would understand and wait. So I got aboard with my boot box. We certainly were late. John did not seem in the least bit of a hurry. It was 3 a.m. when we arrived. We had been expected at 11 p.m. "This is where you get off," John said. "This is where I don't get off. There is no one here and I cannot find the way four miles through the scrub to Berri." There were signs of someone having been there, the fire still burning on the road side. We tooted but there was no response. John informed me that if I went on to Renmark I would not get a bed anywhere as the place was overcrowded. I convinced him that there was more hope of getting a bed in Renmark than there was here on the roadside. I could at least remain in his lorry till daybreak. We finally agreed that I go on.

We got nearly as far as the Renmark gates leading into the Avenue when we saw a couple of men in a spring-cart. Quite merry, they were. John asked them if they would assist me to Berri. They agreed and my box was hoisted up and I sat between the two men, Bob Butcher and Tom Bland. They were very drunk, and not nice company. I got to know these men later and found them good chaps, and they often proved friendly to me, but not on this occasion. About four miles out

from Berri, and not much after 4 a.m., it dawned on them to ask me who I was and where I was from. I told them in as few words as possible, but not few enough. They there and then decided that they were not giving rides to any parson, and I could get out. I had to get out and they drove off without me and with my precious box. I ran in an attempt to catch them and kept running in the hope that if I could not catch them I would at least find my way into Berri by following them.

I was almost in a state of collapse by the time I reached what afterwards proved to be the boundary gates of the Berri settlement. There and then I gave up the chase and, resting until I found my strength and my breath, I leisurely made my way into the settlement. I knew less than nothing of Berri and did not know what to expect. I walked down the hill that led into the settlement and saw a man with a lantern walking towards me. I knew him afterwards as Mr. McGilton. I asked him if he could direct me to Mr. Edwards's home. Fortunately, Mr. Edwards lived at that end of the settlement and I was only a few hundred yards from my destination.

The day was breaking when I entered Mr. Edwards's orchard. I had only entered a few paces when his dog, Mick, held me up and dared me to advance. I was glad to hear Mr. Edwards call out, "Who is it?" When told my story, the good man and Mrs. Edwards were greatly distressed. It was not long before they had me fed and in bed, clad in pyjamas three sizes too big. I was glad of the opportunity of a sleep, but had hardly gone off when Mr. Wishart, a neighbour, knocked to ask if the new minister had arrived. Presently Mr. Edwards came in to inform me that Mr. Wishart (who was a carpenter now turned fruit-grower and, because a carpenter, the local coffin-maker) wanted me to conduct a funeral at 9.30. Mr. Jim Moritz's little baby was to be buried and there was no minister in the settlement. I did as asked, with what embarrassment! I had no Bible, no burial service, and very little experience. But I read some appropriate scripture, prayed, and tried to comfort the parents, and then returned to my disturbed sleep. That night my box was recovered from two very apologetic and much sobered men.

The next day we had our first services in Berri, both held in the home of Mr. Edwards. It was following the morning service, with seven present who were members and a few others, that we set about forming the church. The Lord's Table had been set up by Mr. Edwards and A. G. Jarvis since about 1911. I think those present who were members were Mr. and Mrs. Edwards and Miss Taylor (afterwards Mrs. Gernsey), Mr. Jarvis and George, Harold Clarke and Mrs. James. The Simon family were at the evening service when sixteen were present.

It was not long before we had to find better accommodation for our growing congregation.

There was in the little township of Berri a large room that had been built for an implement shed. It had large doors in the front, large enough to use for agricultural implements, and one small door at the rear. It was built of iron and was not lined nor ceiled and was without windows. Measuring about 18 by 25 feet, it was a veritable hot-shop in the summer. We hung a few hurricane lanterns about for night use. We had an old piano provided for our use and I also used the top of the piano as my preaching desk, standing on a box hidden behind the piano. It was crude, but blessed.

Our first two converts were two young men, Tom Simon and Joe Stittiford. These two young men were the first ever immersed in the Murray River at Berri, and the only ones that I know of. The time chosen for the baptism was a Sunday afternoon and the place chosen was opposite Mr. A. G. Jarvis's orchard. We used Mr. Jarvis's camp (many of the people called their temporary dwelling camps) for changing purposes. The river was in flood, but Mr. Jarvis assured us he had taken all precautions to ensure that the place was safe and the ground solid. I baptized Joe first, and experienced a sensation that made me shudder as Joe left the water. It was worse as Tom stepped into the water. As soon as I had immersed Tom, sensing the danger and not waiting for me, he attempted, successfully, to swim out. I was just reached and drawn ashore in time by someone who realized what was happening. And then it happened. The whole side of the cliff on which we were standing gradually slid into the fast-flowing river. Had I been another minute, less by far, in the water I should have been whirled away in the current of the Murray, a mighty river when in flood.

On returning to Berri after a visit to Pyap West, the first thing I noticed as I approached the town was the heap of iron and old timber where the hall had stood. I was faced immediately with the fact that we, as the Berri church, were now without a meeting-place. As Mr. Edwards and I were talking over the problem near his Berri store one evening during the same week, wondering what we could do for Sunday, we observed the approach of Mr. Harris. Immediately I knew what we should do. I asked Mr. Harris if I could rent his house, a four-roomed galvanized iron structure in what was then the main street at Berri, still a bush settlement with unmade roads. He was unwilling at first, but finally agreed to let us have it for 15/- per week. He also agreed to my making any alterations provided that, when it was no longer needed, we handed back the house in the condition in which we had received it. We took out the partition in the two front rooms and so made one room measuring 16 feet by 30 feet.

I knew that Mr. Edwards was anxious to find a man who could assist him in the shop, so I wrote to Mr. Ted Grigg on Eyre Peninsula, who had been, with his family, among my best friends while I was at Tumby Bay. I told Mr. Grigg of the opening and assured him that I could find him accommodation at 12/6 per week.

He arrived with Mrs. Grigg and Jack and Irene and accepted the unused portion of the house. I was happy about this because I was assured of the rent for the church portion and had a good caretaker in Mrs. Grigg. And we had four new members.

Indeed we soon had more than four. A few weeks later Mr. and Mrs. Neilly, Mrs. Grigg's parents, drove all the way from Tumby Bay to Berri, not by motor car but by horse and buggy. Two elderly people, they were delightful souls, in whose home I had often slept at Tumby Bay. These were followed by three of Mr. Grigg's married daughters who were also members. I might add that I was able to let the building one night every week to the library committee, for which we received 2/6, and on two other nights the room was let for a like amount. In the two years we used this house as a meeting-place we were able to pay our rent and save enough by letting to purchase a block of land upon which to build a chapel. Mr. Edwards was enterprising enough to build a hall beside his large shop, which was then in the most prominent place in the town. We gladly surrendered to Mr. Harris the house we had used, with the partition restored, and hired Mr. Edwards's larger hall, which was, until then, the best hall I had used anywhere. We had many conversions and baptisms in Mr. Edwards's hall.

Until we met in Mr. Edwards's hall there was one very disturbing thing about our morning services. It was the reading of the weekly mail in church before service, a thing which caused a very late start with the services and one which ill prepared us for what was to follow. The cause of this was that in the early days of Berri the one mail a week always arrived on Saturday night. Many people waited until late on Saturday night for its arrival and often went home without it. Then any mail one had to collect would be gathered on Sunday morning. I am sure 'collect' and 'gathered' are the right words. The storekeeper who was acting as postmaster for Berri never sorted the mail for its recipients but emptied the contents of the bags on to the counter, where anyone looking for mail must needs go through the heap and turn it over and over until he secured what he could legitimately claim as his own. Imagine fifty people trying to get mail under these conditions on a Sunday morning!

Then, with all the eagerness of people in lonely places, they read their letters before attempting anything else. One would read walking to the hall and, indeed, in the hall. When the letters were finished there were the papers and magazines. Often have I seen members of the congregation casting furtive glances at the open page on their knees while I was attempting to preach. Never once did I rebuke one for this. I felt it would have been a much wiser thing to change the time of service. But if we had done that the gathering of mail would have had to wait till people came for the service, or the service would not have been attended at all. These conditions improved with mail facilities keeping pace with our growing township.

With headquarters at Berri I was expected to cover a lot of country. Mr. Will Ewers had visited Berri and other places in the Murray Valley with a view to ascertaining what help was available from the district if a preacher could be provided. He made his enquiries at the request of the Home Mission Committee. The result was something like this: the few at Berri had promised to raise 10/- per week; at Pyap West 5/- or more (depending on services given); at Renmark 5/-; and at Noora 2/6. These places were separated by great distances, and to raise the money from the little groups meant keeping in touch with them. I went to Pyap West every month, visiting Loxton and Noora on the same trip. I had a service at Renmark, meeting in an olive grove on a Sunday afternoon, every fortnight, being present at Berri in the morning and evening of the same day.

To cover these distances I had to provide my own conveyance. At this time I again had only a bicycle which was out of the question for the distances to be covered. I borrowed money from my father to buy the first pony I had at Berri. I shall make a separate story of my experience in horse-dealing.

My initial visit to Pyap West was made through the kindness of A. G. Jarvis who loaned me his unusually good horse, Fortune, a four-year-old entire with all the appearances of a blood animal. I set out on this beast on the morning of Easter Monday, 1914 to find Pyap West. I wore leggings (up to the knees) and a cap, and I weighed 7 stone 10 lb. I crossed the river by punt and took the road to Loxton, 13 miles distant. It was the day for the annual race meeting at Loxton, a fact made increasingly apparent to me as I rode towards the township which I reached about noon. Along the road young men on horseback, scores of them, came riding alongside all intent on knowing the horse's name and for which races he was entered and what were his chances. It was impossible for me to make them believe I was not riding in the races. So finally I told them his name was Fortune Teller, and that I must not ride him too fast, so they had better hurry on if they would be in time for the first race. It was not so easy for me to be rid of them and I was pestered till we reached the course. When I rode past, some came after me to assure me there was only one entrance and I would not find one further on. However, I rode on to find Loxton the most deserted town I had ever visited. Even the hotel was closed and there was no place in the town to buy a meal. Everyone was at the races. I was relieved when about 2 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. Edwards arrived in the little dusty township. All they had to eat was a watermelon. I shared this, and Fortune shared some of the feed Mr. Edwards brought for his horse.

Shortly after this I saw a man at the Post Office and hurried to ask him for direction to help me find Pyap West. He proved to be the Congregational minister. He put me on the wrong road. I can hardly believe this was intentional, but since he conducted services at Pyap West and knew the way, I could never

understand why he so misdirected me. I rode 8 miles, making 21 thus far for Fortune, to find upon enquiry at a farm that I would have to return to Loxton and go by a different route. So I made my way back to Loxton. It was after 5 p.m. when I got there, and Fortune had taken me almost 30 miles, a fair day's work. I tried to get accommodation in Loxton, but these confounded race meetings had always thrown my plans into confusion, and so it was that this little place was overgrown for the night with men with money. So I had to ride out to Pyap West.

I saw some young fellows riding out along the road I was now directed to take and asked if they could tell me how to get to Pyap West. "Follow us," some called. "We are going there." But their horses were fresh, while mine was stiff in the legs and hungry. I could only get a walk from Fortune. Progress was slow and presently the moon was shining and I was cold and hungry and beaten. I said to myself, or to Fortune, "This is it." I dismounted, took off the saddle and, placing it under a tree, used it for a pillow, trying to cover myself with leaves and the saddle-cloth. Everything was quiet. Too still.

About 10 p.m., or a little later, I saw a man lighting his pipe, by which I mean I saw the flame of a match, with the well known rise and fall of the flame which is so common when men light their pipes. I was sincerely thankful this one night of my life that someone had discovered tobacco and that men smoked. I jumped to my feet and coo-eed. He called back and presently I reached him with my story. He took me in and had Fortune fed and housed. He and his wife laid an uncommon but most welcome supper before me. He was a German, as were most of the residents of this part of the country, as I was to discover in a few months. They placed before me a large bowl of hot porridge. The man of the house offered thanks, or asked a blessing, in broken English and then commanded me to eat. I was offered nothing else, and as I was about to rise from the table I was commanded to sit. I thought I was about to be told I must ask to leave the table. But rather I had to wait for thanks to be returned for what we had eaten. For both of these exercises, asking the blessing and returning the thanks, we stood. Then my host led me out to the barn and made up a bed on an old mattress in the corner. I did not go to sleep that night until I had on my own behalf offered thanks for my Father's providential care and bountiful provision for both myself and a very tired horse.

Next morning I was stiffer than I had been for many a day, because of the previous day's long ride in the saddle. We returned to the kitchen and the second bowl of porridge. There was, as I remember, only porridge, of course with milk and sugar. For this tender treatment of man and beast, the old German farmer charged me ten shillings. I hated to tell him that that was all I had with me and paid it out gladly. Ten shillings in 1914 was really some money. Consider, I was only getting £2 per week. I reached Pyap West at 5 o'clock on Tuesday after-

noon. That is to say, I reached the home of George May, whose guest I was to be. It took me some time to find the farm. Was I glad of a hot stew and dessert! And to sleep again between sheets after a hot 'tub'! Then followed some happy days in the district where I remained for the Sunday services.

I paid several visits to Pyap West and beyond. I used to do what was regarded as a dangerous thing in order to shorten the journey. Avoiding going up stream to Martin's punt to cross the river, I would ride my pony across, making an amusing sight with my feet on the horse's neck in an attempt to keep dry. Never once did my pony let me down; never once did I get wet. Often I reached the opposite bank a long way downstream from where I had entered the water, so strong was the current.

Services were conducted on the Sunday evening in the Pyap West hall. Our congregation often numbered over one hundred. Louis Curtis shared the preaching with me. Lew was a graduate of Glen Iris College of the Bible, and an excellent preacher. I never quite understood why he did not take up the ministry, but he had a bent for politics. He was a Socialist and I think he felt he could not find freedom within the church for the expression of his socialistic politics. He was ambitious also to serve the Labor Party. But he was a good Christian and a successful preacher. He farmed with his brother Bob on a property in Mantung, I think near to Hampton Well. He was a dear friend of mine as were Bob and his wife; and the weariness of the trip to Pyap West, and additional 11 miles to Bob's place were soon forgotten in the company of these lovely souls.

Not far from the Curtis farm was the farm of Alexander Gordon, the father of three more or less famous preachers with our people in Australia and U.S.A. There were Con, one of the early lecturers in the College of the Bible, Linley, who later was a world traveller and lecturer in the Carnegie Peace Movement, and Gifford who was outstanding in his work in the U.S.A. prohibition campaign. I never got very close to Mr. Gordon, senior, who was, to me, a difficult man. His brother Donald, father of James Gordon, so well known in Western Australia as a preacher, was of a different type and one of the dearest old men I knew. Mrs. Alexander Gordon was a sweet and humble soul. She was later, with her daughter Jessie, to be a member of the Nailsworth church when I ministered there. I was with her in her final illness and conducted her funeral service. It was at Nailsworth I got to know Linley when he was on his last visit to his mother.

Not far from the Curtis farm was the Veitch Experimental Farm of which Laurie Davie was manager. No man in the countryside was more respected than he. Often we had a preaching service in the spacious dining room of the farm homestead. I would be there over night on the Saturday, conducting a Sunday

morning service at the farm and then riding seven miles for the services to follow in the Pyap West hall.

