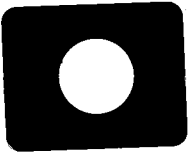


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ORAL HISTORY

interview with

Alice Isobel Nannup (nee Bassett)

(1911 - 1995)

1989



AL50500249459B

3 x 60 min tapes

Transcript: Norma Hayley

Interviewer: Carol Cahill

1. Alice Isobel Bassett
Abydoss Station via Port Hedland 17/10/1911
2. Thomas Bassett
Dot born Pilbara Station 1896
3. Father died 1933 Roebourne
Mother died 1933 - Munda Station via Port Hedland
4. Magumber 23/4/1932
5. Charles William Nannup
Born 3 May 1910 Mundering
6. Father William Nannup
Mother Ella May Ring
7. Died 3/4/1988 Geraldton
8. 13 children 10 living 7 girls and 3 boys
9. N/A
10. Homemaker
11. N/A
12. 3 years of education
13. SDA
14. Labour
15. N/A
16. N/A
17. N/A
18. Alice Nannup 3b Lantana Street Rangeway

Childrens' names:

Ronald George	M	Blanche Quartermaine
Gloria Dawn	M	James Hill
Pearl June	M	David Fox Gray
Joan Laurel	M	Aubrey Gray
Daphne Jean	M	Ronald Shiorzaki
Lewis Edward	M	Irene Shiorzaki
Veronica Rose	M	John Ellis
Noel Gregory	M	Cheryle Patzak
Beverley Ann	M	Stephen McLaughlin
Glenis Lorraine	M	Christopher Large (S.A.)

TAPE 1 SIDE A

ALICE NANNUP

CC Could you tell me your full name please?
AN Alice Isobel Nannup.
CC And your date and place of birth?
AN 17/10/1911.
CC And whereabouts?
AN On Abydoss Station out of Port Hedland.
CC How would you spell that?
AN ABYDOSS.
CC Right and who was in charge of the station when you were born?
AN Mr and Mrs Val Heaster.
CC And your parents names Alice?
AN My fathers name was Thomas Bassit and my mother was Dot.
CC What about brothers and sisters, did you grow up with some?
AN I had one sister, Ella.
CC No brothers?
AN I had one brother but he died. Then from my step sisters and brothers I've got. I had two brothers and another sister.
CC And you grew up with these on the station?
AN No only Ella.
CC Okay, so how old were you when you left the station?

- AN About nine.
- CC And where did you go from there?
- AN Went to Malenna Station with my mother, she left home. She left my fathers station.
- CC Right.
- AN But that wasn't Abydoss, that was Kanga you see. Abydoss belong to the Heasters, that was where I was born though because my mother used to work there.
- CC And this other station you mentioned?
- AN Kanga station was my fathers station.
- CC Oh right, were they very far apart?
- AN Oh about two days journey by cart, yeah.
- CC So what's your earliest memory of growing up on the station?
- AN Oh I've got fond memories of growing up on the station, on our station I mean.
- CC What are some of your memories Alice?
- AN Well I had a marvellous father to begin with, he was really lovely to me and of course my mother. She was a lovely mother, she was a wonderful cook. Cook anything. She could cook bush tucker, () you know European foods and everything like that, you know. I can remember when we were little children my mother used to want wood, you know and so I got my father to make us a cart and we had a goat. We used to live on goat milk and butter and (). Of course my father had sheep as well but we never used that, we kept that for wool. This goat I called him "Toe Go" because he was the Emperor of Japan in those days you see and anyway my father made this cart out of logs and the boxes that he used to bring out with stores and things, you know, real good one. It was very strong, we used to ride in it too. We used to ride "Toe Go" as well and it was really lovely times, you know. I learn't to ride a horse when I was six years of age and I was more of a tom boy than a girl. I used to dress in Safari suits, because to ride horses you'd have to have, be dressed like a boy I suppose. It was really lovely.
- CC So that your mother taught you to cook?

Nannup

- AN Yeah in a way, you know. I used to get food off her and cook it myself.
- CC And you would play with other children on the station?
- AN No there was only two of us.
- CC Just you and Ella?
- AN My sister, yeah.
- CC Did you ever get kind of lonely for other children's company?
- AN No I never had time because, I used to be most of the with my father when they went out working or anything. And we built a big stock yard, you know, for horses because my fathers used to break in horses and things like that, or used to get the men to come and do it. One day he was boring post holes, you know to put wire through and what was it? ah for making a gate, that's right for the paddock and I went to, when he pulled the bit out I went to have a look to see if the hole went right through and he blew, he blew all the sawdust into my eye, you know and because I, you know, like my father said, "your smart aren't you?". He nearly blinded me, but still I got it out.
- CC How did he get the sawdust out of your eye?
- AN Washed it out.
- CC Right, so did he have water with him at the time?
- AN Oh we always carried water, water bags, yeah.
- CC Where would you get your water from on the station?
- AN We had a well on it, on the edge of the creek.
- CC There was a creek that ran through the station?
- AN Mm, mm.
- CC Did you ever go swimming in the creek?
- AN No not in the creek. But we used to have a marvellous time just the same. On the creek it had a deviation like that you see and we had a island there and we grew our garden.
- CC In the middle of the island?

AN And my father had a brother in Carnarvon. When he went down to Perth on business he called into Carnarvon and brought two tubers of banannas back, you know and we planted them on the island and we had rock melons and watermelons, pumpkins, everything growing there, we had the most marvellous garden and these trees we bought, just fruit, you know banannas on them and they were laden with banannas and they were long and they were weighing down. My father got two props and propped them up, you know the bunches and we had a severe cyclone. I can remember that as well as anything, you know. But a few days before that, oh it might have been a week or so, there wasn't any sign of rain or anything and he said to this aboriginal man that used to work for them, his name was Tommy too. He said to Tommy, "Tommy I want you to make rain, you think you can?" He said, "I'll try boss", so and I said to my mother, "can I go with them?" because he had a wife name Mary too. She said, "no I don't think you'd better go", she said, "oh yes you can go". I won, so we went and there was a devil's marbles, you know these.

CC They're big rocks aren't they?

AN Mm, he got there and he started digging the ground up and making all sorts of noises and talking in aborigine you know and when he'd finished he was cold and he sang out to Mary, because he was splashing water, we had one billy to ourselves, but he was splashing water and making us and he came out and said "Mary make a fire". So we made a big fire for him, he walked out and warmed himself up, oh he was just covered in sand, you know and we went home and he said, "I've been trying to make the rain for you boss" and he said "alright". Anyway few days or whatever the clouds started rising, it was a cyclone. Thunder, lightning, struck five of our goats killed them you know and our island was washed away but the plants. The first thing I did in the morning was, they used to live in a little myall, myall you call it you see. But this night when the thunder and lightning and everything was going on, father went down and said "you'd better come to the store room". We had a big shed there, you know, like in the stores and if they had men working there they'd live there. And he said "You'd better come and stay in the store room, too much rain might be you know". He said "alright". So that the next morning I jumped out of bed and straight up onto the hill because you run up onto the hill and look down into the, and there wasn't any garden left.

CC So all your banannas had gone?

- AN All my bananas, we never even had a taste of them. They were only new you see, they were first year.
- CC Well I bet your father never asked anyone else to make rain.
- AN Never, not that I can remember. So anyway when I, I ran straight back down and of course I never called my father, "father", I always called him Tommy like everybody else you see. I said, "you know Tommy", I said "we've got no garden". He said "what do you mean?" I said "it's gone". See the water came down on both sides.
- CC Just washed it away.
- AN So when Tommy old, old workman Tommy came out and he said, "Tommy" he said "I didn't tell you to make that much rain". He said, "no boss" he said. (laughter)
- CC So what kind of work would you help your father with, what kind of work did he do on the station?
- AN Oh go around and see that the sheep are all good and you know, mustering time, shearing time. He used to have different people come shear for him. Got a lot working () with us. I don't know got on so well I suppose. I used to work with my mother too yes.
- CC So how many goats would you have had?
- AN Oh I don't know, about 100 suppose 90 or more. But still a lot of them and they used to go away feeding all day, you know. But say about, just before sundown or something like that, if we wanted them we'd call them because we had the names, old Leana, you know.
- CC And they would come?
- AN Yeah because they were our milking goats, see.
- CC So you helped with the milking?
- AN Oh we did all the milking, us kids.
- CC And what about the butter making?

- AN My mother used to do that.
- CC Do you remember how she made the butter?
- AN We used to have these scouring pans, you know those big pans you put on the fire and scour the milk and the cream comes to the top. You scoop it all up and make the butter.
- CC And would you whip the butter, whip the cream until it became butter.
- AN Yes, mm, mm.
- CC Was it good tasting?
- AN It was white butter like philadelphia, you know.
- CC Yeah, yeah.
- AN But it looked good, yes. My mother used to, you know put salt wash it, put salt wash it until it became you know all butter, just butter and it was beautiful. And we used to get butter by the, in the tins too you know.
- CC Yes.
- AN Called three little maids.
- CC When would you do your shopping?
- AN My father used to send to Perth for all the stores. But if we wanted to do any shopping we'd have to go to Roebourne.
- CC And that was the nearest town?
- AN Yeah well that was ex-home.
- CC How far away would Roebourne have been?
- AN Oh about three days trip from our station to Roebourne.

- CC Describe your house and what the station looked like then Alice from your memory?
- AN It was a big, we had three like big sheds, you know like sort of sheds but made into rooms, you know, they were all in a row like that, you see. One was here and one was there and one was there you see and this was a big courtyard sort of thing. And we, father used to go out to these big flat rocks and get them and make cement blocks, cement floors sort of thing. But just cement that cracks, you know and he used to have like just, just beautiful, like beautifully patterned courtyard sort of thing. But the floors used to be like that to you see and we used to have straw brooms.
- CC Did you have a wood stove to cook on?
- AN No we had open fire, just a place as big as this and had bars and had all iron pots and camp ovens, you know.
- CC Was this inside or outside?
- AN Oh outside, we couldn't have it in the house.
- CC Bit too hot?
- AN No, too hot yeah.
- CC Would it get very cold at night sometimes?
- AN No not really. Oh it might be sometimes but we never used to worry about it you see, we'd be inside. Oh yes had some lovely times and mother used to make beautiful bread and brownies and cakes. I can remember my mother, she used to always make marble cakes for me for my birthday or rainbow cakes, you know, just pink around them. In the camp oven she used to make them.
- CC Where did your mother come from Alice?
- AN My mother she was born on Pilbara Station, they called it, Pilbara.
- CC And how did she learn to cook so beautifully?

AN Well, there was my mother and my mothers' sister and two other girls. Mr and Mrs Hester took them when they were children, reared them up and taught them to be house girls and even took them down to Bindoon and they went to school down there while they were on holidays.

CC Oh right.

AN And my mother could write a little bit. She used to teach me to read. I never used to have time, I used to always find all sorts of excuses, you know. Used to get impatient (unclear) that's alright.

AN So how old were you when you left the Hester station?

CC Oh when I was a baby.

CC And you went to this other station?

AN To my fathers' station, yes.

CC Right and then after that where did you go?

AN Oh well when I was about nine, we left home and went to Mallina and must have spent two years there because then we were taken away from home there, taken away from my mother, taken down south.

CC Against your will this was?

AN Well, my mother, when she was working in the kitchen at Mallina and these scouts used to come looking for all little half-caste kids, you know. Take them away and she used to come down and say, "I want you girls to stay indoors today, because" she said "they're here". She only just has to say that and we knew what, she'd bring sandwiches down and things like that and she said "if they come snooping around, just get under the bed" and hide, see. And you know those people, they were one jump ahead of my mother. Well this is my surmision because when I grew up, you know and thought back to myself and I realised what, how cunning these people could be. They spoke to Mr and Mrs Campbell and they were retiring you see.

CC Yes.

AN From Mallina station, they were the owners of the place and they were going away back down to Perth to live, you see and they'd promised to take us down and educate us, you know. And when we finished our education we could be taken back home again. But that didn't eventuate because they kept us for a year at Bidgernup, that was another friends station, like the farm, big farm and they were managing that place while the owners went to Singapore on a holidays and they were away for

about a year. And Mr. Baridge he was a farmer at Tilbinnup and he was guarding for kids to go to school so he came to Bigernup and us three kids were there and he was was overjoyed because he want more kids to come to school otherwise the school would have to close down.

CC Right.

AN And Mr and Mrs Campbell said yes, so they took us. Like we went to school there, four miles.

CC And did you see your mother again?

AN No. no. See I left, when we left home, well I'm jumping the gun really, but still. So mother jumped at it see, she thought "oh that's a good idea". Rather than let the Aboriginal Affairs take us away. But Mrs Campbell could take us and have us educated and we could be with people that we knew, you see.

CC Yes.

AN There was three of us children, two girls and a boy.

CC So there was Ella and?

AN No, no, Ella was my step sister.

CC Who were the other two children?

AN Doris Bun and Herbert Todd, you see, two other children and Mrs Campbell, you know, talked to our mothers' and they said "yeah that's a good idea". So my mother, she was working on Kroydon station now, she didn't work on Mallina she and she didn't want to see me go so we went over to Kroydon, said goodbye to her and she never saw us anymore.

CC That was it, you never, how old were you?

AN No never. I was just about going on twelve, about eleven.

CC So what happen after that Alice?

AN So we caught the boat, like Mr and Mrs Campbell took us and as we were going, they were spending evenings along the way, so they called into Wilcreek and stayed the night there because they had a big send off party for the Campbells and we'd dance and all that. And Sgt. Page was there and he. We had to sleep under the stars he went over the police station and got three beds for us kids, we slept outside while all the rest slept in the hotel, you see, because Wilcreek a hotel.