Following my regular visits to Pyap West I would plan to leave there on Tuesday, using the Monday for a little follow-up visiting. I would make the 11 miles to Loxton by lunch-time, and would spell my horse there for a couple or three hours before setting out for Noora, on the Brown's Well line where we would have a little service in the home of the Connigrave family. I conducted only two or three services there as the distance to be covered was more than the poor attendance of five or six warranted. I would ride home the 14 or so miles to Berri on the Wednesday.

I remember one occasion when I left Curtis's farm one Tuesday in February in an effort to reach Berri in time for a business meeting at night. The distance was about 38 miles. (With regard to all these distances I am speaking from memory.) It was a long, tiring journey on a blazing hot day. I was not able to give the pony the customary spell at Loxton, but was on the road as soon as he had got through his bit of feed and I had swallowed down a few sandwiches and a cup of tea. I debated whether the pony was too tired to swim the river, but we made the attempt and it was touch and go. Just as the brave little fellow was clambering up the bank, a couple of fellows, fishing from the bank nearby made some remark which I did not catch but which I felt was not complimentary. I stopped to ask them what it was they had said. "Just remarking what a lovely job parsons have with nothing to do but ride about all day." I was too disgusted to reply. Arriving home at sundown, I went straight to my meeting without a bite after seeing to it that the pony would get his without delay.

We were not successful in our efforts to establish a church at Renmark. A Mr. Ellersly, one time of the church at Stirling in the Mount Lofty Ranges, who was at this time an orchardist at Renmark, gathered a few neighbours for an afternoon service. We had no hall available and no house could quite accommodate our numbers, so we met in an olive grove. It was a delightful place in which to meet in the summer, but we had to forgo the services in the winter.

To ride 14 miles after the morning service at Berri and be back in Berri for the evening service was too much like my Eyre Peninsula experience and so I dropped the Renmark venture after the first summer. The strenuous circuit work was telling on me and my health was beginning to suffer. My nerves were at the point of cracking. It was a great sorrow to me to have to abandon the work on the other side of the river, but circumstances finally compelled me to do so.

When I went to Berri I had no horse. I borrowed the money from my father to buy my sulky and pony in 1914. Not long afterwards we had one of the worst

droughts that South Australia had known. Towards the end of 1914 and early in 1915 horse-feed was almost unprocurable. One day, when the Murray was lower than it had ever been known before, I saw horses and cattle standing in the shallow water of one of the backwaters of the river. The poor brutes had gone into the stagnant water to eat the green slimy substance floating on the surface, and because of their weakness were unable to lift their hoofs from the mud and so died where they stood. I decided that my little pony was not going to die that way, so I took him out to Spring Cart Gully and after patting him a little, shot him and burned him. I walked home as one returning from the funeral of a dear friend.

So now I had a sulky and harness and no pony. I did the best I could with a bike. One day Constable Jones came to see me. He had a horse and saddle he wanted to exchange for my sulky and harness. He had another horse and a wife, was his argument, and I had neither and so did not need a sulky so much as he; a saddle and bridle would do me. I was not sure about the horse, but as I had now missed a couple of visits to Pyap West I consented to the exchange. What a horse! What a brute! By the time I got to Loxton I was aching with the strain of keeping him on the road. He was a big fellow and strong, but I could not get him to swim the river. All the time going from home he had his head half turned in an effort to face the homeward way, but when riding towards home I had to hang on for dear life. Two such trips to Bob Curtis's place were as many as I could stand. Bob told me he would let me have his pony Dolly and he would take my big fellow and put him in the team. I jumped at this until Mr. Curtis said he would expect £5 to boot. That was a lot of money for me, but I agreed. And what a delight it was to ride Dolly. No one ever enjoyed driving a new car more, nor could one have been more satisfied with it, than I with Dolly. This little mare could amble along at about 7 miles an hour, and riding was like sitting in a rocking chair. She was also a trained jumper as well as a prize-winning trotter at the show, and I was proud of her. I finally sold her for £11 to Jack Grigg. I would never have parted with her, but I wanted to get married, and I so badly needed money. So again I was without a horse. Not long after our marriage we invited Mary's mother and father to holiday with us. When they saw me struggling up the hill on my bike to the little house we rented, and when they also saw that I had no means of showing them the country-side, they agreed that if I could find a good pony and trap they would buy it for me. And so I came by my third pony in the Berri work. I took this pony away with me. He was a sturdy and useful horse and I did not part with him until I left the Kersbrook work to go to Gawler.

For the first year of my ministry at Berri I lived with Mr. and Mrs. Edwards and family. Seymour Edwards was one of the easiest men to get along with that I ever met, and Mrs. Edwards was our friend all through the years. When I went there to live, Edna and Doreen were not yet in their teens and Ella, sometimes called

Minnie, was old enough to be our church organist. For the most part while living as boarder with the Edwards' I used my own tent which was erected in their back-yard. I paid £1 for board and washing.

Towards the end of 1914, I suffered excruciatingly with toothache, particularly Sunday nights, when I seldom got a wink of sleep. I took the first chance of consulting a visiting dentist, a representative of F. W. Grote, of Adelaide. He at once advised the removal of every tooth in my head. And so on December 12, 1914 (my mother's birthday, I recall) Mrs. Simon drove me to Renmark in her spring cart. I was to be there without having had breakfast by 9 a.m. Dr. Lucas (more often drunk than sober) was to give the anaesthetic. While I was sitting in the surgery waiting for the doctor to arrive from the hotel, I was handed the *Advertiser* of the day before. The first thing I read was headed "Death in a Dentist's Chair". Then followed the news that a Mrs. Champion, of Port Pirie, had died while under an anaesthetic in the dentist's chair. I felt more than a little disturbed.

I rested in the dentist's rooms till after one o'clock and then staggered down the street to find a cup of tea. I found that the only food available was meat pies, two of which I washed down with a pot of tea. Mrs. Simon called for me at three o'clock and off we went on the 14 mile journey home. When I arrived home, Mrs. Edwards dished up a hot dinner of hashed meat on toast. This indiscretion was overlooked later in the evening when the gentle soul put a golden sovereign in my hand to help pay my expenses, £14 in all.

I know I ought to have gone to bed. But I had a baptismal service that night. My head was thumping. How I got through I do not know. Edna Edwards was to be baptized, and this is how it was done. The service was held on Mr. Edwards's back verandah, one end of which was the family bathroom. The end of the bathroom was removed for the purpose and I baptized Edna in the bath. Anything wrong with that? Only one thing, so one carping critic thought. It was this. In the Bible it is said that they both went down into the water. In this case I did not go into the water. But I have known people say even sillier things than that when it comes to the celebration or administration of the ordinances of our Lord.

I met Edna again many years later when she visited Perth for the wedding of her second daughter. When I had her and Jack Grigg with me for a day one of the first things Edna asked me was whether I remembered her baptism.

I was persuaded by D. A. Ewers, then Home Mission Secretary, to discontinue my strenuous circuit work and concentrate more in the immediate Berri area which was constantly expanding. So we started services in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gray at Winkie. Mr. Jim Norman approached me to see if we could put up some

kind of a building at Winkie to be used as a day school as well as a chapel. For this purpose he gave a small piece of land. In time we built a little asbestos hall, mainly through the help of the Sunday School Union, as our youth work in South Australia was then known. Brother Barton Manning came to help with the opening services. The work at Berri was growing. We had already built the Berri chapel. Mr. Harold Ackland was the contractor. Mary laid the foundation stone in 1917. When the building was complete Mr. Jabez Wiltshire came to conduct special opening services. Ira was then one month old. Remarkable interest was shown in these meetings. Mr. William Matthews, then more than 70 years of age, rode his bike all the way from Morgan, 60 or 70 miles away, and helped magnificently with all the services.

At the end of 1917 we had notice to quit the house we occupied. No other place was obtainable and so I tendered my resignation. The church held a special meeting and decided to erect a manse next to the chapel where limited space was available. Promises of help were readily forthcoming. Mr. Ackland promised to direct operations. Mr. Jarvis promised to cart the sand. Another promised the lime and another offered the loan of moulds to make the sand bricks with which we decided to build. But, alas! they were promises, just promises! I went to Mr. Jarvis to ask when he would start carting the sand, as we could not commence brick-making till we had the sand. He then said how sorry he was that he was too busy, but if I felt that I could cart the sand he would lend me the two horses and dray. It was my experience in Berri, more so than any other place I have known, that most people envied the easy life of the preacher. I know they thought I could well occupy myself with a little hard work such as they had to do.

So I took the horses and tip-dray three days a week and carted 65 yards of sand from the sand pit a mile or so from the chapel. I then went to see the man who had promised the lime, but he was not able to find the cash till after harvest. So I borrowed Mr. Burnell's horses and trolley and carted and paid for all the lime.

With the limited help of one or two men, I started making the bricks, big fellows, made from lime and sand. I had nearly 900 made and set out to dry on vacant land about the place when we had a great thunderstorm and downpour. The bricks for the most part were absolutely ruined as were my hopes.

Again I resigned. Another meeting was called and more promises were made. Mr. Arndt promised that if we would build with reinforced concrete (lime concrete, that is, cement being out of the question) he would cart all the stone and give wire for reinforcements.

We were now living, and had been for many weeks, on the verandah of Mr. Harold White's home. Harold White afterwards joined the Methodist ministry in

South Australia. He was most kind, but we could not continue there, so we secured a tent, and for an eating room used the church vestry, a little eight by eight feet three-ply room in the corner of the chapel. We had little privacy. I wanted so badly to relinquish the work with Frank on the way, and Mary far from well. But I felt uncertain of any future as a minister if I left Berri, and so decided to remain and try again for a house. As it happened, I need not have feared. When a few months later I did definitely decide to quit, I discovered to my amazement that offers were coming from several churches for my services.

Mr. Arndt was true to his word and carted the stone. I carted more sand and lime, and we commenced. The men would come every night after 5 o'clock and place the boards and fill in the concrete. I rose every morning at 5 o'clock and mixed the huge heap of concrete. I mixed all the concrete that went into the manse for the two bed-rooms 14 feet by 14, a dining room 16 feet by 14, a little kitchen and a little study. The walls went up, but we could not get supplies of timber from the city without the greatest difficulty, while iron for roofing was out of the question. (It must be remembered that I am writing of the darkest days of World War I.) We used timber planks overlaid with tarred felt for roofing. The walls were nicely plastered and the ceilings were of lath and plaster. We stained the boards. We dispensed with verandahs, and we did without mantle shelves. I painted the exterior myself. The irony of it all was that we lived in it for only 5 months. Our baby was born in this house, without a doctor. We had only been there a short time when we felt we must close our work.

The reason was that the Home Mission Committee was urging me to open up the work in Cobdogla. There was nothing to open up with, and the prospects were not in the least promising. It was reported to me, however, that the Congregationalists were planning to start in Cobdogla, and I was urged to be first in the field. I replied that if the Home Mission Committee could find no nobler or more Christian reason for wanting to start in Cobdogla than that we must beat the Congs to the post, then I would have none of it.

The work was never really started in Cobdogla. I did hold a few services there, and I conducted the first funeral in the Cobdogla cemetery on 30th August, 1918. Cobdogla Cemetery was then an unfenced piece of scrub with no roads. The township of Barmera came into existence after I left, and so the unholy rush to be first in the field was on again. The history of our work in Barmera shows that the Lord's hand was never in it, and His blessing never upon it. The building was destroyed by "an act of God" in the form of a fierce storm. It was re-erected, but finally moved to another part of South Australia, where it could serve some useful purpose.



Berri Church of Christ, opened 1917.

I was in Berri all through the years of World War I. I was in Loxton the day the news of the declaration of war came through. From away back in the days of my youth we could foresee the coming of this war. And when it came I was in the thick of the enemies' camp. I went into a tea-room in Loxton for a meal, being on my way from Pyap West to Berri. The tea-rooms were owned, as was most of the countryside round Loxton, and more than half the town, by German settlers. There was such excitement in this overcrowded eating-house that I was completely bewildered. When a Mr. Coffee, whom I knew, came in, I beckoned him to my table and asked him what the excitement was about. We were the only two Britishers there. He told me that war had been declared and these men were voicing their support for the Kaiser. Many of them were soon to be interned for the duration of the war. Some of my warmest friends were also interned only

because they had German names. Some were indiscreet and their indiscretion cost them dearly.

I was always a pacifist, a fact that brought me as much trouble as careless talk by men with German names brought them. When W. M. Hughes, whom I heard in Adelaide after his return from Britain and France, made his appeal for conscription, I was one who opposed it. I became secretary of the Berri Anti-conscription League, to the disgust of many of my congregation. Hughes was so certain that conscription would be carried that he set the machinery in motion before the vote of the people had been taken. So I had to report for service. I could have claimed exemption on the grounds of my profession, and of being married, but did not want to shelter under this protection. I was so bullied about by the major who was enrolling the conscripts that I reminded him that we had not yet got conscription and that I was not going to be rudely ordered about by him. Without completing any further orders I walked out and went home.

I had only returned from my honeymoon the previous week and so could claim exemption on the grounds of marriage. As I have said, I could also have claimed exemption from service, even if conscription were brought in, on the grounds that I was a minister of religion, but this I determined I would never do. Captain Essington Day, an upstart, was sent after me to bring me back to the recruiting office. Day's father was the government surveyor who had been responsible for the survey of the irrigation settlements and was highly esteemed, as was also his sister, Miss Muriel Day, a singer of some class and a willing helper in every effort to raise money for the Belgian Relief Fund and other charities. But I had little respect for Essington, mainly because on one occasion when I was standing outside the local barber's shop, Day had ridden up (he was a cavalry officer) and without any suggestion of a greeting or any kind of asking, thrown the reins at me saying, "Here, you! Hold my horse." I had caught the reins and as soon as he had disappeared thrown them on the ground and walked away. Granted he did not know me, but what difference ought that to have made?

I saw enough of militarism to view it with the utmost disgust. One brand is as bad as another, and German militarism, so much discredited in the First World War, was no worse than any other kind. When this man, Day, came to make me return to the recruiting office I told him I had no intention of doing so. He asked on what grounds, so I told him I was a married man and was not under obligation to enrol. When asked for proof of my marriage I introduced him to Mary and produced my marriage lines. But this was not enough and so I had to make a statutory declaration before a J.P.

From then on I was out to fight conscription. This did not enhance my popularity in some quarters, though it did in others. I was, in that year, a member of the

Berri football team. Many of the team would attend my evening services, but others utterly disliked me because of my attitude to the conscription issue. When we played the Renmark team I was badly manhandled. The opposition became so unsportsmanlike that I had to leave the team and give up the game. I do not remember ever saying one word against anyone who held a contrary view. It was a principle I was opposing. But I was called pro-German and once found a white feather on my preaching desk.

Mr. Taylor, editor of the Renmark *Pioneer*, publicly challenged me to debate the issue and made much of my refusal to do so. He had his paper with which to attack me, but I refused to use the pulpit for an attack on anyone or for any other purpose than Bible teaching and gospel preaching.

It was a relief to us all when the Armistice was signed in 1918. I well recall the night of the 11th November. Perce Knight, one of the engine drivers at the pumping station, had been known to be practising for months to play the national anthem on his steam siren. And, believe it or not, he so pulled the strings on that night that we could recognize the anthem. It was a great night of rejoicing even in our somewhat isolated little settlement.

Harry Emerson Fosdick in his autobiography tells us of Frederick C. Howe. When Howe finished the final draft of his autobiography he submitted it to his wife for her criticism, and having read it, she exclaimed, laughing: "But, Fred, weren't you ever married?" "Oh, yes," he stammered, "I'll put that in." So shall I.

I was married at Hindmarsh Church of Christ on September 14, 1916, Jabez Wiltshire performing the ceremony. And from that day until Feb 1, 1930, when Mary was taken from me, in all I have said about my work I should have been using the pronoun "we". It was Mary and I. She was a grand wife and an ideal one for a minister.

I had only known Mary twelve months when we married. It was at the conference in Adelaide in 1915 that Theo Edwards introduced us. She had been the soloist in the conference choir, a soprano of unusual talent. We spoke together for only a brief few minutes and I went away and thought no more of it. A few weeks later I received from her a request for a paper for the C.E. Society of which she was a member. I sent it. She wrote and thanked me. I replied in acknowledgement. She wrote back to say it was kind of me to do so. At Christmas she sent me a copy of Whittier's poems. In February of 1916 I was in Adelaide on annual holiday and Mary was at the train to meet me. I met her again the next night and gave her a ring. I did not see her again till I went to the city for the next conference, when we were married. Her father, Thomas Doley, was an elder in the Hindmarsh church and all the family were active workers. During the

reception in the church hall we were all in good spirits and the toasts were accepted with enthusiasm. Half way through the function some one broke into the proceedings with the news that Frank Doley, a cousin, had been killed in action. It was an official announcement and put an end to all jollification that night.

I took Mary to Berri. We had a poor little rented house with a few bits of second-hand furniture, mostly hers. Our dining-room suite and the double bed were bought at the auction sale of the furniture from the home of Sir Samuel Way, late Chief Justice and Lieutenant Governor of South Australia. The dining-room suite of a couch, five chairs and two easy chairs is still in my possession. When we returned from our honeymoon, all the money in the world we had between us amounted to £4, but we had not a debt in the world, and a month's pay of £8 to come the next week. Notwithstanding poverty, I never once heard Mary complain. Even during her long illness she never once murmured. Of her illness I shall say more.

Marriage was heaven to me. For three years before Mary came I had been baching. At the rear of Mr. Edwards's store he had erected a little galvanized-iron room for the use of the National Bank. The room which measured 8 x 10 feet was a little gable-roof structure, unlined and unceiled. It had a door front and back and one little window. Its only furniture was a rather wide counter such as is used in banks, but certainly not polished. As the bank only used this place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays, I was able to rent it for 2/6 per week. When the bankers arrived, I had to have my bed, meat-safe, other items of furniture and books taken out and put in the back of Edwards's store.

Mr. Edwards was generous to me and gave me a key to the back door of his shop. I would help myself and make an entry of every purchase made. Often, coming in hungry from a long ride after an absence of a few days, I found this key handy. It was then, and so often on other occasions, I would make my meal of tinned beef and biscuits with tomato sauce. For dessert I would have tinned pears, my favourite canned fruit, and condensed milk. It must be understood that I had no cooking facilities apart from a little spirit lamp to boil a kettle. I kept this unwholesome diet going for far too long and living under these conditions brought on a breakdown in my health.

I can say without exaggeration that almost all my adult years were accompanied by indifferent health. This may have been due, in part, to constitutional causes. My mother was never strong and I can scarcely remember her being in good health. She used to laugh in telling us that Dr. James of Moonta told her father she must never marry. When he heard she was married he is reported to have said she would never have a child. He attended her at her first confinement and warned her against ever having another, but she had twelve children and lived to

pass her 89th year. My father was always a strong man and, not knowing what illness was in his own experience, he showed little sympathy to others who did. Often I heard him say, "Look at her — like a dying duck in a thunderstorm".

I am sure that I brought upon myself much of the trouble from which I suffered through my own indiscretions in bachelor days. I ate wrongly, rested too little and in other ways hurt my health by things I ought never to have done. It is a fact that from December 12, 1914 until mid-April 1915, I did not have a tooth in my head. I carried on my work and preached regularly. I also took a prominent part in the campaign for the closing of hotel bars at 6 p.m., a campaign that was wholly successful in South Australia, 6 o'clock closing still being enforced by law. Soon after I received my dentures from the dentist I had the most cruel stomach disorders. It was mainly a matter of nerves. By night I was stricken with dread in anticipation of nightmares of the most distressing kind, and was afraid to go to bed. I did my best to keep awake when I did get into bed, always much after midnight. When finally I did drop off to sleep the hideous dreams would come to me. We had no doctors in the neighbourhood and I tried to doctor myself with every kind of stomach and nerve tonic. Obsessed with the fear that I would lose my reason, I visited a doctor. After hearing my story of what I was doing and what I was eating, and how, he bluntly told me that he was of the opinion that I had already gone mad. He ordered me to give up my work and go somewhere to be looked after. This I could not do.

Two things helped restore me to health, such as it was. One was my faith. I learned to pray, and prayer proved the best sedative when I helped answer my own prayers by sensible attention to diet and habits. I have been able to help many people broken in health who started to tell me how they felt. When I told them to listen to me and I would tell them how they felt, describing their suicidal tendencies, they would ask with wonder how I knew. I could say, "I have been where you are."

The other thing that helped me so much was a sense of humour. Jack Grigg often chided me, many years after the event, for having run across the road to his place one morning before daylight (and I did run at record-breaking pace) to inform him that I was dying. I had come out of an awful nightmare and felt so near to dying that I literally raced over to tell Jack to be with me, as I was so afraid. And while sitting on Jack's bed I suddenly saw the funny side of a man racing as I did, in the act of dying, and burst out laughing. I learned often to laugh at my fears, and thus overcame them. Many times, in facing problems relating to my dealings with some of my obstinate and maybe shortwitted brethren, I have been saved a lot of hurt by being able to laugh.

Another reason for my indifferent health was explained to me by Dr. Harry Lucraft of Perth, who said that I was like a four cylinder car engine attempting to do an eight cylinder job. The problem for me was that the eight cylinder job was there to be done, and it did seem that if I did not do it, it would never be done. And so all my life, as another doctor said, I have been sailing too close to the wind. I have been much better in later years, but always the scars have been with me, and try as I would, I have not been able to get rid of the head noises that often have nearly driven me to distraction. One doctor who thought these noises might be due to some form of congestion did something to raise a couple of fearful blisters behind my ears. I well remember how the following Sunday morning when I was preaching at Nailsworth, these blisters both broke and I was conscious of rivers of water running down my back.

But through it all the good Lord has brought me. I thought when I was in my forties I would have to retire when I was 50. It was when I was 50, I began my ministry with Subiaco, and it was when I was 66 I concluded my second term. One can never predict his own future and one does well to learn to live one day at a time. We get into serious trouble when we take life in the aggregate and live in anticipation of the awful future that never comes. What fools we can really become.

The following report appeared in the *Australian Christian*, vol. 22 no. 14, April 3, 1919, p.189:

A Splendid Home Mission Field

The report of the opening of a preacher's residence at Berri, South Australia, is of more than passing interest. It makes a most worthy outcome of the splendid labours of the preacher, Bro. Roy Raymond.

When this heroic and consecrated young man went less than five years ago from the church at Kadina, S.A.*, to the faithful pioneer brethren in the back reaches of the River Murray and faced the task with them, it was enough to discourage those of lesser faith. They met in a chaff store loaned by a good brother for the purpose, and they had no church furniture. Everything was primitive in its style, like the gospel that was proclaimed.

Bro. Raymond used often to prepare his own food, and in the course of his labours rode many miles through difficult country. By faithful perseverance and through the encouragement received from the brethren, the erection of a building at Berri was made possible. The church has grown from 12 to 45 members.

It was made possible recently to erect a school and meeting house at Winkie, some few miles distant, and now they have an up-to-date five-roomed house for the preacher and his wife to live in. Surely this is a great achievement, and we need not wait till this little man dies to say 'Well done.' It is such stories from real life and work that tell how much God owns the labours of His servants.

We pray that God will richly bless such a church and preacher. This encourages us to do even more for Home Missions in the coming days.

* Note: The above was written by James E. Thomas. He should have known I was for nearly two years on Eyre Peninsula before I went to Berri, and did not go from Kadina.



The foundation stone of the new Berri Church of Christ opened 27th August, 2000 incorporates the original stone laid in 1917.

CHAPTER 6

MURRAY BRIDGE

I closed my work at Berri at the end of August, 1919. In anticipation of my resignation, I had been distressed with the thought that there would not be any further opening for me in our work. I felt that I was not intellectually equipped for any work already established in larger towns or suburbs, and I knew of no such places as I had worked in, now calling for the limited service I had to offer. However, God took a hand in this matter and almost immediately it was known that I was to leave Berri, an offer was made to me to succeed Mr. Theo Edwards in the work at Murray Bridge. Edwards was called to Stirling East. I knew him to be a well-trained and diligent worker, and hesitated to accept.

Finally I yielded for the simple reason that necessity drove me: I had to live. I was married with two children, was not in a fit condition to seek manual work that demanded physical strength, and suffered from educational limitations that ruled me out as an office or business man. So, trusting in Him for wisdom and strength, I responded to this call. We put our belongings and our pony on the river boat at Berri and we were at Murray Bridge to take care of them when at last they were unloaded.

We paid 27/6 per week rent out of our £4 per week salary. The house was owned by a previous minister at the Bridge, J. T. Train. Mr. Train used to drive a baker's cart at Kadina when in membership there, and, as a boy, I often rode beside him. But I thought that now, being a man of means, and with no family, he might have done better for me.

I liked Murray Bridge. We were given a grand welcome by the church, and at the public welcome it was a great joy to me to have my own father and mother in the gathering. The building and living accommodation, like the salary, were an improvement on Berri. I felt that if I could measure up to the demands of this work there would certainly be great opportunities ahead.

The influenza epidemic that was then sweeping the world, following upon the Great War, was making its presence felt at the Bridge. The yellow flag was flown on almost every house. The remarkable thing about this plague was that the strong and able-bodied were falling like ninepins, while the weak and aged seemed to survive. I visited uninterruptedly, in spite of doctors' warnings, without harm. Policemen, and men of similar physical calibre, were like babies.

It was not until the epidemic abated that I was able to get down to real preaching work. The congregations were growing and everyone was happy with the results. I was made happy, too, from the fact that so many returned men were coming to me to arrange their marriages. Marriage fees helped me to meet the growing financial burden, and during the few months I was there, I suppose I must have got more income from wedding fees than from salary, notwithstanding the fact that I never made a charge, leaving it to the bridegroom to give me what he felt was due. It was seldom I was disappointed.



Murray Bridge Church of Christ.

After only a few months, and just when we felt we were getting somewhere with this work, tragedy hit us hard.

Ira, then about two years and a few months old, was ill with bronchitis, very ill. Mary watched anxiously by his bed day and night for two weeks. When Ira was almost back to his normal good health, Mary complained of pains in the chest and showed signs of a fever. I called in the doctor and he, an old ship's doctor was not over gentle nor seemingly very capable, asked me how long I had been in Murray Bridge and from whence I came. When I told him I had come from up the river at a place called Berri, he at once barked, "Then go back where you came from. This is no place for her." I was not satisfied and so I called Dr. Steele to come and attend to Mary. He was a young doctor, the son of a doctor. He confirmed the older doctor's diagnosis, and strongly advised that Mary consult Dr. Walter Brown, a chest specialist of North Terrace, Adelaide. He urged that this be done at once.

The following Tuesday was the earliest we could see Dr. Brown, and as I was unable to take the two boys to the city it was decided that Mary should go alone. I was sorry for this, but it had to be. We lived more than a mile from the railway station and I drove Mary to the train in the morning. I was to meet the train in the evening. I waited anxiously all day, wondering what we were to do and what the specialist's advice would be. The train by which Mary returned to Murray Bridge was an earlier one than I had expected and so I was not at the train to meet her. She walked the mile and more from the station.

I saw her coming along the street in which we lived and hurried to meet her. It had been a big day for her and a fateful one. I was almost afraid to ask her about the doctor's examination and what he had advised her. I shall never forget the brave and characteristic smile on her face as she approached me. When we met I saw the tears in spite of the smile. I said to her, "The kettle is boiling and tea will soon be ready. Come in and rest and then tell me all about it."

We had some tea. We ate very little. After we had put the babies to bed (Ira was then only two years old, and Frank barely five months). She said, "I have to go to Kalyra".

I had half expected this. Kalyra was the sanatorium for the treatment of chest complaints and was near Mount Lofty. It was about fifty miles from Murray Bridge. I asked her when the doctor wanted to admit her there. I felt sick in the stomach and greatly disturbed, for my sake as well as hers, and the children's, when she replied with the same brave smile and tears that it was "Friday next". There it was! We were both a little afraid. But she was by far the braver of the two.

So on Friday I went with her to Kalyra and saw her settled in. On returning home I had the problem of meeting the needs of a four-month-old baby. I had no end of bother trying to get Frank to take some nourishment. He was as yet unweaned. I tried a spoon, I tried a bottle. He screamed the place down, almost. And he must have been hungry. I tried to get him to suck a crust dipped in sugar, honey, condensed milk. Nothing worked. He finally slept from exhaustion. Early in the morning I prepared some condensed milk and water, warm of course, and tried him drinking from a saucer. I think he was thirsty enough to have drunk from a bucket. It worked, and from then on till he could eat he would not take his food any other way than from a saucer.

My mother arrived at the Bridge within a week or so and was a wonderful help to me. But she could only stay for a short term. Then Mary's sisters took the boys from me, to live with them and care for them. They were in business at Thebarton. Now I was alone in Murray Bridge and intending to leave when Mary

was discharged from Kalyra. I had to make up my mind whether it was worth paying 27/6 per week rent. My expenses were heavy. I had, of course, to support the boys, and pay costs for Kalyra and the doctor. As I have said, marriage fees helped me much.

I remember some of those weddings so well. One couple were Swedes. The bridegroom came to make arrangements for his wedding before his bride had arrived in Australia. He could only speak a few words in English and his bride did not know any English. I got him to write the names in block letters — Par Ansen Carlsoreno Carlsen and Henrietta Josephina Albertina Linquiste.

Their reception was held in a back-yard and consisted, for the most part, of games and wine drinking. The huge barrel of wine was hoisted on to an old table and everyone drank from the same tin pannikin. I was urged to drink and I am sure they thought me a very unsociable fellow because I refused. I did not stay long at this party. It is not so easy conducting a ceremony with an interpreter.

I closed house in Murray Bridge and went boarding. I stored my furniture in the wood-shed of Mr. Alf Overall's place and went there to live. They made me so welcome. The two young women were members of the church. The boy, or young man, was not interested in church affairs and made a joke of it all. He was a bit of a worry to his dad. Mrs. Overall was a simple, humble soul who knew just how to cheer and encourage. She was a wonderful help. I shall always remember her Saturday dinners. Always a well cooked roast of beef. She used dripping plentifully in the process of roasting and always poured it over our dinners as gravy. If one did not eat one's dinner while hot, it was a question of digging it out.

When I first started my work at the Bridge, Mr. Overall went with me to every church member's home and introduced me. He was well esteemed amongst the members, not because of his ability, but for his simple faith and lovely character. He was a railway worker and had charge of the train from Murray Bridge to Bordertown. When I went to the Federal Conference in Melbourne in 1920, I rode with him on the engine. The fun of this was spoilt by the fact that I was missed among the passengers and created a great deal of alarm. It should be explained that I got on the engine at Tailem Bend and was only on the engine for a hundred or so miles.

I pay my tribute to this lovely family and hold very dear the name of Alf Overall. Lovely, homely, humble folk whose great kindness to me is another of life's treasured memories.