CC Yes.

Nannup

- AN And then from there the next, went to Roebourne, we spent a couple of days there my, oh when my father found out that I was leaving he sold his station see. He said he had no, no more, you know, that was empty, no nothing. He wanted to be where I was you see. So he sold his station and he booked his passage on the boat too, thinking that he would be with me, but, they soon fixed that up, they wouldn't let him even come near me. But when we got to Perth, oh we caught the boat, my father was on the boat too, but the Campbells' didn't know that he was coming with us and we was on the boat for eight days coming down. I was sick. The whole time, you know and we slept on the floor in the cabins you know and the boat, you know the engines going boom, boom, boom all night. Well you couldn't sleep. It was terrible and through the day we never got, we weren't allowed to go down to the cabin. We had to sit on the deck all day, so we used to sit on the life belt box, like this, all day. We could speak our own language and we used to cry and talk in our own lango, you know, wishing we were back home with our parents and why did we have to come down and we were very lonely and unhappy. So anyway my father used to come around and see us and he used bring us fruit and things like that, you know. That's all I could eat really, we're used to it, good kids. But when we used to meal time, you know they never took us into the dining room.
- CC Where would you eat your dinner?
- AN They'd put us on the deck, you know on the outside of the kitchen and just give us our food.
- CC And why weren't you allowed to go to the cabin in the daytime?
- AN I wouldn't know, I haven't got a clue, never ever thought of it until now. I suppose that, I don't know why, but. But we could of had a different, like another cabin with bunks on it, couldn't we? No we were little black fellows see, we had to sleep on the floor.
- CC And what was the name of the ship, can you remember the name?

Nannup

AN Kerrin.

CC It's ship Kerrin.

AN Yes.

CC And it sailed from?

AN From Roebourne.

CC Roebourne down to Fremantle.

AN Yes.

CC And the two other children, how old would they have been?

AN Oh Doris was about nine and Herbert was about my age.

CC And where did they come from?

AN Well Herbert come from Roebourne and Doris and I were from Allena.

CC Right.

AN Yes.

CC So their mothers were back in Roebourne and Mellina.

AN Yes.

CC So when you left the boat where did you go?

AN When we're in Fremantle?

CC Yes.

AN Oh we, the pilot ship came out and we had to all have our fingers, you know, the doctor comes and they examine you. And then we went into Fremantle and got off there and got tram out and they sent us, they took us out to Belmont. They had friends there because the son up there, proprietor of the Belmont Hotel, his son was a, was working on Mellina Station you see, so he we got, like they got the place for us to stay there. Mr and Mrs Ball, they were really good people, but they weren't that good anyway, but when you think of it, you know, I just, I grew up, I grew up to just think, how, how hard it was for us. I didn't realise until now, you know, when I think back. We used to sleep in little, I called them little stores, like, you know, like little, with wooden bunks on, you know.

CC Yes.

Nannup

- AN Where they used to put the drunks, that's what I come to think, after you know, they have a little places where they, they just lay the drunks out there in the evening or whatever.
- CC But it didn't bother you at the time?
- AN It didn't really, we didn't think, it never entered our brain, you know. And anyway we'd get up and have our shower and go into the pantry, that's where we used to eat, in the pantry. Plate of porridge and then they tell us, "go out and play". So I'd go out into the park. There was a boy Ball, I just can't think of his name, but he grew up to be a big man and that, he looked after () orphanage. I just can't think of his christian name. But he was about fifteen or sixteen at the time and he used to take us down to the Swan River, you see and swim. We used to swim and all that. But we never ever went back for midday meal and Herbert used to go around and, well there was money everywhere those days, you know, you'd just pick it up. There was a race horse stables, they had, see they were amongst the races there you know and there was heaps of race horses there and we used to pick up money where the people used to go down there I suppose and money was plentiful those days. And he'd go up to the shop and buy biscuits or icecreams or lollies or whatever. That's what we lived on all day. And my father got permission to take us to the museum, one day he took us to the zoo, no to the museum and then the next couple of days away he took us to the zoo. And then another day he wanted to take us somewhere else and they refused him.
- CC Now who was this who refused your father?
- AN Mr and Mrs Campbell. Oh Mrs Campbell I suppose it would be. But anyway, when we came in they took us to Aboriginal Affairs you see. Up to Mr Nevilles' office and Mr Neville was talking to us. He said, "you are going to school and you're going to do this and do that and when you grow up and you leave school and we'll send you back home". We thought that was great, you know. But that was 1923. 1925 see we only had a years schooling down in Didgenup. When we went to Palannup there were no school there, it had closed down because there was not enough children. So we spent about a year there without any school.
- CC Where is this Pidgenup?

AN Down Nangarup way, down the South West.

CC So that's where you were sent from this, the Balls' home in Belmont?

AN Yes.

CC All three of you were sent down there?

AN Mm, mm.

CC With other children?

AN No, only us three.

CC Only you three.

AN You see. And while we were at Binningup we had to learn to milk cows. We had to milk sixteen cows before we went to school in the morning. And Doris she never had anything to do with anything, she was the little house girl. She helped in the house see. But Herbert and I, we were outsiders. While Herbert took the cows out to put them in the paddock for the day, I would have to separate the milk and when he came back, he'd take and feed poddy calves and the pigs and then we'd go and get ready for school. And we used to have a horse called "Dyna", we'd put her in the sulky, cut lunches and we'd go to school.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A

TAPE 1 SIDE B

AN Yes we'd go to school and there was nine of us at the school, nine kids, you know and Mr and Mrs Parriage they were lovely people. They had three children I think it was. I know Wilson and Grace, they were, like I can always remember them because we were more like friendly with them than. There were lots of Barridges there. I think there was about three or four Barridges and then there was the Mc farlins and Hollins and us three kids.

CC And where were you staying at the time?

AN At Beejenup.

CC At Beejenup and who were looking after you?

AN Mr and Mrs Campbell.

CC They had gone down there, they were still looking after you?

AN Oh yeah, they were looking after us until 1923, 25 rather.

CC Right.

AN You see, for two years we were with them. But when there was no school at Pallinup we had to be sent to Mogumber.

CC Oh Mogumber.

AN You see.

CC Yes.

AN When we were at Beejenup, christmas, no it was Grace's birthday and she'd turn nine, I can remember this and we had a teacher named Miss Martin. Anyway Mr Barridge came and invited us kids to grace's birthday you see. On their farm. They were farmers at Moorilup, that's just about half a mile from school. We were invited and we went along, Mr and Mrs Campbell too. And oh the table, you know you see all sorts of tables spread, you know, nicely, beautiful, you know. But when you know when your kids and you never see.

CC So you thought that all your christmases had come at once.

AN All had come at once. There's this table spread and it's as long as from here to my, like the length of and I couldn't keep my eyes off the different coloured jellies, you know all rainbow colours and anything. But we were playing games, all sorts of games and enjoyed ourselves, had a big feed and anything and then they cleared away everything and just left a little table on the side like this and they started dancing and everything and this old gentleman, he was sitting over there, I don't know who he was and he came and picked me up and he had a dance, you know, "ha, ha, ha, you and me" and it was so funny, you know and I got, I learnt the step in no time.

CC Was that a polka?

AN Yes. Polka it was. But it was beautiful. He wouldn't let me sit down, he was an old fellow, but we really enjoyed ourselves and that was the happiest night I ever had you know, because we were fretting for our family and I sort of got over it, sort of thing. When we went back Mr and Mrs Campbell said, "oh you enjoyed yourselves didn't you?" I said "yeah". And we had our first christmas there. We must have went down in about September or August I think it must have been and we had to make a fire for our first christmas because it was so cold.

CC Oh.

AN Down the South West you see.

CC Down South, yes.

AN At christmas time now when school broke up we'd tie our horse up under the tree and we used to have a nose bag you see to feed her and then we used to take her to water. They must have got him, Herbert not to take the horse to water, see, so they asked, he said "you take the horse to water", you see Herbert usually does it, see. I said "yeah alright". So I took the horse to water not thinking anything. The two Barridge boys come following me in, one grabbed me by the feet and the other one by the arms and threw me into the dam.

CC And you'd never swum before Alice?

AN No.

CC So what happened?

Nannup

AN Oh I got out of the water, it wasn't that deep, but I had to go four miles in wet clothes.

CC And who did this to you?

AN The Barridge boys.

CC The Barridge boys.

AN Yes (laughs) they thought it was a great joke you see.

CC And you were about thirteen at the time, weren't you?

AN Yeah.

CC About that age?

AN About that age yeah.

CC And you had to walk back four miles?

AN No driving the sulky.

CC In the sulky, in wet clothes and this was in reasonably cold weather?

AN It was cold yes.

CC So did you get a cold from that or anything?

AN No I didn't. I went straight home and I had a shower and Mrs. Campbell was quite cross but I forgave them, kids, you know ther're stupid sometimes. They do something silly especially kids, somebody they think is not all there I suppose they thought.

CC How old were the boys?

AN Around my age. Yeah I'd never forget that.

CC So did you like school the year that you had down there?

AN I only went up to three, grade three. That was all the education I had.

CC So you were taken away from parents who loved you for three years of education.

AN Yeah.

CC Well what was your favourite subject at school?

AN Poetry.

EG You liked poetry did you?

AN Yeah, yeah. I can remember my poetry that I loved, favourite one it was. Can I tell you?

CC Yeah.

AN Alright it's about Rainbow Fairies and soon as our poetry came along they'd want us to recite our poetry and I used to pick out mine, you know and this is the way it went.

Rainbow fairies, two little clouds one summers day,
went flying through the sky, they went so fast they
bumped their heads and both began to cry. Old father
Sun looked down and said, oh never mind my dears, I'll
send my little fairies folks to dry your falling tears.

CC Oh that was lovely, that was by?

AN Gwen Sharecalf.

CC Oh it was, oh my goodness, then you must of had a good teacher to teach you to love poetry Alice, did you?

AN She was beautiful yes, she was lovely to teach.

CC Did you know some of the children learn poetry sing song and that wasn't sing that was beautifully done. Do you remember the teacher who taught you the poetry.

AN Yeah Miss Martin.

CC It was Miss Martin, was she an English teacher or she taught everything?

AN No she was an Aussie girl, Australian lady. She had to leave us and she was going to get married so we had a Miss Swinn.

CC Right.

AN She wasn't so bad either, she was good.

CC And do you know where Miss Martin went to after that?

AN No.

CC So what subjects did Miss Martin teach at the school?

AN Everything.

CC So she taught History?

AN Yes.

CC Geography, did you have geography?

AN Oh well I don't know, I can't remember now. We used to have songs too.

CC Yes I was just going to ask.

AN Good morning merry sunshine, you know.

CC Yes, so did you have a piano at school?

AN No, she used to have a fork, tuning forks, she used to go (tune) you know. But I can't remember the good morning, just a little bit though. It used to go, "Good morning merry sunshine, how did you wake so soon". I saw you go to sleep last night, before I said my pray, how did you get there, there, and", oh I can't remember it but it was such a beautiful one you know and we used love our poetry you know and our little sing songs.

CC Did she teach you to love reading too Alice?

AN Yes but we didn't read very much, you know, like you know, just everyday lessons. We never had "A"s and "B"s we just said A and B and all that sort of thing you know and we used to have lunch. When we used to have lunch we used to run to the culvert because it wasn't far and we used to love to hear the train going over the culvert and we forgot the school bell, never even heard it and we got into trouble one day.

CC What would happen when you got into trouble?

AN We'd have to stay back?

CC Did you ever get the cutts?

AN No.

Nannup

CC You never got the cutts, what about lines, did you have to write lines?

AN Yes.

CC On your pads?

AN Yeap so many words you know. But I couldn't write. When we went to Mergrumber we were only in school for a little while there, you know. At Easter my father rang and asked if he could come and see me and they refused, so Mrs Campbell came and said to me, " your father wanted to come and see you but he's not allowed to" and I said, "why" she wouldn't explain it to me, she just said, "he's not allowed to see you, that's all" and I was upset for a whole week. I cried and cried and I sulked and everything else, you know. He sent me a few gifts, he sent me a big box of clothes and easter eggs and everything and I thought of well it was so beautifull and then Mr Campbell's son Moble, he came down for a holiday because he was managing the station up there you see and Mr and Mrs Holthouse, that was Mrs Campbells sister and brother in law and they were all down for a holiday and there was a pantemime or whatever you'd like to call it in Myangerup and Dame Madam Melver she was only young then and she was there, showing at the time you see.

CC Yes.

AN So Moble said, "well look, why don't we take the kids for a treat into Myangerup?" Mr and Mrs Campbell, Mr and Mrs Holthouse and Moble and us kids, you see we all went in to see this and it was beautiful. You know they acted in all sort, acting and dancing, you know and all play it was beautiful play and Dame Madam Melver was singing. She sang Home Sweet Home and she was dressed in a beautiful green, I can still see it, shining, she had this beautiful (unclear) and I thought oh well this has paid for my father not coming, you know, so they had to do that to.

CC Yes.