It seemed to me that as Dr. Brown was now urging me not to take Mary back to Murray Bridge I had to consider closing my work, so recently and happily begun

there, and go elsewhere. But where? The time was fast approaching when Mary hoped to be discharged and to take up her duties again in the home. But where? The church at the Bridge was very kind. It was known I should not be able to continue, and when the S.A. Home Mission Committee offered me the work at Kersbrook and Williamstown (because it was in the hill's district) I had no hesitation in accepting. God is good. So I was on the move again.

CHAPTER 7

KERSBROOK, WILLIAMSTOWN, GAWLER

I got a Murray Bridge carrier to take my goods and chattels by truck (motor) to Kersbrook, and I attempted to make the fifty and more miles by road with my pony and trap. It was a long day, and but for the climb, I think we might have made it. But when we got as far as Gumeracha my pony refused to go a yard further. So we made the night of it in a country hotel for the last time in my life. What awful places! Pests of all kinds — chiefly drunks without and bed bugs within.

Gumeracha is a beautiful country town on the road from Adelaide to Mannum. Until the late twenties, the journey from Adelaide to Mannum was made by stage coach. Gumeracha was one of the places where horses were changed. To see a coach drawn by seven horses come into town, as I saw it that first time I was in Gumeracha, was to make one think of Dickens and his day. A few miles on the Adelaide side of Gumeracha, and on the road to Kersbrook from Gumeracha, one comes upon the beautiful Chain of Ponds. To see this beauty spot for the first time is an enchantment. To approach it from the Adelaide side is even more delightful. There was, now somewhere under the waters of the lovely reservoir, an old-fashioned town named Milbrook. But when the reservoir was completed and the lovely lakes were linked together the town dominating the sight was named Chain of Ponds. I was thrilled the day I drove my tired horse for the first time from Gumeracha to Kersbrook. He could not walk too slowly for me. The scenery was so beautiful that first time I saw it that I could have lingered there all day. Strange that such places should lose so much of their charm for those who constantly look upon them. How true it is that “familiarity breeds contempt”. Are there in this world places more lovely than Adelaide’s hills?

Kersbrook was an old place, off the beaten track, and one with an old English setting. Here were houses with thatched roofs. Here one would find a hellian who thatched these houses. The etymology of this word is interesting. Hell is a covered place, and in Devonshire the one who covered houses was named a hellian.

To see old-fashioned two-storeyed houses with their roofs thatched with straw was something new to me. Kersbrook was my home for nearly two years. Here we had an eleven-roomed house, standing in forty acres of timbered country, all for 10/- per week. Of the forty acres, about four were cleared. There had once

been an orchard on these four acres, but all that was to be seen of it when I was there, were the dead stumps of the old trees. There was a lovely stable and buggy shed. We also had a cow shed and fowl runs and a pig sty. Here we kept cows for the first time. This spacious house was built by the first minister who remained with the church for more than 30 years.



Kersbrook Church of Christ.

The third minister was there for more than 20 years. The church was one of a group of independent churches in South Australia known as the “Christian” Church. They were not organized into conferences and although they held the same faith they did nothing to co-operate in support of each other. So, when they weakened, they had to seek help from somewhere or close the doors. Kersbrook church sought help from Churches of Christ. But the church never conformed to the pattern of our work. The communion service was conducted after the preaching service, which was in the hands of the minister. He would pronounce the benediction, the “sinners” would leave and the “saints” would remain for the Lord’s Supper.

Almost everyone I knew in Kersbrook attended church, either ours or the Methodists’. I knew of only one family outside the fold of one or the other of these two communions. There may have been a Roman Catholic family or two, and one may have found some Anglicans, but I never knew any. The Baptists were worshipping with us. This church was unusual for several things. They were strong fundamentalists with definitely premillennial beliefs. They were none the worse for this but their bigotry was pronounced whenever one dared to say anything contrary to their interpretation of “prophetic truth”, as they loved to call it.

The church at Kersbrook was linked up with the church at Williamstown in a two-church circuit. These two districts in the Barossa Ranges were 11 miles apart. I shared my services with these churches, taking Sunday about with them. My journeys were made with a horse and buggy, the same horse that I brought with me from Berri. It was lonely for Mary. She was not often well enough to travel with me, and as I often spent the night at Williamstown, she was left with the two little boys in this lonely place. Our house was a quarter of a mile from any neighbour. But I never heard Mary complain nor ever show signs of fear.

There were some lovely folk at Kersbrook and the church people were all very generous to us. But the two outstanding events in my brief ministry there do not reflect the high qualities of these homely and lovable people. Here I met two of the worst cases of bigotry I have ever experienced, and bigotry is a thing as ugly as Satan.

There was in this district a person in a prominent public position who did not like the teaching of Churches of Christ. She was an elderly lady. In the second year of my ministry I had a number of young people, to whom I had given much instruction, then baptized them. About this time there was a mild epidemic of diphtheria throughout the district. One of the girls whom I baptized was the first to go down with this dreaded disease.

Soon after a gentleman from the city called on me and informed me that he was a health inspector. He demanded to see our baptistry. This baptistry was filled from the roof. When it rained we emptied it, cleaned it, and filled it again. We had done this a day or so before the inspector called. He took some samples of the water and then had us empty the baptistry for his inspection. He came later to report that the water was quite pure. I reminded him that I knew that. I then asked him what it was all about. He then revealed that this lady — a certain school teacher — had reported that the diphtheria was caused by the young people being baptized in stinking water that had been in the baptistry for years. This person had reported this without any knowledge whatsoever of our baptistry or our method of emptying and refilling.

I immediately visited her and was surprised to discover how bitter and bigoted one could be who had been herself, for many years, a prominent church worker.

The second experience in bigotry was of a different kind. In Kersbrook our service was held at 11.00 a.m. and the Methodist service at 5.00 p.m. Each service was preceded with a Sunday school. The same children attended both schools and the congregations were made up, for the most part, of the same people. The men were very interested in the work of both churches. In a sermon I preached on the origin of our Movement and our plea for Christian unity, I set

the men thinking along the lines of the possibility of church union. And so it came to pass that they organized a meeting to discuss this. The meeting was held in our chapel and was filled to the doors with interested and enthusiastic men. The only qualification for attendance was that all present must be members or adherents of one or other of the two churches, and no minister must attend, lest undue influence should be brought upon the gathering. The discussion was about halfway through and some were already trying to shape a resolution to put to the meeting when a loud knocking was heard on the door. At this stage a delegation arrived from the city led by the conference president. The visitors were all ministers of the Methodist Church and were intent on breaking up the meeting. It took some time to do so, but finally they succeeded in doing so. Not only did they prevent any further discussion on the question, but the lovely Christian spirit of fraternity and fellowship between the two groups was never the same again.

I am sure that the three major hindrances to Christian unity and the ultimate union of the churches are these three: PRIDE (denominational), PROPERTY and PARSONS. While union is discussed, and wherever it is discussed, these three undeniable powers crop up to make the going hard and finally to ruin the chances of that coming to pass for which our Lord so solemnly prayed in His great prayer recorded in John 17. I see no hope for the union of the churches. The World Council of Churches will never accomplish this for the simple and sad reason that Christian men are not big enough and not good enough. They never have learned, and I am afraid they never will, how to obey the new commandment our Master gave when He commanded us to "*Love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*". John 13: 34-35.

Williamstown was a small church of perhaps 60 members. But so unlike Kersbrook. It is strange that people can hold the same faith and be so different. By people, I mean congregations. Both churches were made up of lovable and devout people. Both held to the principles and practised the same doctrines, and yet there was such a difference that baffles one to describe. I felt more at home at Williamstown, and I think the explanation was in the fact that they were traditionally a Church of Christ congregation and did things as I had been used to doing them. Yet it is true that the Kersbrook folk loved us, and we them, equally as much as was true of the friends at Williamstown. These two congregations were part of the same communion, were served by the same minister, held the same doctrines, but I am sure they could not have worked together as one congregation. Such is the influence of tradition. And here is another sure barrier to church union.

At Williamstown the congregation had built a little room on the end of the chapel for the preacher's benefit. I think they were influenced by the reading of II Kings 4:10. Not that there was any similarity between the preacher and the great

prophet of Israel. But this little room was called, as in the book of Kings, the prophet's chamber. And, as in Elisha's chamber, so in this one at Williamstown there were "a bed, a table, a stool and a candle stick". There were also a dressing table and a safe and a fireplace and other necessities.



Williamstown Church of Christ.

And as it was known when I would be coming to Williamstown, and more especially when the weather was cold, I would find every preparation made for my stay. The fire would be lit. The kettle filled and ready. Tea would be in the pot, and scones and tarts and a little dish of scalded cream would be in the safe. It took me a long time to discover who did these kindly deeds for me. When at last I did make the discovery, I found that she was the one whom I would least have expected to treat me so. Outwardly she was my most outspoken critic. An elderly spinster, as unbending and, in appearance, as uncharitable as one could imagine.

Some time before I made this discovery I had delivered to my home one day by carrier from the city, a large and very beautiful water-proof buggy rug. All the indication I could find as to the source of this gift was a brief note in the parcel with the words, "From one of the family". I thought for some time that it was from a relative, but was not able to discover which one. Then I saw, a year or so after, another identical rug in the buggy of this supposedly eccentric old lady. I at once asked her if she bought two of this kind and had given me one. She was embarrassed and tried to evade answering. But the truth came out, and from then on I was making continual discoveries about the very great kindness of this particular friend. I found then that her apparent opposition and criticism were only subterfuge to cover up her kindly deeds. I was only a young man in those

days, but many times since I have seen the same kind of behaviour, but on a much lesser scale. It is good to know that behaviour is not always what it seems, and people are not to be judged by the appearance. *“Man looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart.”*

This particular lady was the church organist. And a very obstinate one. Sometimes in the morning service she played very slowly, and at night she played too fast. I sometimes had the temerity to ask her to play a little slower. That would only make her play so much more rapidly that we could not keep up with her. This happened several times. Then one Sunday morning I suggested to the congregation that we were singing too slowly. I did not address the organist. But it made no difference, she just played slower than ever.

So the time came when I felt I'd have to do something about it. So when she was racing along and we could not keep up the pace, I suggested that perhaps we might sing the next verse a little faster. That worked. For the rest of that service we had the right tempo. From then on I discovered that the best way to drive this “type of make” was in reverse.

I could tell many stories of this strange and delightful person's idiosyncrasies. For instance, she always drove a big upstanding horse in a hooded buggy. One dark night she was driving home from service through the one street of the town with no light on her buggy. When she went past the police station, the town's solitary policeman got on his bicycle and finally succeeded in bringing her to a stop.

“Don't you know you have no light? And don't you know that is against the law?” he asked.

Her reply was to hand him a box of matches and ask him to light it. And when he did so and before he could do any more questioning, she gave the horse such a hit with the whip that he started off at a gallop and the officer had no hope of catching her, nor did he discover who the offender was.

At Williamstown, as at Kersbrook, we filled our baptistry from the roof. The water from the downpipe emptied into the baptistry and if the baptistry was full, the water overflowed at the other end and emptied into the street. This was a cement baptistry and the water in it was indescribably cold in the winter. I recall that one Sunday morning I had five people to immerse. Strange as it may seem, this church did not believe that “waders”, or water-proof trousers, should be worn by the baptizer. John the Baptist never wore waders, nor did the Apostles (I don't know how they discovered this) and as we “speak where the scriptures speak”, how can we justify the use of such gadgets? And so I was obliged to go into this freezing water with no other protection than ordinary trousers. The water was too

cold to baptize any one in, and this ought not to have been attempted. But to stand there while five people came and went was more than I could endure. When I at last attempted to walk from the water, I found I could feel no power to do so. I had to be lifted out of the water and my legs and feet had to be warmed and massaged for some time, and the service was held up until I was able to use my limbs. Ever since that day I have been the judge as to whether I would wear waders when baptizing. The time has long since been with us when it is a general practice to warm the water for baptisms. This is not mentioned in scripture, but I am sure it is in keeping with Paul's injunction to do all things decently and in order.

Towards the end of 1921 I began to feel that we were ready to move away from the Barossa Ranges. Mary's health had so much improved that we felt a permanent cure had been effected. Dr. Brown gave us encouragement along these lines. For some months we had been visiting an Adelaide herbalist who had a tremendous practice, and who was an elder in one of our churches. When I told him I was going to move from Kersbrook because the doctor had now given Mary a clean bill of health, he took to himself all the credit, and without any authority from me, published by advertisement that his treatment was the means of curing T.B. and used our name and public office in his publicity. I did not like this publicity, partly because its truth could not be proved, and for other reasons, and I made him understand so. It was not long after we left Kersbrook that we discovered that the hill's climate, and not herbal treatment, was the cause of better health. It was not long after we moved to the plains that our troubles started all over again.

Gawler — my next move was to Gawler. I have never been sure that we ought ever to have started a church in Gawler. There was a strong Baptist church in the town, and this church had twice been served in effective ministries by one of our ablest ministers — H. D. Smith. Mr. Smith had two lengthy ministries also with the church at Hindmarsh. It would be a great step forward in the interests of unity if more of our men and the Baptists could enjoy ministries in the churches of both communions. In the Baptist church at Gawler quite a proportion of the congregation were Church of Christ members.

One Sunday morning, without much thought of the consequences, this group moved out of the Baptist church and held their own services in the Foresters' Hall in Murray Street. Here is the place to give the reasons for their action which, at the time, seemed to be the right thing to do.

In 1919-20, following immediately upon the war years, there was a strong attempt made to unite the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Australia. The Congregationalists were interested and joined the union movement. These three

churches have so much in common that union would seem to reasonable men to be readily possible. It has been proved so at Darwin. But for the most part they are still talking, more than forty years after. The Baptist church in South Australia, or at least a large number of Baptist ministers, felt that they were left out in the cold. I can readily recall the names of several Baptist men who, at this time, went over to the Presbyterian or Congregational churches. Mr. Fred Steward, minister of the Baptist church in Gawler, was one of them. He went to the Presbyterian church. Mr. Steward was largely responsible for the break-away at Gawler. So enthusiastic was he for union with the above-named group that he came out quite openly with the statement to his congregation, that baptism would not stand in his way. He was quite ready to baptize babies and sprinkle adults.

This was repeated to the annoyance of the Church of Christ members in the congregation. These left that church, and soon after Mr. Steward also left. It might have been better had Mr. Steward left first.

There were now about 40 people meeting in a hall, helped by visiting speakers from the city. It was to this group I was invited to go by the Home Mission Committee.

I closed my ministry in the Hills circuit at the end of January, my last services being at Williamstown. Mary and the boys had gone to the city to escape the work and excitement of packing and all that a move from one church to another involved. We did this mainly on account of Mary's health. This had to be safeguarded.

The day following my farewell service at Williamstown was a holiday. I was taking the day off to be with the family at West Thebarton. What a surprise awaited me when I arrived there in the heat of this mid-summer Monday morning. As I came through the side gate, I saw a little group under the vines and Ira there on a bed. I went straight to him and kissed him and asked him what was the matter. Almost before I had the question formed, Dr. Lewis (who was in attendance there and whom I had never met) laid hold on me and promptly pulled me away. I asked him, somewhat rudely, what he was up to. There is no need to repeat his words, enough to say I was the fool. He told us when he called later in the day that Ira, he thought, had meningitis, but he would call again in the evening and confirm it. At about 8 o'clock that night he told us it was meningitis and that an ambulance would be sent next morning to take Ira to the Infectious Diseases Hospital. We were worried, but we had to resort to prayer. Mary and I were on our knees most of that night. Some time before daybreak I persuaded Mary to try to get some sleep, and an hour or so after I dropped off from sheer exhaustion. I had had a big day on Sunday (and that always left me feeling 'done in'), and the anxious experience of this testing had left me indescribably weary. But we both

had an assurance that God would not desert us, nor permit that to come to pass for which He would not provide sufficient grace.