Nannup

- AN A little while after that we were taken away from Mrs Campbell sent to Mygumber.
- CC So the year that you didn't go to school, what did you do?
- AN We worked in the garden at Campbell's. Like we made a garden down there in the flat.
- CC Did the Campbells' ever undertake to teach you themselves?
- AN No. All we did was work, work, work. We had cows, we had to milk cows. We had to take them, go and get them. We used to have to walk about mile to get the mail from Mr and Mrs Moore. He was the, he was one of the members of Nyangerup and he had a shop in town and he used to bring all our mail out and we used to have to go down and pick it up, you see and some nights we used to ride down but most nights we'd have to walk, the three of us. This night I was sick so they said to Doris "you had better ride down and get the mail yourself" and it was with Tilley you see, so when she got down there, there was calf on the side of the road and the horse shied and she fell off and we were waiting and waiting and waiting and Mrs Campbell said, "you'd better go and get father to go and look for her". And so I said "oh you've got to go and get a horse and go and look for Doris". No, no the horse was standing at the gate, that's right and you had better go and wake Herbert up and go and get the, to get the horse and go back and look for Doris, there's something wrong, you know. And when he got down there she was just coming too. So anyway he said "oh you had better go down and get the mail" and she'd wait for him. So he went and got the mail and came back and picked her up and bought her home. She was knocked out because fell off the horse you see. But at night we used to have sticks and we'd go (noise) you know, run the motor, make out we're driving the car or something, you know.
- CC Did the Campbells' have a car?
- AN No they didn't have a car only Noble had a car. Yes they did they had a car, old () yeah and then we had a sulky too. No they didn't have a car that's right because we had a horse and sulky and one day Mr Campbell wanted to go into Nyangerup and I had to go in with him. Yeah it was a horse and sulky we had.
- CC Just before we go to Mygumber Alice, what was some of the bushtucker that you really liked up on the station?

- AN Oh way up there. Oh we ate wild turkey, bungarra, goanna we ate, oh they are beautiful. We used to go out bush sometimes and mother used to get them and cook them in the ashes. Even the turkey, they used to put it in a bag and put it down in the ashes, in the hole and cover it over and leave it for about two hours, come back and you've got beautiful cooked turkey.
- CC And what about Witchetty grubs and things like that?
- AN Yeah, yeah we used to love them too, yes.
- CC Yes I hear they are lovely. Then how would you catch the turkey?
- AN Oh my father used to shoot it or mother used to. She was a great shooter my mother. We used to go out hunting. Mother and I used to go out. One day we went out riding and used to take kangaroo dogs. We had two kangaroo dogs but one got bitten by a snake and killed and another time we went out and a big boomer kicked my spear and kicked it on the jugular there and mother ran home to get needle and cotton and I sat there with him while he was bleeding and held his, but he'd lost too much blood and he died in my arms, poor old "sked". He was a beautiful dog. So we had no dog now. So one day mother and I went out shooting now, we used to always go at 4 o'clock, my father used to say "you can go when it's cool" and the kangaroos come out to feed.
- CC And this is in the afternoon?
- AN Yes 4 o'clock in the afternoon. So mother and I went out and she was really good. She was a sharp shooter my mother. Anyway she wounded this kangaroo and she went to do, he was lying down and we got near him and he stood up and he wanted to fight my mother and my mother dropped the gun you see, she went to hit him but she dropped it, so she pulled a stirrup iron off, the stirrup off and she just swung the stirrup iron and hit the kangaroo on the head, you know and dropped it. Oh I was so scared you know, but anyway she got him. So we went back home, picked up the gun she did and we got the kangaroo. We had beautiful horses, quiet you know. They'd throw a kangaroo over it's back, it wouldn't worry you know and take him home. We used to use the back part for us and the bottom part to feed, we used to boil it and feed our chooks with it, you see. We had chooks, we had plenty of chooks. Yeah. Oh and one thing on my mind just now to tell you. But I tell you how when we were leaving home and my father and mother had a row, you see. I don't know what that was about but

they had a row over something and mother said "well I'm off". Anyway I heard my father crying during the night. Woke up next morning and I never said a word and my father said to me, "we're going onto Wogann today love" and I said "why?". "Oh we're just going to go, you know your mothers leaving". And I said "well I'm not going" and he said, "yes you've got to go with your mother, wherever your mother goes you go", you know. And I always thought that was terrible. But we're going into Wogann he said to get stores. So we got our horses ready and we went into Wogann, spend the day in there because he never drank but he wanted to get rid of his sorrows I suppose. Talk to people, because that was a tin mine you see. And these miners used to come in for lunch and they'd have big things hanging, like spreen you know, hanging on the belts like straps and a big rope in the middle and the fan you know pull it and these fellows used to pay a shilling, pay me a shilling to fan them while they were eating. Yeah they were lovely people you know. And they had a chinaman cook. His name was Jimmy, I don't know what else you know. But he used to come along and say, "Miskey you do your work missey". He was lovely too and my father bought the mouth organ because I loved the mouth organ and I used to play mouth organ like you know. So there was the mailman, Mr and Mrs Soliman, they were just down about two or three miles out of Wogann and father wanted to take me to say goodbye and we stayed the night there. When we were going along and I used to have my mouth organ in my pocket and must of started to canter or something and it fell off see. And I said "oh Tommy I've lost my mouth organ" and he said "how far back?" and I said, "I don't know". It was still daylight you see, so we went back and found it and went to () I used to call her Aunty Minny and old Mr. Tinnerman and we stayed the night there. But mother knew she didn't worry. Went home the next day and a couple days after my father gave my mother my horse, a pair of horses and the buggy and piled her up with stores, you know, he gave me everything he could. He was heartbroken the poor old fellow and we were on Malenna and then when he found out that we were going down and my father came through, he was down () on business or something. She said well Tommy is here, so we had better go down and see him and tell him that your going away, you know, he won't like it if I don't tell him because she had another husband then and they had a little daughter Mertle. So I went down and he said "well that's finished, he said I'm not, he said I'm going in to make arrangements to sell the place up this way, home will never be a home again without you, you know, because he was depending on me to grow up and look after him I suppose. This will be mine when he was gone.

Nannup

CC Do you have any idea how old he might have been when you were born Alice?

AN Oh he was only a young man about twenty or thirty I suppose, might be more. But he was a lovely old man.

CC Right so that, you were sent up to Mygumber?

AN And then Mr. and Mrs. Campbell said, "well there's no school around here and Mr. Neville says you've got to go to school, so you've got to go to Mygumber". We wanted to know where that is you see and they said, "oh it's somewhere but you'll find out", you know they just put us on a train. Ask the guard to watch us until we got to Perth and then Mrs. Mulvale picked us up and took us to West Perth and we were there for a few days and went up to the Department and everything else and because we were only silly dumb because we didn't know what was going on. All we did was do as we were told. So we caught the train this night, it was running late, got to Mygumber about 12 o'clock I suppose or whatever it was. At 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning we were, or might have been, I always think it was, but could have been less, we got to Mygumber, like to the Mygumber Mission or settlement. We went, they locked people up in there you know, the girls, they always locked the girls up and the boys were free to roam, but the girls weren't you see. They used to lock us up at 5 o'clock at the evening you see. So anyway they had our beds ready and we got into bed and next morning I just peeping around you know, we were in bed clothes. We never had sheets just blankets and I could see all these little black fellows just looking at you, you know (laughter). It was so funny we were, oh we were scared you know because never saw so many little kids like that and I thought to myself, my goodness what are we in for now you know. Got up and they had a house mother, she used to look after us. She used to bang on the walls, she used to have a big stick. Out of bed you'd jump into the fast ball, have a wash and all this and other. Or wash room it was no bath there. We had to bath way down at the laundry. So all the young kids come along and said, "where'd you come from?" "Oh we come from the North", you know. And when you say where ever you come from the Norwesters will come and take over, see they'll come and look after you, you know.

CC Oh did they, yes.

AN And if you come from the South the Southy's will do the same see and they're just like, you know. They didn't like one another the North and South were very bitter to one and another. They'd used to get stuck into it, fight, every, at the drop of a hat. It was terrible.

Nannup

But we had our fight girls and they looked after us. We'd all march up to the dining room. Boys come through one end of the verandah up at the dining room and the girls and all the girls go around the one side and the boys go on the other side.

CC So were you separated the whole time you were at Mygumber?

AN Yes.

CC How long were you at Mygumber then Alice?

AN Only two years.

CC And then where did you go?

AN I worked my first job going up to Williams. I went to Perth and stayed there a day and they told me I was going to work. Didn't tell me where, anywhere whatever. Just stuck me on the train gave me a round of sandwiches and I sat in that train all day until I got to Collie. I was going to the William's you see. I didn't know, they just tell the guard or whoever. So when I got to Collie I was sitting there starving, you know. When the guard came to see me and I said to him, "I'd like a drink of water I'm dry" you know. He went and got a water bag and a mug and just hung it on there and I was hungry, you know. That was from 7 o'clock in the morning, you know, I had the sandwiches and this old Station Master, he saw me sitting there and he said "didn't you have a cup of tea?" and I said, "no". He said, "why?" I said, "I've got no money". He said, "you got no money, where are you going?" I said, "I don't know". He said, "you don't know?", I said, "no, I'm going to work for somebody but I said I don't know where but," I said, "the guard knows where I'm going". And he said, "well just hang on a minute" and he went and he got a plate of sandwiches and a cake and a cup of tea. And just as he brought it to me and it was hot you know, and I'd just put half a sandwich in my mouth and whistle blew and I said, "excuse me but", I said, "I can't drink it" I said. And he said, "look this is all government" he said, "just leave it there", he said you know the cup and saucer and the plate. I said "oh thankyou" and he was wild, you know. He said, "oh fancy sending a girl like you to work and you don't know where your going". I said, "no I don't know where I'm going", I said.

CC And you were about fifteen probably?

AN Sixteen I was.

CC Sixteen.

Nannup

AN Anyway got to the William's and the train stopped and the guard came along and said to me, "you get off here Miss Bassett", I said, "do I?". He said "yes". So he got my case and took it down and push it down over the railway platform, you just get it lowered down, you know and stood there. I must have stood there for about quarter of an hour I suppose. This tall bloke comes up to me and he says, "you Alice Bassett?". I said, "yes". He said, "come with me". He was a policeman. I didn't know. He had black pants on too.

CC Right.

END TAPE 1 SIDE B

Tape II Side I

Nannup He carried my case and he put it in the car. I got in with him and he went a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile I suppose up the road and we came to this beautiful place, I thought it was. Walked in, down the passage into the house and there's this lady sitting in a wheelchair and he said - this is Alice - this is my wife Mrs Larsen he said - anyway. I suppose you're hungry Mr Larsen said and I said yes and of course anyway - Mrs Larsen said "How are you, you know, she sat down there and I looked straight around the place - you know how you do, you eye things off and I saw a captains coat on the sideboard and I thought to myself no - I'm in a police station - to myself, you know and of course anyway I suppose Mr Larsen spotted me and he said - you know you're at a police station - and I said yes - he said I'm a policeman and I said - yeah I know. He said would you like a wash and I said yes. So I went and I had a shower - a bath - they never had showers those days - they had baths you know. I had a bath and changed. He said - while you're having a bath he said I'll get tea for you - because Mrs Larsen was an invalid see - so I went in and had my tea and washed up and left the dishes there - you know on the table, I didn't know where they went or anything, and of course Mrs Larsen said to me - when I got in there, she fired shots at me I tell you. She had me worried. She said - How old are you? I said 16. She said, I wanted a woman you know what religion are you? I wanted a Catholic - because she was one you see, and she said - you know I'm an invalid - she said - you can't manage looking after me you know - cause she was a big woman - bigger than me she was. She was a seamstress in her time, she was a Miss Ryan and she said I wish they'd send me what I asked for, you know. I did feel so terrible. Mr Larsens standing there behind her and looking straight at me you know and I said Mrs Larsen, I said, I'll do my best if you'll give me a chance, you know. She said, I'll give you a months trial. I ended up with her until she died. I went to her in September 1927 and she died on New Years Eve 1928. She was 44. She was 10 years older than Mr Larsen. They had one little girl and she died at the age of 10 months I think. She swallowed, you know those little bits of grizzly thing on the end of a leg of mutton. She swallowed it, she was given it. Mrs Larsen gave it to her to chew for her teeth, you know. It slipped and it choked her so she never had any more, but on her honeymoon she told me they went to Pingelly and she said that in the hotel where they stayed they got damp sheets and she got rheumatoid arthritis so she couldn't use her fingers or anything, she was just a cripple, but she taught me a lot. I always admired Mrs Larsen, and she was so tall her skirts used to make dresses for me. She used to get all her old dresses out and I used to unpick them and wash them up press them out and she taught me how to cut out and I made frocks for myself. Taught me how to do a lot of cooking. She was really a lovely lady and that. She used to come and sit at the end of the table and just order me around and tell me what to do. She was marvellous. They were just like my parents really, you know, so anyhow one day - I slept in her room - poor old Mr Larsen we threw him out because I had to be with her all the time and we had a doctor called Dr. Mortley and he had to walk to see her every-day, you know.

CC Were they fairly well off?

Nannup No, I don't think so. He'd just been shot not long ago, he was - he had a big - he got shot in the stomach - somewhere down there - I forget where. He was following this man who was wanted and he caught him up the road and had a wrestle with him and the gun went off and he was lucky to survive and he still had the patch on his stomach cause he showed it to me one day - he said - you've got two cripples to look after !cause look at me and he just showed me. When he put his coat on I'd have to brush him up and get all the fur or whatever.

CC Did you do ironing or washing?

Nannup Yes, but Mrs Campbell you see taught me how to do the washing and ironing because I - even today I'm very fussy about my clothes, and it was good. I learnt all these things in younger times you know.

CC Did you get paid?

Nannup 5 shillings a week, fifty cents nowadays, but 2/6 went to the bank and I had 2/6 pocket money. I'd go down the street sometimes - they had a niece - Mr and Mrs Larsen had a niece - used to come and have a holiday from Morikup - his sisters daughter and we'd go down the street sometimes and go to the Post Office and a Bake House there and we'd go around to Mrs - can't think of her name now, and we'd buy lollies or something and - but I never spent very much money - you know, just didn't want to.

CC Church Sunday?

Nannup Not in Williams. I never went and Mrs Larsen used to get so sick sometimes and Mr Larsen would have to get time off and go to Perth - take her down to the doctor and so the doctor told him you'd have to come back to Perth to have 'cause they had a house there you see. In the meantime, she used to have Holy Communion every Friday morning you see and that was one of the things she was very upset about because I was - you know - she had to teach me how to set up the table for it, you see. She said - I have mass every Friday morning and she said - I'll have to teach you how to set up ready for the priest to come, you know. Anyhow she taught me - and I used to just get it all ready for him. I used to have a little basin of water you know for him - little towel and I'd just leave them to it, but I managed. Then when we went to Perth to live, it was in North Perth you see, and next door to him was his nephew, his brothers' son - and he was a detective and so I had 2 detectives and a policeman next door to one another - but they were beautiful people you know. He was a police inspector up here for awhile.

CC In Geraldton?

Nannup Yes. When I, when we were living here.

CC What year?

Nannup In the 40's that was.

CC During the War years?

Nannup Mmm. Nephew, Lofty they called him. Henry, his name was Larsen and he was detective when I first knew him. They were only just married, those two, and I used to do a lot of embroidery to keep me awake at night, you know and we used to get Togosilk materials and cut them out and make night dresses, and scallop them and put transfers on them. Oh, just nick and nick and draw the threads, you know. I did all that kind of stuff. She taught me. Well she just told me how to do it - we used to - if her sister-in-law was going to have a baby or anything like that I'd have to do these nighties. Beautiful you know. Beautiful flowers. They were really beautiful.

CC Time off?

Nannup I never saw a holiday while I was with her. Never went - I nearly had a nervous breakdown because it was too much for me. Oh, I was all right until her niece came over and she put the pressure on me, you know. You see I had Mrs Larsen to look after, you know, and so she wanted to come over and live with us - with Mr and Mrs Larsen, so - and Mr and Mrs Larsen bought a new house and they lived in Dunedin Street in Mt. Hawthorn and they had a brand new house and I had to put the lawns in and the gardens in, you know and look after Mrs Larsen and do everything you know. So Miss Ryan she worked in Alic Kellys shoe store see and this day she stayed at home and she wanted to wash her hair. I thought she'd do it out in the bathroom but no. I'd polished the floors - hands and knees - no polishing machines like today. Just finishing polishing the floor and the passage was long you know, and I stood back and admired it and I saw the water on the floor, you know, she took a jug of water down to the bedroom. They had hand basins - in those days you had hand basins and jugs and things like - and I knew that she must have taken - so I walked down and knocked on the door and I said are you there Miss Ryan. She said yes. I said - did you just - did you spill water down there. Yes, yes she said. Well I got up I said - you spilled that water you wipe it. She said - she said - you're here to do that - you're paid to do that. So I walked into Mrs Larsen. She was sitting on the commode the poor old dear. I said Mrs Larsen I've polished all the floors I said and I've just finished the passage and Miss Ryan's gone down there and she's spilt water - and I asked her to wipe it up and she told me to do it myself, and I'm not doing it. Miss Ryan - Mrs Larsen said - just ask Miss Ryan to come here. So she comes in with her towel around her head and she said why didn't you wipe the water up. Alice just finished polishing she said - she's paid to do it, she said - you know to her aunty. But I think you should do it - she

said no Alice does it and I said I'm not doing it and my blood rose, and there was a silver brush - Mrs Larsen's beautiful brush and she picked it up and she hit me with it. I just - got that brush off her and I just broke the brush up on her, you know, I lost my block really - so she went into her room. She wouldn't wipe the mess - so I finished up getting Mrs Larsen down, put her wheelchair everything - Miss Ryan was missing. You know what she did. She walked down the street and rang a policewoman. She rang a policewoman up and told her to come and tend to me you know. This Mrs Dugdale - Lady Dugdale they called her - policewoman she came around. She had like a whip you know. She came. Mrs Larsen was shocked, you know, to think that her niece would go get a policewoman come deal with me. She showed Lady Dugdale where I hit her. I showed Mrs Dugdale where she hit me first. She hit me right across there, a black eye. She had a black eye too but I didn't do it first see.

CC How old was niece?

Nannup She was about 21 or 22. Big, you know, sort of lady. Lady and Mrs Dugdale came over and she said you know you people don't do things like this to people. She said we deal with your kind of people that take the law into your own hands she said to me and I said what about her - she took the law into her own hands I said just come over here and the floor was still wet. Thats' what the trouble is all over I said, I said, I've got to look after this invalid lady, my mistress I said, I've got to do everything in the house. Miss Ryan never lifts a finger, I said, not even to lay the table, I said, I've got all the washing to do, the ironing to do, the cooking to do. I've got to walk down to the butcher's shop I said, you know, I've got to do everything. I've got to go up to the shops and order the food cause we never had a phone see. Lady Dugdale was there and she was listening to me and all that and she said still she said, you know, I've got to punish you. I said what do you mean by punishing me, haven't I had enough punishment I said, and Mrs Larsen said what is this going to be, you know - oh, I'll take her out there and give her a few wacks on the - with the whip. I just bounced straight back at Mrs Dugdale. She was a big tall woman too, you know. I said, Mrs Dugdale, don't you miss, because if I get that whip I said - you're going to get it straight back and I said besides that, I said, I'm going to speak to Mr Larsen and I said if you hit me, I said, I'm going to see Mr Larsen when he comes home. I said - I don't think I deserve to be flogged around by you or anybody else because, I said - I'm a slave as it is, you know. Well, Mrs Larsen said nobody touches this girl, if there's any reprimanding to be done, it's done by me. Mrs Dugdale jumped up and put her whip in her bag and walked out and said to Miss Ryan as she was going out, you'd better wipe that water up before you - before I leave here - so she went and got the cloth and wiped it up. Mr. Larsen came home he just looked at me and I burst into tears and Mrs Larsen and I were both crying and he said, what did you do and he said - I stood up for myself

and he said and yes, just as well you did and I'm going to go and look into this and he goes to work. So I said look want to leave, I want to go. I said - I'm tired. I told Mr Larsen I said I need a break, so, she sat in the big dining room and wrote a letter while we were - she advertised for girls first, she wrote a letter, see, Mrs Larsen and we got these girls 5, 6. They all come and we had an interview she said - you pick the best you think and I said - you're the one that wants the girl, so she picked this big tall girl out she thought, you know, sturdy she was, bigger than me. About 18 or 19, big girl she was. So the girl went and got her case - her bag and vanity case and everything, sat them on the verandah, and I showed her all around and I told her what I had to do and everything and she - I was going the next day see - anyway when evening came, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4 - 5 'oclock, she said to me, while you're doing this, she said, do you think I could slip down to the shops and get something for us to chew on tonight and I said yes, but she had other ideas. As she walked out the front door she picked up everything took it with her, you know, and Mrs Larsen says to me - where's the girl? and I said - oh she's gone down to Harbuck Street to get a few lollies or something and she said - how long has she been gone and I said about 15 minutes and she said well she should be back because Harbuck Street is just around the corner see, and I said yeah. So, I used to make beef tea for that lady you know, and she had to have raw liver you know and I used to have to do that for her medicine and just turn it grey, but I did all this - but anyway this girl you'd better go have a look and see if she's coming. When I went out there, there wasn't a case or anything and I came straight into the room. Mrs Larsen I said - she's gone, she's gone! Anyway, she was writing this letter a couple of days after and I said are you going to advertise for someone else to come I said because I need to go cause Miss Ryan and I weren't talking. She made everything very hard for me, you know. So anyway I said - see she's writing this letter and I had to take her over the commode, see, she wanted to go on the commode so anyway I went back and I was naughty and I read the letter. It said - I've got a little girl, a little black girl she said and she said she's beautiful and this and that. She does everything for me she said and she and Cathleen and her have had a bit of a blue and it upset her she said and she said she wants to leave and we got some girls and were interviewing them and I thought I was going get her but she took off without even starting work and she said I'm not bothering, she said, but I don't think I've got much longer to live and I'll stick to my little black girl because she said there's no one else that will ever take her place and it rose me up you know and I felt really good a little black girl she said and I said to myself - ah - at least this little black girl knows what she's doing you know and I proved myself because she said she'd give me a months trial you know, I never got a break. She died on New Years Eve as I said and oh we had a terrible houseful. We kept her body in the house. She died in my arms. She had a cloak made, you know, they get a cloak made when they die and you've got to slip it over their arms and over their face, I mean over their head, it was black and orange - beautiful thing it was. I did that and I ran straight into Mr Larsen and I said quick Mr Larsen - I think Mrs Larsen's gone and she was too.

CC Was it expected?

Nannup Oh, yes. Oh, yes. She was a very sick lady in the finish. Dr. Cohen he said to me and Mrs Larsen, I think you'd better get a nurse in. There's only one nurse for me, she said, and that's me - that's the only nurse I've got. I don't want any other nurses see - told Dr. Cohen. Well, if you don't want one come into hospital and he said no, she said - she wouldn't have anyone else but me, you know. She was about 46. She was 44 when I went there - well she was nearly 46, see and oh Mr Larsen he was so good to me, you know and she died on New Years Eve 20 - 1928 on New Years Eve. Mrs Yates - that's Mr Larsens sister - she was good she helped me. She was buried at Karra-Katta, but I tell you what Miss Ryan never shed one tear, and all the rest of them - and we had her in the room where I used to sleep. Miss Ryan went back to Sydney - that's where she came from. I only stayed until after the funeral. Mr Larsen took me back to the girls home - you know - they have a girls home until they leave you and go to work you know. It was in Bennetts Street East Perth.

CC Was it nice?

Nannup It was alright.

CC You were 18 now?

Nannup Going on for 18. Oh, I got a job on a farm on the 29th of January. Now, all that, only just had that much time before I started work. January 1929. No - a fortnight. It must have been about that 14th or 15th in 1929. I went to Wyalkatchem on a farm and worked right out in the bush. I was there until 1931. Well, when I went there first, Mrs Castle said, you can do all the housework she said and cleaning, and I'll handle the kitchen, see and I thought to myself - well that suits me fine 'cause I'm fed up with cooking you know, but one of her sons got sick so she had to take him to Perth, so she took all her children down and put them in Lady Lawley Cottage and just had Jeffrey at the doctors and looked after him, you know, and left me home to look after the farm and farmers and the men and Mr Cashmore and Dadid, there were only two men there. David McLennon was a worker and her father was a doctor down at Albany - old Dr House and anyway - oh before that I got sick. I had mumps and measles and what else did I have. I know I had 3 things wrong with me and I had to go to Perth for about 3 months and came back again but then the little kid got sick. I stayed in the girls home. Went to the doctors and got medicines.

CC Did they look after you?

Nannup Yes.

CC Name of farm?

Nannup Avon Park.

CC Big?

Nannup Yes and we used to have to do our work in the house and then go down to the paddock and sew bags, you know, and every second Thursday I went to Wyalkatchem and got stores, mail and things like that. Drove 11 miles in the sulky and the second Thursday I had to go out in the field, either on the tractor or drive a team of horses, fallowing or ploughing or whatever.

CC Did you get paid?

Nannup Still 5 shillings a week with my keep and my 2/6 pocket money. This was paid by the farmers.

CC They would employ you through the Aboriginal Affairs?

Nannup Yes, Yes, Yes. 1929.

CC How did depression affect you?

Nannup Yes. Wyalkatchem was a prejudiced town. When I was sick you know - I went back to Wyalkatchem and Mr Cashmore came to pick me up. He left - he missed me you see. I went into the cloak room or whatever you call it and he came and picked the mail up and vegetables and things and left.

Tape II Side II

Nannup I missed him because really he didn't even look around for me, I don't think - you know, and I listened and I heard the trogon going over the railway line, you know, and I looked out and I saw Mr Cashmore - now what am I going to do you see so I went back into cloakroom and got my case, and I'm just standing there wondering what I'm going to do. (unclear) come in - runaway workers. They were foreigners too, some of them and they walked up to me and said what you doing here and I said I just came from Perth I said and I said my boss didn't pick me up, he's gone home without me, well you can't stay here, you go - and the one got a pick handle and he said if you don't leave now, we'll kill you, and I said, where's the Police Station? and he said you find it, this is what he said to me, so I walked around the corner and walked across to Mrs Greaves - cause I knew her you see. She was at the Bakers Shop, and I said Mr Cashmores' gone home without me.

AN And I'd like to know where the police station is. She told me where to go you see and she said to me, "what is the matter?" she said, "are you alright?" And I said "yes I'm alright", but I was all shook because he was going to, he had this big thing, he was going to knock me out, you know. I never ever told the policeman or nothing. Mrs. Spencer her husband was a train driver and we travelled on the same train that very same day and she had a daughter and when she saw me walking along up to the police station she ran out and came and got me and took me into her house, see. So I told her about it see. She said "oh they're terrible people here", she said "they don't like aboriginals and no aborigines live here", she said, you know. No she didn't, they never used to say, they'd say dark people, no dark people live in this town because they won't have you here. So anyway I said "all I wanted to know was where the police station is?" and so she said "I'll take you up there". So I went up and said Mr. Larsen gone without me, a Mr. Cashmore rather and he said, "well I can't take you out tonight, but I'll take you out in the morning" you see and I said "can I have a "no" Mrs. Spencer said, "she's staying with me". So I stayed with Mrs. Spencer.