At a short time after day break I awoke with a start and looked across to the patient who was on a stretcher beside me (contrary to doctor's orders). I saw him look at me and say, "Hello Daddy".

I jumped out of bed and felt his forehead and the fever had gone. His eyes were straight, whereas they had been badly crossed all the previous day. I awoke Mary and together we rejoiced in a prayer of thanksgiving. We called the family in and all was excitement.

About 7.50 a.m. the doctor called. He was Dr. Drew, whom I had known when he was in practice at Kadina. After introductions he asked to see the patient, explaining that Dr. Lewis had started his holidays. When he saw the patient his first words were, as nearly as I remember, "How wrong one can be. This boy has not meningitis."

We assured him Dr. Lewis had not made any mistake, but that God had intervened. He examined Ira and found he now had a mild form of infantile paralysis. His diagnosis was later proved correct.



Roy, Ira, Frank and Mary at Gawler, 1923.

I returned to Gawler to unpack and set up the furniture in a little attached cottage on Churchill Avenue. It was a poor little place, but there was nothing better, and so here I worked and waited for some weeks before the family was all together again.

As with Eyre Peninsula and Berri, this was pioneer work again. Meeting in a friendly society hall with all the pictures of past masters of the order adorning the walls, was not altogether conducive to worship. Furthermore, we had to take away all our books and furniture at the close of every service. A Mr. Olafsen, a

most enthusiastic member, lived a stone's throw from the hall and all our equipment was stored there.

We had an iron baptistry made. It was not a helpful sight to see this tank being brought from Mr. Olafsen's place for the baptisms. It was too large to bring into the hall so we had it placed as near as possible to the side door in the right-of-way. We filled it with a hose from a tap some distance away. The emptying of the thing was a much greater problem. We did this after dark, by letting the water find its way into the gutters of the main street of the town.

We had some really great meetings in this hall, and many members were added to the church. We had some grand and useful men in the church there, without whom we would not have been able to go ahead as we did. Amongst these was an old friend of mine, Mr. E. J. Killmier. It was in his home, at Wallaroo, some years before, that I sometimes spoke at the morning service. In addition to the Killmier family we had with us Mr. and Mrs. William Green. Mr. Green had studied in England under Lancelot Oliver and other great teachers, teachers, who in every sense were great. And Mr. Green had a good grasp of New Testament Christianity. Mrs. Green was the daughter of one of our English preachers and writers — R. K. Frances. My work was made easier and my days happier because these grand people, and others like them, came into my life at Gawler.

Housing was one of my biggest problems at Gawler. Living in an attached house with only a wall dividing the people next door was doubly bad when the wall had our bed on one side and the neighbour's piano on the other. There were young women in the neighbour's family and they, naturally, had male company in the house who had to be entertained, seemingly on this piano, often after midnight. The only thing we could do was to find some place better.

That was not easy, but a Mr. Johnson owned a house on the farthest part of Willaston — about three miles from the town. It was a good house with several acres of orange trees, which were not let with the house. We were happy in this place for some time.

It was here Mary had a very bad haemorrhage. For some time she was very ill. Mr. Johnson got to know the nature of her complaint by some means I never discovered, and so he gave us no rest till we moved out.

We found a place on the other end of Gawler, well down on the Adelaide Road. This was a comfortable and homely place with a few nice trees. We paid 27/6 a week for this place. That was a lot from a salary of £4, but we struggled on. It was a good walk from the church. I had sold the horse and trap I used at Willaston, and returned again to the use of a bike.

Mary had several haemorrhages in this place. It was while living here that Dr. Brown decided to have Mary's lung collapsed. For this she had to go into hospital in Adelaide — a private hospital. It was an expensive business. After her return home she showed remarkable improvement, temporarily.

For the first week, she would do her work in remarkable fashion. The second week not so well. The third week she was decidedly off colour and the fourth week she was an invalid. At the end of the fourth week she would drag herself to the train and off to the city for another intake of air. How she ever struggled up to Dr. Brown's surgery on North Terrace, I shall never know. She would arrive home in the evening with a chest like a pouter pigeon and she would fly through her work for the first week. The same thing would follow. At the end of the fourth week she would have to go down to the city again for another intake. It was marvellous while it lasted, but it only lasted a few weeks, and then the same treatment. But we were grateful for the little time of relief for her.

One of the saddest things I ever experienced was at Gawler about this time. Mary was, without exaggerating, a very lovely soprano soloist. Her singing was much sought after. It was at a meeting for women in connection with a special mission being held at Gawler that the thing happened. Mary was to sing. She had her lung cushioned (that is, an "air cushion" was put round her lung to isolate it from contact with the rest of her body) only a few days before (her regular monthly treatment) and she was feeling well. She was half way through her item when her voice almost gave out. It was a great shock to her. I was sitting near enough to see what a struggle she was having to keep the tears back. I saw the trembling lip and the determined courage on her face as she stepped from the platform. Others thought of it only as a slight misfortune with a "better luck next time" air about the whole thing. But what Mary knew, and I surmised, was that this was "it". This was the end of her career as a singer. The thing she most delighted to do in public would never be given her to do again.

That was the last time I ever heard her sing. I could have wished it otherwise. I could have wished to have heard her at her best for the last time, but from that day she knew that for her "the writing was on the wall".

But perhaps an even sadder day was to come. She could still play her organ. This was a great source of comfort to her. Many lonely hours she was to pass with her music. Then the day came which I was again to witness. Late one afternoon, early in the year 1929 at Nailsworth, she sat to play before tea. She was half-way through a number when her strength almost failed. She leaned over the organ, when the music stopped, as though praying. I dropped my book to see her, after a long pause, slowly close the organ, never to open it again.

In 1924 our new building at Gawler was officially opened by Mr. W. H. Burford. It was a great day with crowds of officials from the city. The opening took place on the Saturday afternoon. The following day our guest preacher for the morning was Mr. A. C. Rankine. I conducted the evening service. The building was a modest brick building of no outstanding design. Its cost was greater than the little church at Gawler could bear. I understand that for some years after I left Gawler, the little church could not keep up its interest payments and I was blamed for leading the church into such a debt. The accusation was most unjust. I feel constrained to state the facts as I know them.

The members at Gawler wanted a modest building of their own to free them from the inconveniences of the hall in which they met. We finally secured a block of land in a strategic position in the town. We consulted with Mr. Archie Bain, of Williamstown, to plan a building for us and to quote a price for erection. We asked him to do all possible to keep the price down. He submitted a plan for a building of limestone and brick with an iron roof. His price for completing the building was £800.



Gawler Church of Christ.

We then approached the Church Extension Committee for a loan. When they saw the plans they strongly disapproved. They complained of being tired of seeing little buildings which were not a commendation to our Movement being built in the suburbs and important country centres. They strongly urged us to consult a city firm of architects with their representatives. I was instructed by the church to do this and report back.

With H. J. Horsell (secretary) and G. I. Wright (a city contractor), I went to the architects. They had a seemingly endless number of plans of halls and churches of all kinds. The one that was finally agreed upon by the Committee representatives and architects was the one now standing in Gawler, with certain simple modifications. I never liked it from the start. It had been originally prepared for a Returned Soldiers' Memorial Hall at Spalding. To be paid for this plan and specification was a real windfall for the architects.

Gawler church felt as I did about the matter. However, the Committee was insistent and in spite of our protest from Gawler, went ahead to call for tenders. The church finally agreed on the understanding that the Committee was putting the building there, and if we could not pay for it, they would have to do so. We were not, from the beginning, in any sense conscience stricken because we could not pay. In those days a £2,000 building was a colossal debt for so few people.

I think the following factual story shows up the stupid pride some people can have about church buildings. Mr. W. J. Manning (State President in 1921) called me into his office in King William Street when I was on my way to the Conference gathering in (I think) 1923. He said he had something of importance to show me. When I arrived he asked me to look at a plan for a church building.

"What about it?" I asked. He informed me that it was prepared as the kind of building he wanted us to erect at Gawler. He wanted me to take it with me to the Conference and at the appointed time for me to speak, to show the plan and make an appeal for funds. I frankly told him that I would have nothing to do with it. Such a building was out of all proportion for a place like Gawler and would cost more in thousands than we could afford in hundreds. He was naturally very angry and threatened to withdraw any help he could give to any Gawler project.

The rightness of my action will be vindicated when I point out that the plans he wanted used at Gawler were later (under his influence) used by Grote Street, and by them only after many modifications. When one thinks that the building used by the Grote Street church, Adelaide, erected in 1925, was proposed for Gawler, a little church of less than 100 members, one can realize what a problem Gawler church had in those days of building propositions.

It was during my ministry at Kersbrook and at Gawler that I was paid what I have always regarded as the two greatest compliments of my career. At Kersbrook there lived next to the church building a dear old soul whom I always regarded as a most faithful Christian. Mrs. Powell was not always easy to understand and always muttered rather than spoke. Conversation with her was not always easy. It was hard to make her smile and she seemed to feel out of step with things. She was not a grumbler, but appeared to be a hurt soul. But she was my friend and

proved her loyalty to me far more than many her superior in garrulousness and pretence.

On the night I preached my farewell address at Kersbrook and was at the door greeting the people, Mrs. Powell came by. I took her hand and there was a wonderfully warm grip. Then came the muttered goodbye, and then this: "I am sorry you are going; I never knew I was a sinner till you came here."

That was all, and I quietly slipped the coin she left in my hand into my pocket. When I arrived home I took it out — it was a golden sovereign. That was a lot of money in those days and amounted to more, as a farewell gift, than all the combined worth of the gift the church made. But of more value than the sovereign was the sincere and undisguised compliment to the good my preaching had done for her. For, "*The sinner is a sacred thing: the Holy Spirit made him so*". One can never bring another to Christ until he has sensed his own need of forgiveness, and to accomplish this in preaching is far more important than adding numbers to the church membership who may never have known the contrition that leads to true repentance.

The second compliment came to me at Gawler. For months there had been attending my evening services in the new chapel a mother and her eleven-year-old boy. They gave me little opportunity to speak to them for they left the service before I reached the door. However, I finally discovered who they were and where they lived and in course of time paid a call. The mother told me she was an Anglican and never missed Holy Communion at St. George's. I asked why she came so regularly to my evening service when she was such a devout Anglican. Her answer was that it was for the boy's sake. She had tried to get him to accompany her to the Church of England services, and he did sometimes but was never happy about it. "He likes your preaching because he can understand all you talk about, but at our services he cannot follow what is being said or done, so I feel it my duty to take him."

When one can make oneself understood to a child there is not much danger of any missing the way.

It was when I was at Kersbrook that I conceived the idea of holding services on Good Friday. In 1921 I held an evening service on Good Friday and preached on "The Cross". There was a packed congregation and there were some decisions for Christ. The next year we invited the churches of the circuit to join us. The fellowship of this day became a very rich experience for us all. Until I closed my ministry at Gawler we continued to unite the three congregations in services that covered the whole day. It was a good thing to capitalize on the sacred associations of this day. It is good to know that after 40 years those meetings have

continued without a break and with no diminishing of the interest which has been there since the beginning.

My ministry at Gawler closed in 1925. I had been there for four years less three weeks. It was a worthwhile ministry. As in all service, there was sorrow and disappointment but there, as everywhere, the joys were greater than the sorrows, the good many times greater than the bad, and the successes greater than the failures.

CHAPTER 8

NAILSWORTH

Three fields were offered for my choice. I was inclined to Forestville. Cowandilla was also open for me, but Dr. Walter Brown felt it would be better for Mary's health if we could be on higher ground to the north of the city. He suggested (when I told him that I could live at Nailsworth) that the lime kilns in that area would be of inestimable value in the case of Mary's illness. So it was to Nailsworth we decided to go. There had never been a full-time preacher with this congregation. Dr. Arthur Garnett was serving them with week-end services. It was the Sunday before Christmas in 1925 I commenced my ministry there.

My more than six years' ministry in Nailsworth was a bewildering experience to me. Numerically, or statistically, it was my most successful ministry. In this church I met people who were to become my life long friends. In no church did I ever receive more encouragement from warm hearted and sincere admirers. Never before, nor after, did I discover people like some of these at Nailsworth who so loved the Word of God. Nailsworth was a church of opposites. Never in my experience did I meet more hostility and receive more unjust treatment than that which came from my traducers in this church.

Until 1929 the little church was meeting in a building erected at the rear of the church block and which was later to become the church hall. It was small but most useful. Almost every Sunday evening from my first Sunday, this little hall was crowded to capacity, with a congregation of over one hundred. One of my greatest supporters, admirers and personal friends, was Mr. J. H. M. Hawkes. This man was a student of Greek and one who had, himself, done considerable preaching and teaching. Furthermore, he was one of a number, all too few in our Brotherhood, who had made a careful study of our religious position and doctrinal standing and who believed it with profound conviction. All this delighted me more and more as I came to know him better, but at our first meeting he made it clear to me that he had opposed my "engagement", as he called the appointment to this ministry. He was an elderly gentleman and consequently was no longer concerned with what people said or thought of him. This is true of most elderly people. The older we grow the less concerned we are for popularity or what people think of us.

And so he was very frank in his meeting with me. He had never met me, and so had never heard me, but I was an obscure personality and an unknown preacher so

far as he was concerned. It was in the frame of mind of one who expects the worst that he came to my welcome social. I think he was pleased. His parting word was that he was looking forward to Sunday — my first services. On the Sunday evening I preached on “The Faith That Saves”. This captured the old man’s heart. To say he was pleased was putting it tamely. The following week was Christmas day, and to my delight the old gentleman came over all the way from St. Peters (where he lived) to bring me a Christmas gift, and what a gift! A thing I had wanted for years and could not afford — a beautiful copy of Young’s *Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible*.

I mention this incident to show that one cannot judge a man by first acquaintance. Often this can be very deceiving and so often work out other than we expect. So it was at Nailsworth there were some who almost fell over themselves at our first meeting to make me see what wonderful fellows they really were and how much help they were going to be to me in the years that were to follow. Alas! Alas, and alack!

In 1928 we laid the foundation stone of the new church building. The stone was laid by my friend and brother, J. H. M. Hawkes. We had with us for the occasion Dr. F. W. Bernham, international delegate from U.S.A. to the Federal Conference of Churches of Christ, then being held in Adelaide. William Morrow, M.L.C., the then president of the Federal Conference, was also on the temporary platform. Others present were Ira Paternoster and Fred Collins. All these, in addition to myself, who led the stone laying ceremony, were speakers representing the Brotherhood, State and Federal. When the building was completed it was at the time one of the most beautiful structures we had in the State.

The Nailsworth building venture was carried through at a time, unknown to us, that was the eye of a great world-wide depression. In fact the Depression set in earlier in Adelaide than elsewhere. We speak of “the Depression of the early thirties” but in South Australia — or Adelaide in particular — it began to be felt in 1928 with the retrenchment at the Islington Railway yards when so many men were put out of work.