CC Oh that was good.

AN Yeah and so Mr. I just can't remember his name, Lewis somebody the policeman. He took me out and he had two little sons about five and four years of age. But they were beautiful little kids, they were talking to me, you know, really lovely and Mrs Cashmore nearly fell over when she saw me get out there about eleven o'clock, we got out there. And she said "when did you come?" I said, "oh Mr. Cashmore went without me". She said "men have got no patience", you know they don't even bother to look around, if your not there, where they can see you, your gone you know. I was glad to get home.

CC And were they good to you there?

AN Yeah they were good to me, yes.

CC And did you have time off there?

Nannup

AN Yes I had my holiday. We all went one year when the harvesting was over and it was a thundering and lightning day, you know and we all had to you know. They had an old man to look after the place and his name was Charlie and Charlie Roberts his name. That might be the same old man I must find out. Anyhow one of the boys, the son of Mr. and Mrs Cashmore he wanted a gun made out of a piece of deal you know and I told him "don't come messing around" I said, "I've got to have my lunch, we're going you know soon" and he just up with the butchers knife and chopped my finger, but I can't see it now and he got a big belting off Mr. Cashmore. I know it was one of these two fingers.

CC Why did he chop you?

AN Because I wouldn't make a gun for him, I was eating you see and he wanted me to make a gun for him out of this piece of board.

CC Oh, how old was Jimmy?

AN About nine. The boys used to play funny tricks with me. We used to go rabbiting to catch rabbit skins. Mr. Cashmore said "if you go out and get rabbit skins I'll pay you for them", you know because they were pretty good see, so Mickey that's the oldest son we used to go rabbiting and we used to get up early in the morning, because I used to milk five cows before breakfast and separate the milk and he'd get up and we'd jump on the horse bearback barers, ride around the paddock, pick up our traps and rabbits you know and bring them back and I'd skin them and he'd skin his and I'd skin mine and stretch the skins, you know. But this morning he felt mischievous so anyway the last trap was mine you see and oh about a quarter of a mile away from home of course and I said to him, "oh there's a rabbit in that trap it's good. I hopped off the horse to get the rabbit out you know and knock it in the head and while I'm knocking it in the head he just took off and left me. I go into the house, he looks at me and I said "oh that's all right, you'll keep".

CC How far did you have to walk?

AN Quarter of a mile about. From here to the highway across there I suppose, you know somewhere. Anyway when I got home and he gave a little bit of a giggle and never said nothing and I thought to myself, I'll catch you next time. So anyway the next few days after we went around our traps and I said, "oh we'll go around my traps early first" because I said, "then we'll come around yours after" you see. And he said "oh okay" and he never thought any more about it, so we always hopped on our horses, little Lacky we called it, bareback, so went around our traps and the last trap, his was closer

Nannup

than mine and he got a rabbit. So anyway he said to me, "oh kill this this rabbit for me", you know, I said "you kill it" I said. So anyway he went and pulled this rabbit out of the trap you know and he was going to kill it and I said "I'll see you at home". He cried and he cursed me. Went inside and told his mother I'd rode off and left him and I said "did you tell your mother you did that to me one day?" and Mrs. Cashmore said, "no more traps, no more traps".

CC And that was the finish of it?

AN That was the finish of it, yeah.

CC Oh dear, so you lost out of some extra money?

AN Yeah, yeah. And another day we were sitting on the verandah, we had a trap set you see up on the hill and there's the verandah and it's overlooking and I could see this dust flying and rising, you know and I said to the boys, "come on Mickey", I said "Jimmy where's Jimmy come on we've got a rabbit" and when we got up there we had the biggest snake in the trap, big, I don't know what it was, () or what it was, but I tell you what, he fought in that trap. You could see the dust rising all day, he'd try to get into the hole and he'd come back out again. But he was nearly as wide as that.

CC So did you wop him on the head?

AN No I got Mr. Cashmore to go out and deal with him because he was too savage. It was terrible.

CC Did you ever have any, did you ever see any snakes apart from that one on the properties, lots of snakes?

AN Yes plenty. One day the hens were cackling and I was on my own and Mr. and Mrs Cashmore were in town and I went down to see what the cackling was all about and I could see these four chooks staggering around and kicking you know and I look down like this and there was this big snake. So I went out and got a spreader, you know the know the spreaders on the harnesses of the horses you know to keep the chains apart, you know on the.

CC Oh yes, yes.

Nannup

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- AN So anyway I went and pulled this out of there and I went and I, it was a red snake, nearly as red as that and I, strap you know, down on it like that and the snake came straight up and just missed my hand. I tell you what I let that thing go and it was as thick as that you know.
- CC So did it get away?
- AN It got away but I told Mr. Cashmore. I said, "look Mr. Cashmore there's a terrible looking snake" I said and "he's in the pickled wheat" that's for planting, you know they've got pickled wheat with pickling, pickled the wheat to plant you know for the next crop and I said "it's killed two chooks there already" I said and it was there in the nest.
- CC The chickens nest.
- AN In the hens nest where they lay the eggs and I said "it nearly got me". He said "look" he said, "don't you ever try to kill a snake" he said "they're too quick". So anyway one day Mrs. Cashmore was having visitors and she said to me, "I want you to knock up some scones quick" she said, "I've got some visitors coming" and I said, "alright" I said. And of course anyway while I was getting the, I said, "Mrs. Cashmore will you run over and get some chips for me", because you know we were just like friends you see. She said "yes I'll go over there, where's the dish". Because we used to have a dish to put the chips in. She goes over to get the chips and she walks on the snake, you know, but she didn't tread on it. But the snake curled himself around her leg and I got the scones already and I'm looking out there and she standing there with dish in her hand like this. I said "what's the matter?" She couldn't talk she lost her voice you know. And I said, Mrs. Cashmore" I said, "what's the matter". She's pointing down like this you see. So anyway I ran outside and went over there and there was this snake curled around her leg. And she was as white as a sheet, you know and I thought to myself, please god don't you fall over. But anyway she, but I just went shoo like this and the snake uncurled and went into the wood heap. She just still stood there.
- CC It didn't bite her?

AN No, so anyway I just got the chips and I led her back to the house, she was just, you know.

CC All shook up.

AN Yeah you know she was stunned and she never talked. I got her back in there and I sat her on the chair. I stuffed the chips into the stove, because they were all wood stoves those days and I got the scones already there and put them in the oven and I was trying to talk to her you know, "Mrs. Cashmore talk to me talk to me" and she came too after.

CC Oh she must have been in shock.

AN She was in terrible shock poor lady, well it could have me, but no I always had a sharp eye but you know she didn't. And another day this was Jeffrey's birthday and he was four years old and they got him a daisy gun you see and anyway and I was looking at his gun and he is showing me and he is going around popping, popping with the cork in it and anyway I looked across and from the wood heap this snake came in and I was singing out, "Mrs. Cashmore quick get the shovel, get the shovel, snake get the shovel" and Mrs. Cashmore she's running outside to get the shovel and as she's coming back the snake was getting too close. Poor little Jeffrey, I just snatched the gun out of his hand and I threw it and I just got the thing in the neck you know and broke it. And Jeffrey was jumping around, he said, "I'm going to, you've broke my gun, you've broke my gun" and of course Mrs. Cashmore she just stood there she couldn't say nothing and she said, "oh never mind" she said, "we'll buy you another one", I said, "I'll buy you two" I said "Jeffrey". But we want that snake dead, anyway that snake got away under the house. So I got the bush broom, I used to always have the () brushes in, you know and I used to sweep around the yard, you see. So right, so I swept right around it, right around it and it never came out. So anyway we had a Detco engine you see, you had the lights, electric lights.

CC Oh like a generator type of thing?

AN Yeah, yeah and every night you've got to go and turn it on see and this night Mr. Cashmore turns it on about five o'clock, but this night he was away late and he went to turn it on. Oh no, that's right it ran out of oil. Mr. Cashmore went to put more oil in there, whatever, to start it up again, you know and there was this bloke curled around the engine, you know the motor. And he said, "quick bring something, bring something" and Mrs. Cashmore went out there and this is the bloke that, he was there waiting on us, to have a go at us again. Anyway Mr. Cashmore killed him and he, broke his neck down, about that much of him. But he could crawl, you know, he could crawl and he had his

neck dead. So we got him.

CC So that was another dead one.

AN Yes, but oh they were plentiful there, terrible. Another day the poor old turkey she'd hatched half a dozen chicks and we could see her going mad and it killed two little chicks and killed the mother.

CC It doesn't eat them though, it just kills them?

AN The snake?

CC Yes.

AN Yeah. You know the soft part of the, they've got a little, like a, that's where they bite them.

CC Do they bite them in preparation to eat them, is that why they do it?

AN No they don't, they don't kill, they don't kill, they're constrictors.

CC Oh right.

AN Whatever they do, they just squeeze.

CC They squeeze them.

AN When they want to eat a mouse they don't bite it, they just latch onto him, you know, like that.

CC They squeeze them, yes.

AN Yes and then they just turn around and turn around until he's, you know and then they eat it.

CC Okay Alice would you like to tell us a little bit about Mygumber?

AN Yes I will tell you about Mygumber. I went to Mygumber in 1925 and Mygumber I think it was a terrible place really, but we went there about two or three o'clock in the morning from the train, you know when we were taken there. We went into the dormitory, they'd lock you up in there, at five o'clock every afternoon, they locked up all the girls, but the boys run free. But that's understandable isn't it? you know. There's boys on one side and girls on the other. And when I arrived in Mygumber we were only kids and they had our beds ready for us and when we woke up in the morning, there were all little black eyes looking at us, you know and we felt terrible, scared you know, because we'd never seen so many kids like that. Got up, washed up, went up for breakfast. We all had to march up, marched to the dining room.

CC Right.

- AN Boys on one side, they come up one side and we go up the other side. Branch off, girls on one side boys on the other and we're so close. We had, well we called it () just like ground wheat made into porridge, it was uneatable really. For lunch we'd have soup or made up and for tea we'd have two slices of bread with dripping spread on it and jam on top. And these mugs were terrible what we used to drink out of. We couldn't drink out of them, the smell was terrible, sickly. I went to school for a little while, I finished up in Grade 3. They took us out of the school and put us into the sewing room, we had to make clothes for () and mission. We worked there five days a week.
- CC And how old were you at this time Alice?
- AN Fourteen going on fifteen.
- CC About how many other children were there do you know?
- AN Oh there was hundreds of us.
- CC And most of them had been taken from there parents?
- AN Yes, yes.
- CC And who were your teachers?
- AN We had a teacher now, her name was, you know I can't think of her name. We had a teacher, one teacher and she'd get the girls, like the kids to help, you know, I was one of them. I used to give the teacher a hand.
- CC Like a teachers aide?
- AN With the infants.
- CC Yes.
- AN Yes with the infants. Although I never knew nothing but I was there to help. With their slates and chalks and things like that and boys on one side, girls on the other and if you looked across the boys would throw something at you. You know they didn't like the girls looking at them. It was funny you know, we used to sit with our heads down, scared to look around you know. And when I went down to the sewing room we had to, they started us off on button holes, making button holes and then they put us on the machine. Tried to teach us to sew.
- CC Now these were the treadle machines?

Nannup

AN Yes treadle machines, there was five of them, and then there was the girls on button holes.

CC What would the boys be doing, do you know?

AN Oh they'd be doing, working in the garden or milking cows or killing sheep or something like. All had their own chores to do, but, you know the working boys. Every Thursday the teacher would take us up to do cooking class, making cakes and things like pies and things like that. So we could be learning, that was only afternoon, mornings we'd do the sewing and anyway I got onto the machines, they put me onto the machine. We used to try and set a goal, as to how many we could make see. Because they were only just plain you know just sleeves in it, round necks, no collar.

CC These were dresses?

AN No shirts, mens shirts. And we were making these for Forest () mission. Well I used to do. I got better and better. I ended up making sixteen a day you see, just sewing shirts. That was good going, so the sewing mistress said.

CC Yes.

AN She said, "oh well we've got all the shirts we want, we have to start on trousers". So we had to make dungaree pants. They were hard for awhile.

CC Yes.

AN But we got through.

CC So you never had any education?

AN Only to Grade 3.

CC Grade 3.

AN And Mr. Neville said when he came up one day, I heard him say to the teacher, I suppose they were talking about putting us in the sewing room then, you know and I heard him say, "oh it's alright" he said, "because" he said, "so long as they can read, write their name and count money" he said, "that's all they need" he said and I thought what sort of an education is this. We were sent down from home to be educated, so that we could go back home, know something and we knew nothing. So anyway when the time came, when we finished making, like we used to do these trousers and I used to make eight a day, eight pairs of pants and of course they took this other girl off the big machine, it was a James machine, it was Tyler machine and they put me onto it.

CC Right.

Nannup

- AN And I wasn't in the good books then, you know I wasn't popular anymore.
- CC With the other children you mean?
- AN No with the girls. The sewing girls. So I thought to myself, what have I gone and done, but still it was a job that wanted doing and every Saturday morning we used to go down there to clean the machines see and we'd get paid. You know what we used to get paid? A little tray of chocolate like that.
- CC Just a bar of chocolate?
- AN Yep just a bar of chocolates.
- CC Now where was the Spauster Mission?
- AN That was Forrest River.
- CC Forrest River.
- AN Over, up at Wyndham.
- CC So all these clothes that you make would go there?
- AN Yes, at a certain time they had to make clothes for Forrest River. We had a sister there a church sister you know. Her name was Sister Hand and she went up to Forrest River and another one took over. But we missed her because she was such a lovely sister. Used to go to church on Sunday or something.
- CC Now this was a Catholic Mission, Mygumber was it?
- AN No, Church of England and Catholic, both.
- CC Combined, so were teachers mainly nuns?
- AN No, no, no she just a teacher.
- CC Just lay people.
- AN Yeah, yes.
- CC So how long were you at Mygumber?
- AN I was worked from twenty five to twenty seven, two years.
- CC And all this time mainly apart from that little bit of schooling you spent in the sewing room?

- AN Yes in the sewing room. Oh just before I went out to work, I was posted up at the second bosses house, they call it the second bosses house, working there. So there was two of us girls, Eva and myself. But I was the Head girl and she was the housemaid and I was the cook in the kitchen. I learnt to do a little bit of cooking there.
- CC Now all these children at Mygumber Alice, were most of them Halfcastes?
- AN No there was mixed bloods, yes.
- CC There was, did any of them not speak english to your knowledge?
- AN All of them spoke english as far as I remember. We talked in our own language too you know when we came down.
- CC Have you forgotten that language now?
- AN If anybody I meet you know, that I know and they start talking, I understand but I can't speak it.
- CC You can't speak it?
- AN No.
- CC What is your language Alice?
- AN Name is "Yamel".
- CC "Namel" now was that a tribe as well?
- AN Yes, that's the () mob see.
- CC And they come up from up North, somewhere up there?
- AN Mm.
- CC What were some of the rules that you had at Mygumber?
- AN We couldn't go out of the compound without asking. You needed permission from Matron or Mr. Neil or whoever was there. Mr. Berdy was there when we first went there. They were hard people too, very hard.
- CC What would they do for discipline?

- AN Oh punish you. Put you in the boob if you were naughty, cut your hair off. There was a beautiful girl, she had hair right down to here you know and she had a boyfriend and they ran away and they caught them. The trackers went after them, got them, brought them back and poor Linda, they sat her in the middle of the compound and cut her hair off, bald and all the tresses were falling all around her and we were standing there, very sad, crying, some of us were, you know. To think how cruel they were. And they took the man down to the stables, stripped him, tarred him and feathered him and brought him up to the compound and let him and showed us how. This was Mr. Brady.
- CC Was it tar and feathering or just?
- AN Tar and feathering and all you could see was little eyes looking like this and just covered in feathers.
- CC And how old would this boy have been, do you remember?
- AN Oh he must have been about twenty or something like that, they were the older people, the older ones. And poor old Linda. After they cut her hair off they put her in the boob for seven days I think it was of just water and bread, water.
- CC So is this solitary confinement?
- AN Mm.
- CC What did you call it?
- AN Boob.
- CC Boob.
- AN That's what they called it, the boob.
- CC Was it a special room was it?
- AN Yes a little jail way out in the compound.
- CC So there was no shelter?
- AN No shelter, no shade.
- CC What was is made of can you remember Alice?
- AN Tin and cement floor I think it was, I'm not sure about the floor, but I know it was tin and it was no bigger than this. They had a bucket thing for them to use.

Nannup

CC And they would just give them bread and water?

AN Yes.

CC And for seven days?

AN Seven days. You should have saw Linda, she was a fat little girl when she went in there, but she lost about two stone I think.

CC Was it during the summer time?

AN I can't remember that but I can remember it being done.

CC Yes oh yes.

AN Oh they were cruel I tell you, they didn't treat us like human beings, they treated us like a lot of.

END TAPE TWO SIDE TWO

Tape III Side A

CC And how about, what would the typical day start off like Alice?

AN Well we'd get up in the morning and wash, get up to the dining room, have our breakfast and we'd all leave there and go down to the sewing room and wait for our mistress to come along, you know the sewing mistress, start work about eight o'clock. We'd go until twelve when the lunch bell rings, we'd all march out go over to the dormitory, have a little wash or we used to wash at the sewing room really, we had a tap there and do our hair and make ourselves respectable and then go up. Have lunch, come back and at one o'clock we'd start off sewing again, right up until five o'clock. I had two jobs. I was working in the office too you know.

CC Oh yes.

AN Yes you know. We had a hurricane lamp so we never had any electricity. But I used to have to go up there and clean the lamps and fill them with oil and take them around and put them into the dormitory and that was my job every evening, afternoon after five.

CC What did you do at night time when you had time to yourself?

AN We didn't have anytime to ourselves we just got locked up and went in. **Only** other purpose the girls had was to have a, pick an argument over nothing and have a fight.

CC Would anyone stop the fights?

AN Oh yes. I was sitting on the bed one night just talking to someone, I got tossed off the bed, you know, punched off the bed. I didn't know what had struck me, but that's how they were. Wouldn't even tell you why.

CC Okay Alice so after you left Mygumber you went to work for the Larsens and then after her death you went back to the girls home and then you went to Wyalkatchem to work and what happened when you left the job at Wyalkatchem?

AN Yes, yes.

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CC So after the job at Wyalkatchem you went to recuperate from the mumps and the measles?

AN Yes.

CC Back at the girls home?

AN Yes.

CC And then what happened?

AN I went to Mrs Neville's for a little while until they got another girl and then I went back to Wyalkatchem.

CC Right, where was Mrs Neville's again?

AN In Bellenden.

CC What happened at Mrs Neville's, it was up in the hills was it?

AN Yes, yes. I worked for Mr and Mrs Neville up in the hills while I was recuperating because her maid ran away.

CC Oh.

AN Yes she ran away so, I was just about ready to go back to Wyalkatchem and Mr Neville sent for me and I said "what have I done now?" When I got up to the office and Mr Neville says to me, "Oh noddy ran away and we haven't got anybody at home to work" and he said, "would you come and just work there until I get another girl?" because Mrs Neville was suppose to be sickly person see. So, well I fell for it, "yes" I said, "I'll go". So I must have been there a month, must have been a month and there was a girl coming to work for them, so I went back to the girls home and went straight back to Wyalkatchem and worked on the farm.

CC So you didn't get much of a rest did you, between jobs?

AN No, no. That's what Mrs () said you know, she said, "must have known she'd taken you away from us". And I said, "oh well, this girl ran away so they had nobody to put in her place until they find another one, so they grabbed me". And I got on well with the two daughters, Anne and ().

CC Were they around your age?

AN No they were only little girls.

CC Little ones.

AN Twelve and thirteen but they were beautiful little girls you know. Mr Neville's son was seventeen, John.

Nannup

CC That was around, oh you were nineteen I think at this stage weren't you?

AN Twenty nine, 1929 that is.

CC So after you left Wyalkatchem, when you finished up there, where did you go?

AN I went back to Mr and Mrs Neville's.

CC For how long?

AN Oh I was there for about six or eight months.

CC And you were happy there Alice?

AN I was in the beginning but the pressure got a bit much for me, so I left and went to Leonora.

CC And what happened in Leonora?

AN There was three of us girls working on this Artabellie Station way out in, about sixty odd miles out in the bush and that was a real tough place to work in.

CC Very dry?

AN Yes very dry.

CC Isolated?

AN Yes. They had flywire nettings right around the verandah to try and stop the sand from coming into the house, but it just come and land on the floor like chocolate. We'd have to with a hand broom and a bucket and dust pan picking up this dirt all day long, dusting.

CC And who were you working for Alice?

AN Mr and Mrs Mail.

CC Mail?

AN Mm.

CC And did they have children?

AN Yeah they had grown up children. They had three children with them.

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- CC So who were you out there with, the other two girls, who were they?
- AN Mary Stokes and Jessie Parklett.
- CC And were they from Mygumber in the beginning too?
- AN Yes, yes. One from New Norcia and then she went to Mygumber but yeah, Mary Stokes was from New Norcia Mission but she went to Mygumber too. When I went there there was Mary Stokes she was the cook and they had another white maid and she wants to leave so they sent for another girl so I went. They sent me, because that's another cap and apron job, you know, posh people. So I was the housemaid for awhile.
- CC What were some of your duties Alice?
- AN Oh cleaning house, waiting on the table.
- CC So did you learn all the little finer things like serve from the left take from the right, this sort of thing?
- AN I learnt that at Mrs Neville's because she was a cap and apron job too.
- CC Was that the first cap and apron job you'd had?
- AN Yes, yes.
- CC So you had to wear a little uniform?
- AN Yes I wore pink in the afternoon and green in the morning.
- CC And the little cap to match?
- AN Cap to match, apron, white apron.
- CC Would you have to take them breakfast in bed, the Neville's?
- AN Oh sometimes but not often.
- CC So your job would be mainly, did they entertain a lot?

nup

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1 Eat
about

Nannup

AN Oh they were terrible entertainers. Bridge, bridge, bridge, bridge. And every night I had a phone to ring friends, I used to take messages all around Darlington and get little notes back.

CC You would go on foot?

AN Yes walk.

CC Right. Well getting back to Leonora, how was it different in Leonora apart from the isolation and the coping of things?

AN Oh it was lovely, I liked it. But we had that much work to do. You had to water the garden night and morning and when I first went there I had to do the laundry as well you see. I did the laundry, the washing and ironing and the housework, all the ladies of leisure they were. There was two daughters there and the son. But they had visitors and the Bunning girls and Miss Manford and Lora and Joan Bunning, you know the Bunning Brothers, yeah those and oh it was heaps and heaps of fun, you know good fun. But I enjoyed it but the work pressure, you only had ten minutes to have a shower.

CC What time would you get up in the morning and what time would you finish?

AN Five o'clock in the morning, go out early in the morning and water the garden so that the frost wouldn't get on the corn, with a watering can. We used to fill up the tank, we had a big tank. Fill up the water and go down and dip the watering can and go around and spray all the tomatoes and lettuces so they wouldn't get burnt by the sun after the frost being on it. And then we'd go back and prepare breakfast and everything like that you know. Mrs Mail used to have breakfast in bed sometimes because she was a very old lady. But I had to wait on the table just the same and we used to get about two or three hours off on Sunday. We used to go for a walk somewhere.

CC That was all the time that you had off?

AN Yes but all the rest of the time was work, work, work.

CC What time would you get to bed at night?

mup

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AN

Oh we used to get to bed around about eleven. Anyway the work was so heavy they got another girl, that was Jessie. So they said to me, they're going to put me in the laundry because they reckon I was a good laundress see. So they put Jessie in the dining room and Mrs Mail sent for me from the laundry one day and Miss Dolly we used to call her, that's Miss Mail, one of the Mail girls called Miss Dolly and Barbara Miss Mail, she was the young one. Anyway Miss Dolly came and she said to me, "Alice" she said "mum wants to speak to you". So when we were walking back, it was all out in the open you know, copper in the open, big bench, everything, scrubbing board you know, tubs and everything. We never had no laundry, it was just out in the open, way out in the open all the lines propped up with sticks. And as we were going back I said "have I done anything wrong?" she said "oh no" she said "mother will tell you". So when I walked in, walk into her private, because they had a built house, built for themselves, away from the house. And I said "good morning Mrs Mail I believe you want to see me". She said "yes dear" she said "it's alright" she said, you know, "sit down". She said to me "I'd like you to come back into the dining room". I said "why?" She said, "well" she said "Jessie's not satisfactory". I said "isn't she?" I said to Mrs Mail "you know what your doing to me?" I said and she said, "no I don't" she said "what's going on?" I said "I'm in the bad books with Jessie already" she said "why?" I don't know" I said but I said "she doesn't like me". She said, "well that's her problem" she said, you know. So anyway when we, when Mrs Mail finished talking to me she tells Jessie to come in see, she had a bell, ding a ling, you know. In comes Dolly and she said "yes mum" she said "could you get Jessie for me". Oh you wouldn't believe it but my heart starting pounding you know because she was older than me. I'm only nineteen and she's twenty two and the other one, Muriel twenty four see and of course anyway in comes Jessie, she looks at me, oh if looks could kill. So anyway Mrs Mail said "look Jessie I'm sorry" she said, "but" she said "I want you to take the laundry over" and course she said, "why what have I done?" she said. "Oh" she said, "no it's alright" she said. She said "Alice was in the dining room before you came, so" she said "I'd like to have Alice back". She out the door, never even waited to say yes, no, anything else. So I walked out, I said "oh thank you Mrs Mail" and I walked out and she said, "I'll see you at lunchtime" she said. So I walked out, went around the corner and Jessie standing at the table next to Mary and she said, "were you talking about me?" I said "no" because she was very broad and tall. I said "no I haven't" I said. I said Mrs Mail sent for me, I thought I'd done something wrong" I said, "but she just told me she wanted me back in the dining room".

Nannup

And she said, "I knew it, I knew it" she said, "they've been talking about me". But you weren't allowed to leave you had to be there for six months before you could leave the place you know. So I went back into the dining room and they used to take dry cleaning into Leonora and that's sixty odd miles to go. So one day I said to her, there was a tennis tournament coming up and I said to Miss Dolly, I said "Miss Dolly don't take those to Leonora" I said "I'll do it for you". I put my foot right into it, you know. But I thought I was doing the right for them. Anyway so she gave me these four sports jackets, you know those that Bing Crosby used to wear.

CC Yes.