And so we had to meet so many difficulties in raising finance. I doubt if we would ever have been able to find the money and carry the project through, but for the generosity and characteristic kindness of one of our new members. She was then known as Mrs. Plenty, a widow with two little boys, living almost opposite to the new building. We were nearly £2,000 short. We tried to raise the money on free-of-interest loans. To meet the need and put the committee’s fears at rest, she came forward and loaned the money for as long as we wanted it. I had to convince her that a specific term had to be agreed upon and that this agreement must be in writing and legally prepared. It was finally agreed that the document

be prepared and the money, £1900, be loaned to the Church Extension Building Fund for the term of ten years, free of interest, and be used for the erection and furnishing of the new church at Nailsworth. This money was paid back at the end of the ten years after every means had been used to retain the loan for use in other places, on the same terms, of course. This was not agreed to. A brief letter of thanks at the end of ten years for a sum that saved the church more than half as much in interest, was all the acknowledgment for such generous support.



Nailsworth Church of Christ as it was for its 50th Jubilee in 1969.

My work at Nailsworth was one of strain, struggle and sorrow. But that is only one side of the picture. Mary's health was slowly getting worse. In addition to a growing church I had the strain of caring for Mary and the boys. We were happy, very happy, amid so many deprivations. The boys were a delight and joy to us both. Their progress at school gave us continuing pleasure, but the shadow over everything for me was the increasing weakness of Mary.

I had, soon after our arrival at Nailsworth, to enclose the back verandah and make a comfortable little sleep-out for Mary and thus isolate her, as best we could, from the family. Time soon came when most of her time was to be spent in this little back verandah. I had wheels fixed to the legs of her iron bedstead and, by removing the corrugated iron wall of part of the sleep-out, I could wheel her out on to the lawn during the hot nights of her final months in this life.

Almost all of 1929 was spent in bed; even earlier she would have weeks at a time in bed. During her confinement to bed, I did most of the work in the house in the mornings, sometimes rising at 4.00 a.m. when washing and other extra jobs had to be done. Then in the afternoons almost every week, Mrs. Plenty would come and sit with her for a couple of hours while I ran round to see people who were not for the most part in need of such visits, but who made it clear that this was part of a preacher's ministry.



Mrs Plenty with Ed and Des.

Here again Mrs. Plenty did a splendid thing. She said Mary ought to have a radio. Radio sets were not the ubiquitous things they afterwards became. To have one in the home in the twenties meant that you were above the average. However, Mr. Fred Shill, Mrs. Plenty and I went into the city to see what we could buy.

Nothing but the best was good enough, and Mr. Shill, who had a good knowledge of radio, recommended a table set that would cost about £30. That was a lot of money in those days — to me a real fortune — but Mrs. Plenty paid for it and Mary never ceased to enjoy it, not at least, until she became very weak.

During the latter part of 1929 I felt the burden too heavy and had to secure assistance. A Miss Peek came into the home. She had been a missionary with the P.I.V. Mission in Poona, India, for about 50 years. This missionary's experience did not fit her especially for such house service, but she was a tremendous help and made my burdens much lighter.

On the Saturday morning of February 1, 1930, Mary's choice spirit took its flight to regions above. It was a hot, very hot day. Early in the morning Ira came to tell me Mother wanted me. I had been up with her most of the night and was weary for the want of sleep, even at 7.30 in the morning when Ira woke me. I hurried to Mary's bedside and she whispered, "I think you had better send for the doctor".

It was 9.00 a.m. when he arrived. He had the weak little body sit up while he tapped away at her back. Mary asked him bravely, "How long will it be, doctor?".

He cast his eyes heavenward and said, "One never knows what the weather is going to be like".

That was his only reply. On the way to the gate I asked for a better worded verdict. He replied that it was a matter of hours. I then wanted to know why he made her go through the strain of examination by sitting her up in bed when he could see she was so obviously low and weak. He had no answer.

We had a little breakfast and she asked for needle and cotton so that she might shorten the sleeves of a new coat I had bought for Ira the day before. It was a little summer coat and she wanted him to have it for Sunday school next day. So, propped up with pillows, she spent some time sewing. I then wheeled her bed to the verandah at the front of the house where she could have the shade, and I remained with her until Miss Peek asked me to come in for dinner. She stayed to watch by Mary. I had hardly begun my dinner when Miss Peek came in to say "She has gone". So passed from this life one of the world's greatest gifts to me.

Mr. J. Wiltshire wrote the following report in the *Challenge*, vol. 5 no. 10, March 1930, concerning her passing:

With the passing of our sister Mrs. Roy Raymond, the devoted wife of our Nailsworth preacher, God has removed one of the brightest spirits of our South Australian Brotherhood. It was 28 years ago that Mary Doley,

then but a young girl, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Doley, of the Hindmarsh Church, went down into the baptismal waters to signify her union with her Saviour and Lord. Her father was an elder of the church, and it was largely due to him and his saintly wife that their daughter Mary became such a bright example of what a Christian may be. In the church in which she was cradled Miss Doley was, for a number of years, until the time of her marriage, an untiring worker. Young and old alike were enriched by her sweet influence.

Thirteen years ago, by her marriage with Bro. Raymond, she entered upon her greater sphere of work. As a preacher's wife she was a rich adornment. No visitor ever felt strange in the home where she was the hostess. Although for nearly eleven years sickness persistently cast its shadow over the home, there was a defiant brightness in Mrs. Raymond's spirit which refused to allow that shadow a place.

Even until the last hour upon earth there seemed no flicker of that light which anon was to shine in a better world.

An eloquent testimony to the love and esteem in which Bro. Raymond and the memory of his dear wife are held was borne in the presence of so very many of our preachers, who marched in a body before the hearse to the graveside.

The places of her ministry will ever hold our sister's memory dear. Her voice in song will last as long as many of us live.

I could write much concerning the high quality of Mary's love and patience. She was a darling wife and bore with my weaknesses with wisdom and love. We never had a cross word. Only once did I add to the burden of her sickness by a careless remark. This made her tears freely flow. But the remark was made in all love and tenderness and when she saw this, the matter was forgotten. Having said this much I may as well hint at the cause. She used to read the morning paper while I did the chores. When I was ready for it, she had perused all of interest to her. As I sat reading one morning it crossed my mind that I ought not to be reading it after she had been breathing over it. I foolishly mentioned this. She never read the paper again. This was only a little while before she left us for Home. Her memory is treasured in my heart.

And so we were left — the three of us. What a loss. Home was an empty place. I had my work, but at this time that was giving me grave concern. I could see a division coming in the church. I did all I could to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace". But the storm broke less than six months after Mary left us. Of this I shall say nothing. God knows best where the blame should rest, but it was a sad experience.

Through it all I discovered who my real friends were. There were many, but the best of them was the one who mothered the boys and gave me her friendship. For two years the work at Nailsworth prospered. Miss Wilkins kept house for us and did her best to make the boys happy.

I won favour with the Brotherhood of South Australia and was in 1931 made the Vice-President of our South Australian Conference. The following year I was the President. It was a new and a bewildering experience for me. I was introduced to leading churchmen of the State. I was given duties and responsibility for which I had no training, but I enjoyed the experience. It was in the twentieth year of my ministry and my sixth at Nailsworth.

Early in 1932, desirous as I was to see my presidential year completed, I had a strong urge to leave my work at Nailsworth. Early in the year, an enquiry had come from the church at Fremantle, asking whether I would consider a call to the church there. I spoke to Mrs. Plenty about it. I felt I could not venture into unknown fields alone. I felt I needed someone to come into the home as mistress of the manse once again. I felt a longing for a mate. I knew of no one in all this world to whom I could speak on this matter but Mrs. Bessie Plenty. I asked her would she consider coming with me as my wife. We debated a long time the new family arrangement. We both felt it might not work out in the best interests of our boys. They were too young to weigh the facts fairly. We finally decided to make the venture.

As soon as it was known that I was to leave and Mrs. Plenty was to be my wife I had free advice from all quarters. Not one, apart from my own parents, thought that it would work. "There is no such thing as a good step-mother", someone was unkind enough to say. We both tried hard to give the lie to all the hard and unfair things people had to say.

We did succeed as well as anyone could expect. Of course, in such an arrangement there were adjustments to be made and they were not easy. And now, when we are Darby and Joan together we feel that it was all worthwhile. We have proved our loyalty and love to the boys and to each other, and we are happy.

And so ends the *Preacher's Progress* in South Australia. From obscurity to opportunity and officialdom.

The rest of the story of my "progress" in the State of my adoption for nearly forty years follows.

CHAPTER 9

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

I was married the second time in Adelaide, and again by my old friend, Jabe Wiltshire, on March 16th, 1932 and left next day to go by sea to Western Australia. There was a large crowd at the wharf at Port Adelaide to bid us farewell to South Australia. The church at Nailsworth was well represented, and there were many friends from other churches in South Australia also in the crowd. It was a moving experience, as the *Westralia* pulled away from the wharf, to hear the crowd singing, "God be with you till we meet again." Many of them I have never seen since.

We arrived at Fremantle the following Tuesday, March 22nd. Here again was a good gathering of friends-to-be who came to welcome us. The welcome was enthusiastic and satisfying. The Fremantle church paid £25 towards our travelling costs. We brought most of our furniture and there were six in the family. The total cost was £95, so it actually cost me £70.

There was no manse at Fremantle. The church did its best to find a suitable house and we took up residence in Malcolm Street. As the winter came on we felt increasingly dissatisfied with this house. There were several steps leading to the back door. The wash-house was quite a distance down in the back yard, but the worst feature was that the rain beat in so badly at the back of the house that our floor coverings were soon ruined all the way to the front door. We began to search for a better house. The one we found was in Staton Road, East Fremantle. This was quite a distance from the church, but my thought was that as we would be building at Palmyra, where meetings were being held regularly, the situation of this house would be central. But many of the Fremantle folk were not happy about our being so far from the city, so we began to look for another place.

It was finally decided that we would buy a block that was for sale in Ellen Street, Fremantle and build our own house. Bessie's brother, Albert Walters, who was a builder and contractor, agreed to draw plans and erect a house for us. I paid £175 for the block and several more pounds to have the high rock frontage cut away, and the block prepared for building. The house suited our needs in every way and was built at a cost of £865. We moved into this house in August, 1933.

Six weeks later our family increased as "our" son, Ronald Roy, made his entrance into this world, Sunday September 24th. I was so busy on the Sunday that I did

not see him till the Monday, a thing that in retrospect gives me a little sense of shame. He was born in a little hospital in Staton Road, opposite where we had lived. It was a strange experience for all of us to have a baby in the house after so many years, but he was a good baby and we all loved him greatly.

The work at Fremantle was different to anything I had known elsewhere. We were told that three years were about as many as we would have in Western Australia, so few preachers remained in W.A. I have seen many scores come and go. Preachers from "totherside" (Eastern States) were called tourists. The reason for this was that at that time we had a Brotherhood plan prepared by church secretaries who came together quarterly for that purpose. One was only with his local church for the morning service about five Sundays in thirteen. We had at the time, only three churches that could support a full-time preacher. These were the City church in Lake Street, Perth, Subiaco church and the church at Fremantle. At the end of three years the smaller churches and the three named had heard all of our preachers so often that it was the general custom when a new minister was needed, to pass by these so often heard and try for a new man from "totherside". I must have been more fortunate than many because I was invited to the ministry of both Lake Street and Subiaco before I concluded my work at Fremantle.



Fremantle Church of Christ.

The congregations at Fremantle were always good. We had a C.E. Society of young people numbering 40. I had a Sunday afternoon Bible class of the same number. It is worth recording that Fremantle has sent out more ministers and

missionaries than any other church in Australia. While I was at Fremantle there were still young men wanting to go into the ministry. Some of the leading preachers in our Australian and overseas churches were once Fremantle boys. I take no credit for this. Indeed, I had so little to do with it.

We had a board of deacons at Fremantle who were equal to any found anywhere. They were all men of experience. I always thought of them as elders, but they eschewed the name and were satisfied to be deacons. All of these men, with one exception, have passed from this life, but all of them were my friends to the end. Mr. Oscar Fieldus, a school master, was a man of great worth who, because of his knowledge of and love for the Word of God, was very close to me. So were all the others.

I continued with the work here till 1937. During my years at Fremantle I was also engaged in much State-wide work, spoken of generally as "Brotherhood work". In 1934 I was called to the office of State President of the Conference. I also served on various committees. I found the journeys to and from Perth a great inconvenience. When living at Staton Road I would catch the last tram from Fremantle Railway Station and arrive home at midnight. This sometimes happened two or three nights a week. In my local work I used a little two-stroke motor cycle. In 1935 I almost broke my health completely. I had my tonsils removed and later in the same year went again to hospital for an appendicectomy.



The family at Fremantle in 1935 (l-r): Roy, Bessie with Ron in front, Des, Ed, Ira, Frank.

That was the end of my cycle riding: I decided to get a car. So I bought an old second hand 1926 model Morris Oxford. I was the envy of all the preachers in the State. The car cost me £130, but it was not a good buy. I spent almost that much in repairs in the year and a half that I possessed it. I bought my second car while at Fremantle. This was a new car of the touring type, not a sedan. It was a two-cylinder Jowett. This cost me £355. It was a worse buy than the Oxford. In both these cars I did only about 16,000 miles before selling them.



Roy Raymond at Fremantle in 1936.

I was not weary of the work in Fremantle, nor do I think they were tired of me, but at the end of my five years there I was being urged by the State Executive to give my time entirely to Home Mission service as State Secretary and State Evangelist. This work appealed to me, and so I resigned my work at Fremantle. I carried on my State work from Fremantle for a while, but in the first week in January, 1939 I moved to the City church manse in Palmerston Street, Perth. This brought me nearer to the office in Barrack Street, where a lot of my work was done, and made things somewhat easier.

I spent considerable time in travel and soon found that my Jowett car was not equal to all the work I was asking from it. In 1939 I bought my third car. This was a new car, a 1938 model Willys Overland Sedan. This cost me £375 and was my best buy to this date so far as cars are concerned.

This may be the place to say what I may have said earlier, that in all my ministries I have had to find my own conveyance and keep it going all at my own expense. In the light of much later conditions this may seem an extraordinary situation, but it was the common thing before the Second World War. Few, very few, churches had either a manse or a conveyance for the preacher, and he did well if he received as much as £5 per week. Until I became minister of the Subiaco church my salary had never exceeded £6 per week, with no amenities such as house or car or travel expenses.

During my term of office with the State Executive, I conducted several tent missions. These were at Palmyra-Fremantle, Bunbury, Nedlands and Lake Street. Missions were conducted without the tent at Collie, Harvey, Midland Junction and there were a few minor missions. This was hard work for me; the preaching I delighted in, but physical and nervous strain took toll of my health.

When the Second World War broke out, I was invited to the part-time or interim ministry with the Lake Street, Perth Church, and continued with Home Mission secretarial duties.

At the end of 1939 the church at Subiaco sent me a warm invitation to succeed Mr. Hurren as minister there. In view of the uncertain future due to war conditions, and partly because the church at Subiaco at that time was our most prosperous work in the State, I accepted the invitation. I entered upon my ministry there in the early part of 1940. In this church I had my happiest ministry and my longest. Here I had two ministries and from here I retired in 1956. I shall have more to say about this ministry.