AN They used to have these panama hats and these striped coats and I went up to the laundry and I put them through the washing and I hand washed them, hung them on the line with stockings and dried them like that and I pressed them and you'd think they'd come out of the dry cleaners when I finished with them. And Mr Lockett that was a nephew then and he was the manager there and he came one day and he said to me, "Alice" he said, "did you work in the dry cleaners?" I said I don't know what a dry cleaners is, I said. "Well how did you get these coats clean?" I said "Oh" I said, "I just washed them, (unclear) And he said, "none of my clients had ever heard about that, they used to go to the dry cleaners, not while your here. I thought to myself I could slog myself for that you know. Anyway I managed.

CC Was there much dry cleaning for you to do?

AN Only those that's all.

CC What colour were they?

AN Oh some were red some were blue. You know all the stripe jackets, sports jackets.

CC Now tell me about the ironing, how would you go about the ironing?

Nannup

- AN Oh the ironing. I used to get all the clothes in, damp them down and I'd stand up there and iron and iron and iron and iron, yards and yards and yards of it.
- CC What kind of an iron would you use Alice?
- AN Petrol iron.
- CC A petrol iron, so you would have to fill it up?
- AN Yeah.
- CC What were petrol irons like, were they better than the irons we have today or?
- AN Oh no these irons are just "A" one aren't they? I don't know why we managed with these petrol irons, you know.
- CC Were they kind of smelly things?
- AN Oh just to light them up because you had to burn methylated spirits before you proceeded to get the
- CC Mark?
- AN No the, they had a thing with lots of holes in where the petrol comes out of, you know.
- CC Oh right.
- AN To let the heat out.
- CC Yeah.
- AN And you've got to warm that up because it won't light otherwise.
- CC Oh I see.
- AN Light it up and then you turn the petrol on and shoo. A little bit of fumes but nothing much to.
- CC Tell me a little bit about washing days then?

- AN Well the washing day well we had tubs, you see. Three tubs.
- CC Right.
- AN The first rinse and then the second rinse. But you'd, we'd dry boil all the sheets and pillow slips.
- CC What doese dry boil mean?
- AN Just stick them straight into the copper.
- CC Right. With the washing powder or soap?
- AN Yes, yes it was that and some odd soap or whatever we used to use.
- CC How would you, would you grate that or would you just put it in?
- AN No you just chop it up with a knife, we used to have knives there. Just broke that up and put it in there. That was bleach you see.
- CC Was it called dad was it, D A D?
- AN Yes dad, yes. And boil up the clothes and put them on the draining board with a copper stick. Let them drain and then put them into the first drench and then into the blue and then take them and hand them all out and oh they used to look beautiful.
- CC And what about the dust, how would you cope with all the dust?
- AN Well we were lucky you know we used to get the washing done before the dust. Yes five o'clock in the morning, get up and get the washing out.
- CC Would the wind bring the dust?
- AN Yes you'd just let them, you'd see it, red as that roof on that house.
- CC Right and of course you would do your polishing of anything on Sunday mornings?
- AN Yes polishing, yes polishing. And the dining room was as long as this you know.
- CC Long room.
- AN Yes.
- CC What about silver, did you have to clean the silver?

Nannup

- AN Yeah silver Saturday morning.
- CC Right and what did the place look like, the station, what did it look like?
- AN Oh it was just a ordinary old homestead you know.
- CC With an outhouse out the back?
- AN Yeah, yeah, walk, walk, one of them was about a quarter of a mile away. The one at the house was only just close. But just to get a little breather we used to take to the long one, so that we could have a little bit of a breather. Get away from a little bit of work.
- CC So what would you do on the three hours that you had off Alice?
- AN Oh we'd go walking.
- CC Was there anything to see?
- AN Beautiful devils marbles and things like that you know the hills, rocks, you know we used to go, oh we used to go for about a mile and a half I suppose and come back again and we went up to have a shower and get ready for work.
- CC So how long were you at the Leonora Station there?
- AN Seven months I was there.
- CC About seven months.
- AN But we ran away the three of us because we wanted to leave but they wouldn't let us. They used to tell us we've got to be there for six months before you go. They can't find girls in that quick time. So we made up our minds the three of us girls. Well Mary and I was going, Jessie wasn't she was going to stay until the last hour. She thought we were just talking.
- CC Right.

AN I said "we're off" I said, "I can't", you know you were just tired with the work, work. Anyway we took off, we went about, I said "while I'm serving afternoon tea you girls go up to the far away outerhouse and wait for me" so while they were busy having afternoon tea we just made for the bush see. And we walked and walked and walked until very late and I said to them, "you take some food". But they just got half a loaf of bread, if you don't mind. If I'd known they were going to just and a tin of jam, what's the good of the tin of jam with half a loaf of bread.

CC How would you have opened the tin?

AN Oh we had a knife. We had to get a stone and.

CC Pound it.

AN And some tea, no sugar. So we walked and we came, we got tired so we just laid down and had a sleep. And six o'clock in the morning we heard this droan, you know, motor car coming after us. Duck, duck, we ducked behind the bushes and the car went past. Mr. Lockett and the three girls were in the car, looking for us.

CC They didn't have a truck at this time?

AN No this is out on the station you see, they had no other aborigines working only us three girls.

CC Oh I see, right.

AN So we ducked and so we got up and then we walked and we walked and we walked. And we were getting thirsty too and it's been raining a few days before so we came across a little pool and we had a drink and washed and paddled our feet and everything and got a billy. We had a billy with us and so we made some tea and had that piece of bread. Now we have to go to Sturt Meadow Station and that's thirty three miles away you see and so we kept on walking and we come to this well and it had one of these tripod things that you put down to pull the water up with. So we had a drink there and we had a cases and everything we're carrying. We couldn't carry them anymore so I had a bedspread and bottled a few things, clothing and necessary things, you know. Always carried my bible with me and we planted all the rest of the things in the bush see, under the kerrarer bush and off we went and it rained and thunder and lightning and so anyway we had our blankets with us and it got darker and darker.

So we kept on walking and falling and, because of the ruts you know in the road. But we kept on walking and walking, walking. Must have walked until about eleven o'clock at night and the girls said, "we're not walking any further, we're going to sleep". So we walked off the road and cleared a road of stones and made a bed there and lit a fire and because Mary was a catholic she had her rosaries and Jessie and I was Church of England so we read the bible. And she said "I'm having the 23rd sarb" she said and I said "oh alright". So I said "alright then". So I picked the 20, I just can't remember, 26 or the 20, no the 27th or the 28th sarb. But anyway it just coincided with the people that we left behind. Anyway we went to bed you see and the bravist girl had to me, on the outside of me Jessie she was the scared one she had to sleep in the middle. So next morning when I woke up very early before sunrise, you know, daybreak of course. I could hear this you know on the stones. I rigged these two girls up, "Jessie, tell Mary" I said, "there's somebody here". So anyway we were peeping and there was a great big boomer kangaroo there. It came smelling around to see what was going on you know. Anyway the girls jumped up and we screamed and shouted and the kangaroo hopped away. So we packed up and off we went and about ten o'clock in the morning we were walking through the swamp and we could hear harness jingling. Oh no, no, no that afternoon I'm sorry we were paddling in the pool and we were all waiting to let that car come back you see and we were going to duck but we misjudged and the car came right onto us while we were paddling in this pool. Walking around with a, cooling our legs off and washing our faces. Out jumped Mr. Lockett, comes over and said, "what's the big idea of you girls", he said "what are you trying to prove?" and I said, "what do you mean?", I said, "we give our time and they wouldn't take it" and he said, "well your coming back with us because we've been to Leonora and got the police onto you and the police said you've got to come back". I said "a team of horses won't take me back Mr Lockett, you can forget about it". And the two girls were standing there and I said, "you, you, stand up for your selves" I said you know. I said, "you're just as much in it as I am" and of course they're just standing there. "What are you girls doing?" and they're just like this. And there was three girls already in the car anyway and I said, "I'm not going back Mr. Lockett". I said, "I've made up my mind to leave, I'm leaving" I said. I said, "we're only just slaves out there", I said, "and we're not going to be a slave no more to nobody" and I said, "and you girls you make up your mind" I said. I said, "if you go back you go, but I'm still going".

Nannup

They said "oh no we're coming with you". That was and he said, "right the police are ready, they'll bring you back" and I said "yeah alright". So that's when we slept there that night, I just told you about the story of the kangaroo. Then the next morning we were walking along about ten o'clock in the morning, there was harness jingling you see. It was the musters and the cook at the station at Sturt Meadows had a leg of mutton a loaf of bread, tea and sugar, everything for us, for the boys to give to us because she felt we were hungry. Which was beautiful of Marie her name was. So anyway and the dogs they knew that we were there because they must have heard us run, we ran and hid behind the Tea Tree and of course the dogs were on us. And the chap he said, "come out of there you girls, we know it's you" and he said, "If you don't we'll sue the dogs on you" and of course anyway we all marched out like little lambs you know and he said, "we know, we know all about you", "come over here" Marie said "get something to eat" well and a big brownie she sent us. That's a fruit bun they call it. And they said about a hundred yards ahead of you there's a mill, they said go and make a fire and have a feed and he said you've got another mile to go before you reach the station. But Marie's waiting for you. We said "good". So anyway we thanked him very much and he said, "oh how long you going to be in Leonora?" I said "I don't know" and he said.

END TAPE III SIDE A

TAPE III SIDE B

AN We asked how long we would be in Leonora and we said, "we don't know". And he said, "well, we're finishing shearing soon and if we come in there and you girls are still there, can we take you to the pictures?" that's what he said. And of course we just said, "oh all depends". Oh the other two girls they were giving a lot of cheek you know, but we just. They went on and we went to the mill and had our lovely lunch and every thing else or breakfast and lunch. We really had a good feed and then we got to the station about one o'clock. But the funniest thing were, he said, "be careful because", he said "there are bullocks along the track and we don't know how they will react to you girls", you know, "but just be careful" and it's only flat country. Just little Mulga trees here and there, you know. But I tell you what the bullocks, they spotted us and they were coming towards us. And of course I'm scared of bullocks. But the ground was just covered with Sturt flowers, sturt peas rather.

CC Mm yes.

AN And I said, "look you girls, don't think about anything else but just rip up one handful each, by the roots" and I said, "and let's run straight towards the bullocks and scream as loud as you like". I was always the leader in everything. So they did what I asked them to do and these two were trailing in a long, yards and yards of these beautiful red flowers. It was a shame to do it but premunition always tells you, do something. So anyway I got these and we ran towards the bullocks screaming, swinging our hands as high as we could and the bullocks turned tail and ran, bolted back like and we bolted this way and we were about three hundred yards from the fence you know. And as we got to the fence we rolled under and when we got on the other side we laughed and the yardman heard us and he came and he said, "oh you girls are here, you got through alright, yes?" And he said Marie said to come up to the house, so we went up there and had a cup of tea with her and talked and then he went down and he heated up the water for us and made the beds in the shearers quarters and we went down and had a shower and did some washing and put them on the line and then we went into the quarters and had a sleep and at six o'clock he came and said, "come on girls" he said, "Marie's waiting with tea for you". So we got up, brought in our clothing and packed them up. Gone and had another wash and went up to the kitchen and sat with Marie and had tea with her and Constable.

This policeman came out then. Seven o'clock he got there. And he fired all sorts of questions at us and why did we leave and why this and that. And I told him. I said, "oh we were worked, just worked and worked", I said "I couldn't go any further". I said, "we gave our time and they said we couldn't leave unless we were there for six months, so". But we were there for seven months and they never even did nothing, just ignored us. So anyway he said, "well your going back aren't you?" I said, "no way, we're not going back". He said, "why?" I said, "no". I said, "you've only got ten minutes to shower" and I said, "you had to work again". I said, you know. I said, "it's just too heavy". So anyway he said, "alright I won't bluff you's" he said, "I'll take you into Leonora". So anyway he got us all into the car. Jessie said, "you get into the front with him". I said, "alright". They pushed me in the front, so I sat there with him and we were facing Leonora and he moved the car and he turned around and I was facing down at Ida Valley see. And I said, "if your going to Ida Valley", I said, "then I'll open the door" and I was going to jump out of the car. And he grabbed me, he said, "no I just wanted to see if your dinkum". I said "I'm dinkum" I said, "I don't care if you put me in jail" I said, "I'm not going back there". So he took us into Leonora, took us down to some old people that he knew, aboriginal people, left us with them and he said "come up to the police station tomorrow because I going to give you some rations, to help you through". And we said to old Rosey, the lady that we went to. We said, "we don't know where the police station is", I said, "you'll have to show us". She said, "oh we'll show you" Went there the next day and he gave us our rations and everything. But we all got jobs.

CC What was your job this time then Alice?

AN Well Jessie got a job at the Dairy out at Hatfields. And Mary got a job at the boarding house, working for Mrs. Cramery and I got a job at the Whitehouse Hotel as a pantry maid with Rosey. And this is where Jessie got mad at me again. She said I always find the cushy jobs. But it wasn't that at all. They got their jobs before me, so.

CC She was just a little jealous.

AN Yeah you know. But we only stayed a little while, Mary and I. We went, I used to write to the Cashmore's see. I never lost touch with them and while I was at Leonora she wrote to me and asked me, she had little Jill then, the little baby and she said that she needed somebody to help her so she asked me to come back. So Mary and I

went back down to Perth and I went up to Mr. Neville and told him that Mrs. Cashmore wanted me back. Got in touch with Mrs. Cashmore and I went back to Wyalkatchem but it was only for a little while because it was November and in January I left because Mr. Neville said my fiance was up in Mygumber and that he had a job up at Meekatharra but his job was open to him but he had to have a wife to go up there with him.