Meanwhile, let me say something about the family. The boys were growing into useful men. It has been my joy to baptize all five of the boys. Ira had worked his way through university, after qualifying as a school-teacher. He had won a scholarship in South Australia and when we came to Western Australia he had to forfeit this. I felt I had to make it up to him as best I could and was pleased to see the enthusiasm with which he entered into his academic career. University education was not so easy to secure following the Great Depression of the early thirties. Few men could send their sons to the university. Indeed it was difficult to find suitable employment for lads leaving high school.

It was in my heart to give Frank an opportunity to attend the university, but when what we thought at the time was a most suitable job was offered with Dalgety's, I was strongly advised by his teacher at Fremantle Boys' School to place him there. Frank seemed very willing and so he commenced work. This was before sitting for his Junior which he passed later in the year. He not only passed his Junior, but, like Ira before him, became Dux of the Fremantle Boys' School.

When we went to Perth to live, and because Frank's work was then in Fremantle, he continued in the Fremantle district and lived with Mr. and Mrs. Russell Manning. Frank and Russell were good pals and between them carried on the North Fremantle Sunday school as superintendent and secretary respectively. I have wished many times, because of his ability to study, that Frank had been placed in a position where he could have gone to the university. He would have made a very great success of an academic career.

We thought we were fortunate to find a good job for Desmond with the Fremantle Tramways and Electric Light Company. He was happy in his clerical work there for many years.

We placed Edwin in the printing trade. He was not as happy in this as we had hoped, but as it was a semi-professional trade and as jobs were hard to secure we felt that this was a very satisfactory arrangement.

Ronald was growing and learning and gave us great joy as he developed. It was while we were at Subiaco that we decided to place Ronald with the best teacher we could find to teach him music. This was a very good thing as Ronald has proved to be a musician of no mean ability. Several preachers have told me that Ronald was the kind of organist who made a service, but I discovered this long before any other. Ron was only a schoolboy when I first used him for week-night services. He became the regular organist at Subiaco during my second ministry there, and his services were always requested for wedding ceremonies.

While on the subject of organists and music, I would like to pay tribute to Desmond and the valued service he has given to the churches as an organist. He is a church organist of ability. Added to this, Des has always had a bent for radio and amplifying and thus has added to the usefulness of his services to church and the Brotherhood.

My ministry at Subiaco was always a busy one. During my first years in this prosperous church — prosperous not in matters material — we were in the frightening years of the World War. The enemy was drawing nearer all the time. We learned of the fall of Singapore, and the captivity of so many of our valued forces. Then came news of the bombing of Darwin. Then rumours of submarines off our shores but a little way, and the danger of air raids. So real was the rumour (if rumour it was) that many people had the car boot loaded ready for evacuation to any place.

Great as the fear of invasion was, my greatest concern was for my own boys. Ira was the only one out of Australia. As a member of the R.A.A.F., he was posted to the New Guinea area, and to me, that was the front line. My concern mounted as time passed and there were occasions when I failed to sleep through some nights.

Both Frank and Desmond had become commissioned officers. Before the war ended, Frank was posted to the Solomon Islands. I had learned of a number of lieutenants who, while leading their patrols, had been cut down by snipers. My concern for Frank was very great. Fortunately, the war ended before the snipers had much chance in Frank's limited time there.

Des, we felt, while danger threatened Darwin, was not exposed to the same degree of danger. Edwin was on his way to a commission and had reached the rank of sergeant when the war ended. Great was our relief, equalled only by our thanksgiving.

The war years had been a great strain for me in my work at Subiaco. The black-outs made it difficult for the church at Hollywood to hold services after dark. They requested me to conduct an early evening service. The Hollywood church (afterwards named Nedlands) then met in a little hall in Merriwa Street. My custom every Sunday was to preach at Subiaco in the morning — occasionally in some other church — then I would superintend the afternoon Sunday school and teach the Bible class. Following this I would hurry to Hollywood for the evening service at 4.00 p.m. and return to the Subiaco church almost every Sunday for a men's tea.



Subiaco Church of Christ.

It was arranged that these teas would provide an opportunity to entertain U.S.A. servicemen, both soldiers and sailors, and to welcome and farewell our Subiaco men. These tea-table functions would take us right up to time to start our evening service. We had always, in these days, large and inspiring services. At the close of the evening service I was completely worn out. I rarely slept much on a Sunday night.

Monday was seldom a day off for me. Many churches were without ministers and, because I was nearer than others to the Karrakatta cemetery, I found myself called upon almost every Monday to conduct a funeral. This not only meant cemetery duty, but called for a visit to the home of the bereaved, often some distance from Subiaco.

But it was not all toil and anxiety. There were happy experiences. For instance, I had more weddings and presided over more wedding breakfasts during those few war years than in all the rest of my experience over the years. Many American servicemen were married by me at Subiaco, and many of our bright young women were lost to us to make their homes in U.S.A. Records revealed that in seven years in Subiaco I conducted more weddings than all my predecessors combined. Welcomes for our boys returning from war service were frequent and enthusiastic.

Late in 1947 I began to feel that I was becoming overtired, and felt I ought to seek a work that would make less demands on my failing strength. Inglewood church was offered to me. I thought the smaller work would help me relax a little. This was not so. I was never quite happy at Inglewood. There were some lovely people in the church, some of whom were my dear friends before I went there, but the difficulties were tremendous.



*Raymond Family 1946. Back row: Des, Joy, Olive, Ed, Audrey, Frank.
Front row: Roy, Ron, Bessie, Ira.*

I had been promised the use of the manse. We found to our sorrow that the manse was not available for the simple reason the occupant would not vacate it. Court proceedings were instituted to secure the property, and for the first time in my life I found myself involved in a court case. We lost it. Nothing was done to secure me a house in the district, and for some time I carried on from the Subiaco manse. But my successor at Subiaco wanted the manse and I vacated it. I secured a house at Inglewood at a weekly rental of £1/12/6d, (\$3.25). This I paid from my salary which was lower than I received at Subiaco.

The congregations were small and there was little, if any enthusiasm. I did the best I could for three years, but all the time my heart was with Subiaco.

At the end of three and a half years at Inglewood, I was surprised one night with a phone call from a well known Subiaco church officer, Mr. H. L. Vawser. He asked if he could come and see me. I reminded him that I had gone to bed. I felt whatever it was it could wait till morning. He insisted that he come out that very hour. I agreed. I dressed and had supper prepared for two.



Inglewood Church of Christ.

To my great amazement, when I opened the door, there were eleven men present. The whole board of officers of Subiaco church were there. In they walked to the lounge room and the spokesman explained that they had been deliberating for some time concerning a successor to the Subiaco minister who had resigned to take up a teaching appointment in the east with one of our colleges. They had gone over the names of men known to them, or some of them, in every State of the Commonwealth and every time they came back to my name. They felt it was wasting time to write to me, so they had all come together to see if I would return to Subiaco. I did not want to appear nearly so willing and excited as I felt about the offer. They had agreed to offer me £11 per week. This was £4 more than my present salary at Inglewood, but it was not salary that influenced me.

I made three conditions which I was afraid they would not agree to and which I insisted would be the only terms on which I would return. The conditions were these: (1) We would not be required to live in the manse, (2) I would not be required to assist in Sunday school work and (3) Mrs. Raymond would not be required to become involved in church work. To these terms they readily agreed, and that night was one of the most satisfying of my preaching career.

Before I took up the work at Subiaco, I made a trip east and paid my first visit to Canberra. One of the great surprises of this trip was to find Ira waiting for us when we arrived in Melbourne by train. Neither Bessie nor I knew anything about Melbourne. We were apprehensive about getting to Geelong where we were to visit Edie, Bessie's sister, but Ira solved all our problems. He went to Geelong with us. He booked a room for me in "The Victoria" in Melbourne and we had the weekend together. It was my 60th birthday during this trip and no greater joy could come to me than to meet Ira there in Melbourne and have his company.

It was Saturday when we arrived in Melbourne and I had Ira's company till he flew back to Canberra on Monday. Bessie stayed with her sister, and on the Tuesday of the following week I flew to Hobart to take part in the Federal Conference of our churches being held there. I was billeted at Newtown. A bed and breakfast arrangement, on a paid basis.

Sunday was the big day of the Conference when all the churches closed and joined in united meetings in the Hobart City Hall. Mr. Williams, Principal of Glen Iris, addressed the morning meeting. Mr. Ern Brooke, of Lygon Street, Melbourne preached in the afternoon. I was the speaker for the great evangelistic service in the evening. I have addressed larger meetings, but never one in which I felt more the master of the occasion than I did here. I preached on "Crusading for Christ", this being the theme of the Conference.

I returned to Melbourne on the following Saturday. Allen Brooke met the plane and took me to his home at Armadale for the weekend. I enjoyed Allen's company. He was with the Baptists and led their youth work in Victoria.

There was a railway strike in Victoria at the time and all trains ceased running. I had my plans to go by rail to Albury and there catch the coach to Canberra. I got to Albury by road transport. All kinds of motor transport were used to get people to their destinations. Mine was an open truck, but it got me there. I left next morning for Canberra. I stayed, by Ira's arrangement, at Beauchamp House.

I agreed to preach at the Baptist Church on the Sunday morning. I was a little apprehensive about this, but this was not warranted and I enjoyed the service very much. Mr. Adermann, M.H.R., attended here and it was he who introduced me to another M.H.R., and in the group was a young lady who I thought at the moment

bore a strong resemblance to Mary, not in stature, but in the quietness of her manner and the way she smiled.

Later that week when attending Parliament House I called at the Library to see Ira, and here was this same young lady again. She hastened to call Ira. I was again reminded of Mary. It was only a few months later that I was to learn that this dear girl was to take such a large place in my heart. Many times since that first meeting she has brightened my life with her love and her many deeds of great kindness. Patricia and Ira were married in Canberra the following year, and it was a matter of great concern to me that I was not there to attend the wedding, and a greater disappointment that I would not have been able to perform the ceremony even had it been possible for me to be in Canberra at the time.

It has been a great joy to me to have baptized the five boys and I would like to have married them all, but Ira had to be the one exception, and this only because he had to be in Canberra. Frank, Desmond, Edwin and Ronald were all married in the Subiaco Church and I officiated on every occasion.

It was while we were at Inglewood that Ira spent a whole year with us during which time he gave himself to working for his Master of Arts degree and completing his librarianship course. To have him live with us for this year was to compensate for the years he was away from us.

All my time at Inglewood was not wasted. Many were added to the church and I made some lasting friendships. One remarkable experience I recall during my time at Inglewood I think is worth recording. Late one night, almost midnight, I answered the phone to discover it was from a sister at the Perth Hospital. She was leaving work at midnight and wanted to see me. It was half an hour past midnight when she arrived. I showed her into my study and asked, "Ila, what is all this about?"

She came straight to the point with the question: "Mr. Raymond, do you think the end of the world is very near?"

I thought she was possibly overwrought or mentally deranged, but she was a most intelligent young woman. I asked why she was showing so much concern with such a matter. Her reply was that she was planning to go overseas where she would take advanced studies in her profession. "But", she said, "if the world is going to end what use would it be going overseas?"

Further talk drew from her that she had been attending some meetings in the Perth Town Hall conducted by a "world famed" Bible teacher who was lecturing on prophecy. He was sure he had first hand acquaintance with all the plans that the Almighty had for the destruction of world society and the bringing in of a new

kingdom. I told Ila I wished my preaching had such a dramatic effect on my listeners. She went to London and is still there in charge of one of the great hospitals of England.



Photo taken at Inglewood in 1948.

Early in 1951 I began my second ministry at Subiaco and took up residence in my own house at 91 Redfern Street. It was as if I had never left the church. The people were as friendly in their welcome as one could ever desire.

The following years were happy and fruitful, but I was consciously growing old. I did not feel that I could do all that was in my heart to do, and felt the need to take things easier. This I was able to do. I discovered that a good church, well organized, was easier to work with than a smaller church with very few, if any, competent to lead. Without nearly the effort I put into the work at Inglewood, I found the church at Subiaco making headway by reason of the fact that I had here so many willing helpers and capable leaders. Mrs. Ern Black was one of the most capable leaders of our young women that one would find anywhere.

But at the end of 1955, I felt that it would be a lovely thing to retire and rest. So towards the winter of 1956 I served notice on the Subiaco church that I was to leave them. Many things in the work at Subiaco made me happy, but the greatest

of all, I think, was the fact that in this church, our five sons made their witness count. It was a thrill to tell the congregation on one occasion of my great joy in the fact that all my sons were in the service of the Lord, and useful in so many ways, and so it is to this day.



Bessie and Roy, 1953.

Ira is a quiet worker of quality and an office bearer. Frank is an elder in the church and a preacher of no mean ability and greatly used. I have often felt that Frank ought to have been exercising his gifts in the full-time ministry of the Word. Desmond is a Sunday school superintendent and church organist. His service is one that would be a great loss to the church were it ever withdrawn. Edwin is a church officer and much used in the churches where he has been in membership. Ronald has made his presence felt by virtue by his musical ability. He has given years of service to Subiaco as organist for evening services while at the same time playing for the church at South Perth in the morning service. Added to this, he has been a faithful Sunday school teacher.

No father could be prouder of his sons than I, and it is the Lord's doing to Whom all praise is given. Not only because of their loyalty in service to the church am I proud of them, but because of what they have meant to me in family life.

Bessie did not have some of the gifts with which Mary was endowed, but she had qualities that made her life a wonderful influence for good. Never one for public life, she ministered effectively in unobtrusive service to those who were sick and in need, and gave help as opportunity provided to the aged and lonely. One thing that has pleased me so much with Bessie's service as mistress of the manse is that she has never been given to gossip. I have never known her to discuss people other than in a favourable light. Added to the limited amount of work she could do for the church, was the constant and thorough care of five young men and a somewhat nervy and weary husband who was often so edgy.

I shall say nothing of her sickness and separation from the family. What she has passed through in her last years is known to all. Our loneliness, hers and mine, has been a burden made lighter by God's good grace.

CHAPTER 10

OTHER WORK

During the years I served at Subiaco there were some things that gave me great pleasure and made extra demands upon my time and strength. I was always interested in committee and State-wide work.

In 1941 the Federal Conference was held in Adelaide. I had been secretary since the Conference met in Sydney in 1938. We had set our hearts on having the Conference in Perth in 1940. But war conditions prevented this. A Federal Conference depended for success on delegations in more or less large numbers from all States. The Federal Government decreed in 1940 that as transport on the Trans-Australian line from South Australia to Western Australia was needed for the transport of troops and supplies it would not be possible for more than two delegates to travel from each State to W.A. So we approached the South Australian Conference Executive and asked them to hold the conference in Adelaide. This was done.

But since we had done most of the business for two years in Perth it was necessary for me to go to Adelaide and present the executive report. This I did at my own expense. I was also asked to preach the sermon in the Adelaide Town Hall on the Sunday afternoon. This I enjoyed. I was also invited to give the address in the same place on the Monday night which was Federal Conference Home Mission night.

As it was a Federal night and I was not asked to speak with reference to any one State, I decided to speak on the desperate condition of the Australian Aborigines with special regard to their spiritual condition. I was amazed when at the close of the meeting, quite a few approached me offering money for the work. But there was no work and I could not take their gifts.

The next morning in the Federal Conference in the Grote Street chapel a motion was carried, moved by Albany Bell, that resulted in the appointment of a Federal Aboriginal Missions Committee to be located in Perth, with Albany Bell as its chairman and myself as secretary. This office I held until the work at Norseman was a going concern, and another and abler man in the person of C. R. Burdeu took over the secretaryship.

In 1947 I found myself in the office of a State Conference President for the third time. In 1946 plans were being made to invite the Federal Conference to Perth in 1948 and I was asked to accept the office of Federal President. For several reasons I did not feel equal to the task at that time and I nominated Mr. Les Peacock for the position. He agreed to take the office if I would agree to take the vice-presidency. This I agreed to do and was a Federal Vice-President right through till 1960 when the Conference was again held in Perth.

I think a more exacting task than President was given me when I was asked to preach the Conference Sermon in the Royal Theatre in Perth. Of all the large meetings I have addressed this was the one that gave me least satisfaction. Arrangements for such an occasion were shocking. There was no amplification, no table, no glass of water: simply a microphone for broadcasting over the National Network. I had to abandon the use of notes — which did not bother me as I knew my subject well — but towards the end of the address my voice failed me. I continued to the end with great difficulty and was fearfully embarrassed. One striking thing I well remember was that when I tried to clear my throat with a mild cough I think hundreds in the congregation tried to help me by also coughing and there was a general clearing of throats. I made sure when, two years later in Hobart, I was to address a Federal gathering of a similar kind, I had a glass of water handy. Strange as it may seem, I did not need it, nor can I recall any other occasion when I had recourse to a glass of water when addressing a public gathering — in church services or anywhere else.

All this may seem like boasting, this telling of one's achievements, but I have put it down on paper that I might have a clearer view of what great things the Lord has done for me. From such a lowly beginning and with such meagre educational advantages, He placed me in the forefront of our work in Australia and all this proves Paul's great statement: "*God hath chosen the foolish things of the world*". I Corinthians 1:27.

And now, as the sun lowers in the Western skies of my life, and I know that soon I must leave it all, I confess I do so with many regrets, but with no fear.

My regrets are that I leave those I love so much. I would love to linger longer and see my grandchildren grow into needed and useful members of Christ's church, but to do that means I should see the aging of those on whom I so much depend and would be an increasing burden to those who have the care of me, and this I do not desire.

Edna Aisbett has been like a daughter to me in the closing years of my life. To say all I feel about Pattie would make my eyes water. Ira has never ceased to write to me every week in all the years he has been away from home. Ronald,

Desmond and Edwin and their families have given me of their love and kindness. Few fathers could boast such affection and concern shown for them as I have enjoyed. And now in my time of greatest need, Frank has undertaken my care and happiness. Ronald's home is open to me at all times and the fondness shown me by his children is a grandfather's delight. This is also true of the welcome I always have received in the homes of Desmond and Edwin.



Roy aged 95 with his three daughters-in-law, Pat, Edna and Jan.

And what of the future? That there is one, I feel so sure. Whether the human relationships we have enjoyed here will be continued there, I am not so sure.

Three things I would like to say about IMMORTALITY. I must say them briefly as I am not here writing a sermon.

IT IS PERSONAL — There are those who would seek to satisfy our craving for immortality by suggesting that in death we shall melt into “the infinite azure” and live forever in the life of nature. Both philosophers and poets dilate on this pantheistic creed. But the empty grave of our Lord gives the lie to this and reminds us that in perfected personality we enter upon our great and everlasting inheritance.

IT IS INDIVIDUAL — It is not the immortality of patriotism. The hope of living in the future of one's nation is not the Christian hope. Let the man of Israel see himself in the persistence of Israel. Let the Greek and the Roman speculate on his future in similar fashion. In no sense can this be the immortality pledged for us

by the resurrection of our Lord. Said He, before He went to Joseph's tomb: "*I go to the Father*".

IT IS MORAL — The spirit of holiness is the secret of the glorious resurrection. "*Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory' "*. The one whom I have served has said — I take it He said it to me — "*Because I live, ye shall live also.*"

Weep not for me when I answer the call. My old body shall give way to something like the body that is now our Lord's. I shall not want the old thing anymore. Take it, and put it away in the quickest way possible. It will have done me service like a garment that is no longer of use.

And now let me say a big thank you to all who have loved me and to all whom God has given me to love. How rich and lovely a thing that love has been, we shall not fully know till we know it when freed from all that is of the flesh, and we see no longer through a glass darkly.

God love you all who are left. May He ever keep you in His love. Amen.

EPILOGUE

By Ira Raymond

What shall we call him? The epilogue has to be biographical, not autobiographical. The first question, then, is how to refer to the person who is the subject. Should he be Preacher (the term he chose in the title for his memoirs), Pastor Raymond, Mr. Raymond, Father, Dad, Grandpa, Uncle Roy, or just Roy? There will be few readers of these closing pages, written in 2002, who were familiar enough with him to have addressed him as Roy. But those of us who knew him intimately did not have one common way of speaking of him; to each of us he was someone special with a special name. It still feels like taking a liberty to call him Roy as his familiars used to do, but that is the simplest and most natural course to take and, no doubt, he would have approved of it.

There is another preliminary matter. The foregoing chapters were compiled in 1970. This fact should be kept in mind when certain statements are read. Roy had a favourite saying: "Can time undo what once was true?" If he used it with reference to the Gospel and other matters of faith, the answer was "No"; but if with reference to everyday events, the answer was "Yes", although in these situations he often preferred to quote from Tennyson's *In Memoriam*:

*Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be.*

If he had been writing today, Roy would not have told us that hotel bars in South Australia still close at 6 p.m.; that the tradition of combined Good Friday services, begun at Kersbrook in 1922, is still maintained; that certain denominations have yet to come together in a Uniting Church; or that his young friend, Ila, still heads a large London hospital. Furthermore, he would probably have shown a greater awareness of decimal currency and metric measures, as opposed to the old imperial system.

Then what happened during the rest of his life?

In 1970, the year in which he turned eighty and thought he saw the sun lowering in the western skies of his life, Roy decided it was time to begin his farewells, which he undertook with characteristic grace and affection. As year followed

year, he realized that in the providence of God he was destined for an extended old age, and he determined to make the best possible use of it. In his nineties he would mention with wonderment that worn-out old men fifteen years junior to him would comment on his apparent youthfulness. His doctor told him that he would live to be a hundred, and he began to think he might. At about ninety-nine he became noticeably old and frail, and his decline accelerated. Frank and Edna cared for him at home, as they had done with the utmost devotion for nearly thirty years, and he died there peacefully on 1 August 1993, two months short of his one hundred and third birthday.

Before that sad day eventually came, however, in a life that had always been one of service, he found many ways to give of himself.

The first call on his time for some years was his visit, daily whenever possible, to his wife, Bessie, whose health had declined so markedly that since early 1967, following a series of strokes, she had been a patient in an Attadale nursing home about two kilometres away. On 8 April 1974 she passed away at the age of seventy-eight, and for the second time Roy faced life as a widower, this time after a marriage of forty-two years and with the support of a large and loving family and many friends.

Maintaining relationships of one kind or another motivated everything Roy did. He loved his family and was never at odds with any of its members. He knew he was welcome in the home of any of them, but the house he shared with Frank and in which he had his own private rooms was normally his place of residence. He usually paid an annual visit to his Adelaide family and looked up relatives and friends in South Australia, but his last visit interstate was in March 1981 when he was aged ninety.

For most of his life he was a dutiful correspondent, and even in September 1987, just before his ninety-seventh birthday, he was still writing once a week to his Adelaide family and regularly to a number of old friends, and sometimes to the children of friends who had predeceased him. Mostly he typed his letters, but sometimes he wrote freehand. Either way it was hard work for him because of his poor eyesight. (In March 1988 he was diagnosed as legally blind.)

His letters were warm and outgoing, and correspondents seeking advice gratefully tasted the fruit of his wisdom and experience.

Many of his friends asked for audio tapes of his sermons, and these he generously circulated. He also sent tapes in place of letters for a while when he could no longer see to write. Until shortly before his death he continued to use the telephone freely. A few small hoards of tapes — personal messages as well as

public addresses and sermons — are still cherished by people who were close to him.

Roy's relationship with God, his Heavenly Father, as he makes clear in his writing, was a compulsive force which never left him: to the end of his life he looked on himself as a minister of the Gospel, and he went on preaching as long as he could. He was back in the Tumby Bay church on 8 February 1976. For some years he was a welcome guest preacher at the South Perth and Fremantle churches and, when he visited South Australia, at Kensington Park. The Wembley church, which had been established in 1939 with the help of the Home Mission Department when Roy was Home Mission Secretary and State Evangelist, invited him back, year after year, to preach at its anniversary. The Subiaco church always made him feel at home: he was there to preach on the day after his eighty-seventh birthday; again five days after his ninetieth birthday when the church cut a cake in his honour following the service; and again on 26 September 1982 when the church celebrated its eighty-fourth anniversary, and Roy the seventieth anniversary of his entry into the ministry and (four days early) his ninety-second birthday. He preached many times at the Manning church, his last church home, where Frank was also a member. Naturally, the intervals between his appearances in the pulpit had lengthened as the years went by. Frank was serving as minister



Cutting the cake after the 84th Anniversary Service at the Subiaco Church of Christ where Nigel Merrick was ministering.

at Manning when on 2 October 1983 Roy preached in a memorable service which gave him great joy. He preached for the last time at the age of ninety-six.

During his years as a pastor, Roy met members of his congregation in their homes or his, or any other place where he could help: "visiting" was a feature of his ministry in an era when most ministers had no staff or office, and counselling by appointment was unusual. Many people, including pastors, missionaries, and other church workers, and those who might protest that they were merely plain men and women, could testify to the help they received from talking with him. He continued to meet people and share his thoughts with them into his extreme old age. Many came to see him at home out of friendship or affection, some to savour his wisdom, some because he had become a name and appealed to their sense of history or curiosity, and some because they needed help and knew that he would give it willingly. His instinctive warmth and good humour endeared him to the youngest child and most senior adult alike, while his remarkable memory for events and family background and interest in the lives of his visitors won respect and built up their confidence. He had received gifts of books from some of his mentors in earlier years, and so took pleasure in passing on to visiting young and aspiring church workers a volume from his library as a parting gift.

Throughout his life, Roy was moved by social issues. He had great admiration for the Christian social work of friends like C. R. Burdeu whose efforts as a public servant and church worker in Queensland and Western Australia were justly recognized. Another whom he admired was Will H. Clay who, without benefit of theological college training, achieved a great reputation as pastor at the Subiaco church and in Victoria, in tent mission work and as an influential worker in the field of care for the aged. (Incidentally, he also lived to a great age.)

Roy's own most notable contributions to social welfare lay in helping to arouse and maintain concern for the spiritual and physical well-being of the Aborigines, as he outlines in earlier pages, and in hospital care. Unaccountably, he failed to mention his involvement in hospital work in the present version of *A Preacher's Progress*. In a shorter version, printed as the *Digest*, number 64, March 1979, of the Australian Churches of Christ Historical Society, he reveals his pride at having helped Matron B. G. Hill, one of the members of the Subiaco Church of Christ, in 1943 to convert the struggling Saint Andrew's Hospital into the successful Bethesda Hospital, operating under the auspices of the Churches of Christ. Roy enlisted strong support for the hospital, and served as Chairman of the Board for its first five and a half years and as a member of the Board for the first twelve. On 17 February 1984 Roy with Miss Hill was an honoured guest at the fortieth anniversary dinner of the Bethesda Hospital. The fact that his son, Frank, at that time the Chairman (and only the fourth in forty years) of the Board, presided over the celebrations, gave Roy great satisfaction.



Roy, former Matron Beryl Hill and Frank at the 40th Anniversary Dinner of the Bethesda Hospital.



Bethesda Hospital c. 1968.

Had he still been living in the year 2001, with what mixed emotions would he have received news from the scene of his early labours, Berri. He would have learned that the land on which he had helped build the chapel and manse during World War I had been sold. A new chapel had been built elsewhere, incorporating the foundation stone which Mary had set in place in March 1917, and the old buildings had been demolished to provide space for the expanding Saint Catherine's Nursing Home, run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. In a remarkable acknowledgment of heritage values and ecumenical spirit, the Sisters had decided to name their new building Raymond House.

On 1 October 1990 Roy arrived at the one hundredth anniversary of his birth. The occasion undoubtedly meant much to him, but he displayed more equanimity than his family and friends, for whom it was plainly an emotional event. The main public celebration, in the form of a pleasant Sunday afternoon birthday party, complete with cake, convened at the Manning Church of Christ on 30 September, was a joyous affair in a crowded chapel. Frank presided over the gathering, Ron was organist, and all his family, and many members of the other Raymond and Plenty families, had participatory roles. Colin Wheat, pastor of the Manning church, and Mrs. Wheat, together with representatives from other church congregations, also contributed. Gabriel Bywaters, who had been a lad in the Gawler Sunday school in 1922, had kept in touch with Roy ever since, and with his wife, Gwen, had come from Adelaide for this occasion, spoke briefly and presented an album of photographs of churches connected with the Raymond ministries in South Australia. Roy delighted his audience with an appropriate response to the affectionate tributes paid to him.



All the boys together on the occasion of Roy's 100th Birthday Celebration at the Manning Church of Christ. (Ron, Ed, Des, Roy, Frank, Ira).



*Roy Raymond, centenarian, in the Fremantle Church of Christ. Photograph by Nic Ellis, to accompany an article by Mark Thornton, in The West Australian, 1 October 1990.
(By kind permission of The West Australian)*

On the Monday, in the midst of a continuing stream of callers, Roy was able to relish and display the many congratulatory messages he had received from friends and relations as well as various dignitaries including the Queen, the Governor-General (Bill Hayden), the State Governor (Sir Francis Burt), the Prime Minister (Bob Hawke), the State Premier, the State Leader of the Opposition, and the Federal M. P. of Roy's electorate.

Roy had stood up well to the demands of the occasion, but his health was deteriorating and his grip on life gradually becoming less secure. Frank and Edna nursed him with the utmost love and attention, determined that, if at all possible, he would remain in his own home to the end. This he did. He died peacefully on 1 August 1993, leaving many sadly bereft but proud of their association with one who in life had achieved so much good.

The funeral at the Fremantle Cemetery on Saturday 7 August was conducted by Colin Wheat and Jack Sewell, both of the Manning Church of Christ, in the presence of family members and a small group of friends. The service of thanksgiving for Roy's life was held in the Manning chapel during the afternoon of 8 August.

The crowd of almost two hundred seemed intent on a celebration such as Roy would have enjoyed, with hearty singing of some of his favourite hymns, accompanied by Ron as pianist and his son, Rodney, as organist. Jack Sewell led the service and Gordon Ewers offered a moving eulogy.



Frank and Edna with Roy on the front verandah of their home, 80 Swan Road, Attadale.

People who knew Roy well could have been in no doubt that his life had been a successful and productive one. Coming from a disadvantaged background, he had demonstrated a passion for preaching the Gospel, an ambition to help others fit themselves for service, and a self-developed ability (which he hardly recognized himself) to teach learners of all ages, from little children to mature adults, the principles of Christian living. His early sacrificial home-mission work in rural South Australia had built churches and lasting friendships. Later he had ministered to many other congregations, conducted evangelistic missions, organized training, campaigned for Aboriginal welfare, and helped establish a successful city hospital. He had been Federal Vice-president of the Churches of Christ, 1948-1960, and State President of the churches in South Australia in 1932, and in Western Australia in 1934 and 1947. He had been in demand as a preacher for thirty years after retirement. He had been a loving and much-loved family man. He had left a host of affectionate admirers, inspired by his example with the hope expressed by the nineteenth-century writer, George Eliot:

*Oh may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence.*

APPENDIX 1

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