CC Oh yes.

AN So we got married, that's how it was happened see.

CC So tell me about this fiance of yours.

AN Oh he was my best friends brother.

CC And when did you first meet him?

AN Oh in Perth I met him. We must have been going together for about a year before we were married.

CC Were you writing to one another?

AN Yes regularly. So I said Mrs. Cashmore I've got a letter from Mr. Neville to go back to Mygumber to get married. There's a job awaiting us up in Meekatharra. So she didn't want me to leave but, I'd been there three times I suppose you could say it. Because I went away sick and came back and then went away and come back and so anyway went up to Mygumber. That was in February, that's right, March, April. Two months we were waiting for the Minister to come up to marry us. 1932 that was.

CC Now who made your dress Alice?

AN That dress comes from Russia. The lady that gave me that frock her husband was rabbit trapping at the farm, at Avon Park, that's when the Cashmores, on the Cashmores property. When she knew I was going to get married she gave me her wedding dress.

CC Oh how lovely.

AN Yep.

CC And the flowers you explained came from a previous wedding.

AN Yeah from Sister Phertons wedding.

CC And she was a nurse and she married a Langagen is that right?

AN Yeah from Mygumber.

CC From Mygumber.

AN And the veil that was my own veil. Like that was Mrs. Kercessca, her name was Mrs. Kercessca. A Russian lady.

CC That was her veil as well?

AN Yeah, that her outfit. This is lace, this is () and lace all the way up. Lace () and all.

CC And what happened to the dress after you had used it?

AN I had it for years and years and I dyed it pink after awhile to change, you know, to make it look a bit different.

CC And you have a hat on your head there don't you?

AN No.

CC That's just the veil is it?

AN No it's a frill, that's a frill you see and it comes right down here and just.

CC And you bought the shoes in Perth?

AN Yeah they were my own shoes that I had all the time.

CC Right and tell me a bit about, who did you marry?

AN I married Charles William Nannup.

CC And where was he born?

AN He was born at Mundaring.

Nannup

- CC Right and how old was he when you met him?
- AN He's only seventeen months older than me.
- CC So you were twenty when you got married?
- AN Yes.
- CC Okay and what was the date of your wedding?
- AN 22nd of April 1932.
- CC Now was the depression still on then?
- AN Oh I suppose it was I don't know, I forget.
- CC Okay so you were married and then what happened?
- AN We were there in Mygumber for a week. Then we caught the train to Meekatharra and we came to Geraldton on 30th April 1932. That's a week after I was married, the 23rd, 4,5,6,7,8,9,10 that's right, yes it is, yes.
- CC Yes just over a week.
- AN Yes just a week. And we got off there and we had to have breakfast because they had to get parcels and things like that and we had an hours break here and my husband and I went up to the coffee palace and had breakfast and he was very adventurous, he wanted to have a look around and there was a jetty running out from Durlacher Street. Way out about a mile out to sea. You know where Durlacher Street is don't you?
- CC Yes, yes.
- AN And there were two boats in and he wanted to go out and have a look to see the boats and I was scared because I said, "we can't miss the train" you know. But anyway he ran all the way up, right to the end of the jetty and came back again. I'm red, threw his hands up, walk down to the Railway Station and "I said I'm not moving from here" and he said "right" he said, "when we finish up there and if we want to go anywhere else" he said, "we'll come to Geraldton" to live you see.
- CC Right.
- AN Because he had an uncle here too, his mothers' brother. See he didn't see him at that time. But we were up there, Meekatharra. We worked on Yellalewa Station first and then, only stayed there a little while.

My husband couldn't get on with the boss, so he went across to another Station, then we both ended up over there and my eldest, the first son was born while we were out there.

CC Right.

AN And he was five months old when we went to Wiluna and we were up there, he was working for a butcher, you know, looking after cattle and sheep for the slaughter house and we were stuck right out in the bush about nine miles out in the bush. And the aborigines were a bit primitive in those times.

CC Yes.

AN And there was a nice aboriginal bloke, young fellow, he was about twenty and he was a boxer and he was working with my husband and these aborigines. One tribe died in Cue, there tribe died at Cue and they had to get somebody from Cue to level off the, you know, payback sort of thing. Anyway they got this young fellow and they said get some Womma that means wine, so they got it and they wanted him to drink with them and he never drank. And he put the bottle to his mouth and wouldn't take, but they knew and they rattled around and they killed him you see. Got his belt off and threw him down a open cut. And the little boy went out looking for there goats and they found this body down there. Because they said, my husband came home from work one evening and he said, "you know" he said, "Yunk didn't turn up to work today, we warned him, to where he got to" and so when he went back the next day they, he came home about nine o'clock at night. He used to come home at nine o'clock at night and I used to be so scared, my little boy and I. And he told, he said, "you know they polished Yank off". I said "what?" "Yes" he said, "threw him down an open cutter". I said "who?". "Oh" he said, "three of the tribe" you know. And he said, "and they got them and put them in jail, but they've all pleaded innocent, they let them go and they went into the desert somewhere". And I said, "well if you want this job you keep it" I said, "I'm off". He said, "alright we'll both go". So we both left and we came to Geraldton, that's how we landed here. It was a January, it was January 1934 but what day I don't know.

CC Yes.

Nannup

- AN But we've been here ever since. Apart from when I went to work at different times.
- CC Right. So how many children have you had Alice?
- AN Thirteen altogether but I was blessed with ten to air. Got ten living children.
- CC And how many boys and how many girls?
- AN I've got seven girls and three boys.
- CC Right. So tell us a little about Geraldton?
- AN I've got thirty eight grandchildren and forty greats.
- CC How many greats?
- AN Forty.
- CC That's quite a family.
- AN But Geraldton, oh when we came to Geraldton we arrived here about twelve or six o'clock in the evening I think and we had no idea where his uncle lived, but we got a taxi and came out to, in Bayley street they lived. Oh things were quite different, you know. They were only living in man made houses, like there own makings and humpys we called them. He loved his drink, so I didn't worry about it, you know I didn't drink. But my husband liked it, but I didn't want to be there because I said "I'd like to get on our own". So we went out to, my husband got a job out at Woorree. Way out here, you know where the Allied Minerals, Eneabba Minerals out there. Well it was just over the way and we worked on a farm there. My husband and I, for Mr. Rowland, we used to work for them. Rabbits, he was fumigating rabbits. Oh the rabbits were plentiful in those days, yes.
- CC Yes.
- AN We worked there for a little while and then we finished there and then my husband got a job in the wood cutting for the condenser, they had condenser there for the railway engines and condensed the sea water for the and so my husband and I went up to Olgilgee. He was wood cutting there for a man.
- CC Were there lots of trees around then?

AN Mm plenty, plenty of trees.

CC What kind of trees mainly Alice?

AN They cut Jam mainly.

CC And where was this again, out?

AN At Olgilgee, going out to Northampton. We worked for this chap for a long time. Even finished up at Northern Gully and he never even paid us, he ran off with all the money.

CC You never got any money?

AN He was a Yugoslav, yeah.

CC Where were you living at the time?

AN We were out in the bush, out at Northern Gully.

CC Just living in the bush?

AN In the bush, in a tent.

CC How did you manage with all the children, how many children?

AN Only had two. I only had two then, yes.

CC How did you manage with the nappies and things?

AN Oh we were on the fault line.

CC Oh so you had no problem with water?

AN No, no. We had a thing that could turn on the tap to get the water whenever we wanted it. I used to wash and keep the kids clean there. And he took off and left us, he said he was going into get us stores and things and we were starving. But my husband used to cut, hunt trees and get honey. So this farmer was not far away and I said to my husband one day I said, "what about you take up some honey and offer it to the lady, she might give us some food", you know in return. Oh look they were so happy, he took up half a bucket of honey and they were really happy about it. So she sent the food and different things down and then one my husband he went to town, oh no, no, there was another chap with us, he said, "oh Mick going to town to get a truck to come and get our wood and we were going in. So anyway Mick went out and got Mr. Herb to come out and cart our wood in and took us in. No took us, we borrowed the

cart that's right. We borrowed the farmers cart and took what we had, belongings, up to the railway siding at Northern Gully and we caught the train and old Mick Rooney that was Mr. Rooney he was cutting wood with us. He and my husband met the next day and they went out with Mr. O'hearn and got the wood and brought it back. We lived in Geraldton since then.

- CC In the town itself.
- AN Yes.
- CC Right. So where did you live?
- AN You know where the Baptist church is in Quarry Street?
- CC Yes.
- AN Well just there.
- CC Just there and you were there for how long?
- AN Oh we were there from 1934 to 1939 and my daughter. I had a daughter four years and five months old and had a accident and tetanus set in and we lost her. And they built a reserve for us just here in Banksia Street and we moved up to there. That was in 1939. 14th of March 1939 we buried our daughter and moved up there. That was a sad occasion.
- CC Now you wanted to say something about Geraldton Alice?
- AN Oh when I came to Geraldton first. There was only about four thousand people in this town, you know.
- CC Not many people.
- AN Not many people. There were only about fifty aborigines in all, the whole family, like children and grown ups. Only about fifty living in Geraldton then.
- CC Were they accumulated in a certain area or were they spread out?
- AN All on the ridge, all on that ridge there in Quarry Street. That's where we all used to live for awhile. We weren't too popular with the crowd I suppose. Oh, some good people there were. It's just like everyday life. But we weren't allowed onto licensed premises or anything like that or in dance halls. In the summertime we used to go down to the esplanade, you know where that is at the Yacht Club and one night there was a beautiful dance going and I said to my husband, I could hear this dance, just can't remember what this dance was. But anyway I said, "oh my favourite dance I've got to go around and have a look" and he said, "oh you mighten be allowed to get in". I said, I'm not going to get in I'm just going to go out the back". Because the

back was wide open, see. Anyway I was watching and they were spinning around and going and oh beautiful you know and the head, the M.C. came up to me and he said, "excuse me" he said, he said "what are you doing here?" And I said, "oh I'm just looking at this dance," I said. I said, "I just love dances" and he said, "yeah welll" he said, "you just look now" and he said, "you'll have to move away" he said. "You know your not allowed around here". (unclear). I said, "okay, anyway I'm not coming in", I said, "I'm only just watching" he said, "yeah but still don't turn around". So I went around to my husband and I said, "oh the M.C. pushed me" and he said, "Oh I thought as much".

- CC Could you dance Alice?
- AN Oh we used to dance. Mr. and Mrs. Neil, well Mr. Neil taught us how to dance, yes.
- CC Did he up at Mygumber was it?
- AN Yes we used to have a dance once a fortnight. We used to have a good old time.
- CC Where did they get the music from, for the dances?
- AN Oh we had an old aboriginal fellow and he could play the accordian and the violin because he was from the Mission and he used to play the music and we used to dance and do all sorts of things.
- CC What kind of dances would you do?
- AN Oh we used to do the garden waltz and the Canadian Barn Dance, () the square dance, we used to called it the Set, they call it square dancing, but we used to call it the Set.
- CC The Set.
- AN You know the four couples.
- CC So when you were married you were never able to go to a dance?
- AN Not when we left Mygumber, we were alright out in the bush, but when we came here we had, we used to have some friends, used to live just over the hill there in Johnston Street and we used to go and have dances there. Just in the private home. We used to have a marvellous time. Oh some of them used to get too full and stir up a bit of strife.

But we never, we used to just enjoy ourselves.

CC Tell me a little bit about your husband, now where was he born?

AN He was born at Mundaring. His father was a lumberjack.

CC Oh right.

AN He was a very nice chap, old Bill Nannup, his name was.

CC You knew him did you?

AN No I didn't know him, I knew his brother, my husbands uncle. His name was old Dave Nannup. But he was a thorough gentleman. They were American negroes.

CC Oh yes and what about his mother?

AN His mother was very fair I believe.

CC You never met her?

AN She was a Ring, yeah, Ella Ring her name was.

CC And she was from the south too or from the North?

AN Yes she's from Katanning.

CC From Katanning originally. And how many brothers and sisters did your husband have?

AN He had a brother and a sister. Dorothy and Thomas.

CC Right and you knew them?

AN Yes I knew them. This is Dorothy and that's my sister.

CC Now your husband is deceased Alice?

AN Yes died on the 3rd April 1988 last year. He spent four years in Nazarath House. His brain cells perished from alcohol and he knew nothing.

CC Did things change once alcohol became available freely.

AN It was worse. When my husband was drinking they weren't even entitled to go into hotel. But they brought in this citizenship rights and they could go into the hotels.

- CC And things have changed since that time?
- AN For the worst I think. I don't like it because it's not the same anymore.
- CC No. So Alice is there anything else you want to say on tape?
- AN Yes well I had struggle, hard to get where I am today. To be accepted because we weren't accepted when I first come to Geraldton. We had to prove ourselves, well I proved myself.
- CC So looking back on your life Alice, are you happy with your life?
- AN Yes I've got no regrets. I've got no regrets what so ever. I'm happy. That worries me there. When I say I had to work my way up to what I have, you know, what I've got done today. When we first came to Geraldton we just, we were just nobody as I said. We used to go to town do our shopping, do this that and the other. I used to take my children to the matinee and my children used to get the rough time and fighting and names calling and it was very, very unhappy occasions because we're all equal in gods eyes, you know aren't we.
- CC Yes.
- AN But my children really had it even going to school they used to come home very unhappy, but I used to say, "you stay there, you'll wear them down one day". And you know we were accepted, we've got lots of friends in town today. I've got so many friends.

END TAPE III SIDE B