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BUNBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oral History Programme

an interview with

WILLIAM JOHN PROUT

27 July 1986 - 24 September 1986

DARDANUP

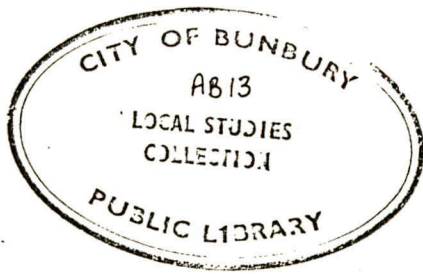
Conducted by

Judy Clarke  
Member Bunbury Historical Society  
Oral History Sub-Committee



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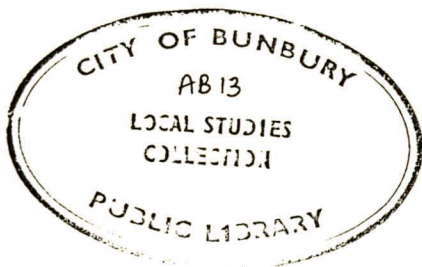




NOTE TO READER

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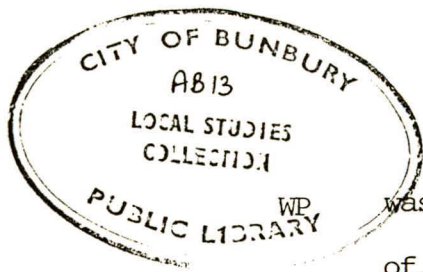
JC This is an interview with Mr. William Prout of Dardanup for the Battye Library Oral History Programme made in his home on the 27th July, 1986, by Judy Clarke. Mr. Prout was born in Bunbury on the 22nd July, 1909.

WP My name is William John Prout, born in Bunbury 22nd July, 1908. My grandparents came from Ireland. They lived in Dardanup near where the tennis courts now are. My mother was the second daughter of the Slattery family. She married George Harris and he was unfortunately was killed in front of Venn's house erecting a windmill. They had only been married about 8 months when Mr. Harris was killed and after he was killed, mother had a son who was also George Harris the 2nd. Ten years later she met my father who was William Henry Prout and he came from Cornwall. He worked for Millars Timber & Trading Company as Foreman of the Timber yards here in Dardanup. Mother had two other sons as well as myself. They are now still living.

JC What were your brothers' names?

WP Arnold Francis and Frederick Ronald. They both now live in Bunbury. I grew up and I can remember most things that happened since I was 6 years of age. I may refer to things that have been passed on to me by elder people but I will try to keep to what I know has happened in my lifetime.

I went to the Dardanup State School. My teacher was Mr. Terrance Hayward and his wife. While I was there my father died so mother

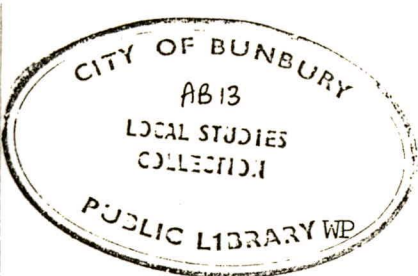


was left with four boys to rear which she made an excellent job of. During the time at the Dardanup school I remember the men going away to the First World War. They came around to say goodbye to myself and brothers and what they were going to bring us back from France.

I can also remember when they returned and we had all the welcoming parties for them and we were taught by Mrs. Hayward to sing 'Rule Britannia'. However, when I was about 9 years of age I went to the Convent School which was opened up at Princep Park which is now Craig' home. Then later the Convent was built in Dardanup.

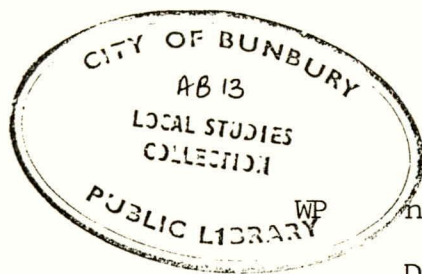
One of the early things I remember - there was a butcher shop next door to where we lived and there were 3 brothers ran this butcher shop by the name of Morrissey Brothers. There was Dick, Jack and George. They also employed other men. They had done the killing up at Dowdells Line and the meat they supplied by horse and cart to the hotels in Bunbury for 7 o'clock breakfast every morning. These men continued on until they were quite old men but unfortunately there is no history left in Dardanup to say they ever were here which I think is a disgrace. However, the Dardanup Timber Yards; the timber was brought down from Wellington Mills and stacked over near the railway line and there was a loop line ran in and trains came down twice a day from Wellington and then when a boat came in to Bunbury it was all reloaded onto the railway and into Bunbury. We had a Station Master, Assistant Station Master and a Porter. Alas today we have nothing.





At 9 years of age we were very well provided for in the way of transport. I well recall that at 9 years of age there was the hotel, the store and the butcher shop had to get their money in to the bank in Bunbury. There were no elders going in. I was sent off every Saturday morning to Bunbury to deliver this money to the Bank. So you can see there was no worry of robberies in those days. However things got better and at a later date the Bank did open up in Dardanup so that overcame that. Now referring back to the butchers, their meat supply came from the Northern Territory. The big bullocks would come down from Fremantle to there from the Dardanup Railway Yards and then from there up to the slaughter yards, the reason for that being there wasn't enough meat produced in this area to keep the butchers going. However, I think that is enough of the meat supply. Then there was my first job - I was on various farms - but what I will recall was up at a place called Maxicar. It was a property owned by Dr. Flynn and Dr. Joel. They had 40 acres of orchard there and I was there for 6 weeks during the harvesting time. The manager was Tubal Clarke and he also had a nephew there, Les Clarke, and Les was a great lad. He used to drive the truck down to Dardanup with the fruit and back it because it was going overseas and he had to get it down here quickly to the railway trucks but he was a great man was Les.

Ah, now to our sport. We all enjoyed ourselves very much. We never appeared to have much worry in the way of finance. Now to get to Bunbury to football we would leave the Dardanup Railway Station at 9 o'clock in the morning, we could catch a return train at midday at South Bunbury Station to bring us home. Should the



next week we want to go to Donnybrook to play football we left Dardanup Station at half-past-twelve and returned again at six in the evening. Now we have none of that service at all today. And the same with anyone wanting to go to Bunbury to shop; they could use that same train - very convenient.

JC Where did the train come from - on route from?

WP Donnybrook to Bunbury and then back again. The train service was always provided on a Saturday night that you could go into Bunbury at six and leave Bunbury at half-past-eleven on Saturday night.

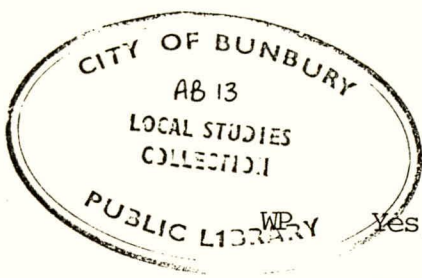
JC But what year was that?

WP Oh, that would be back in 1915 - from then on. So football, we had a team here. The boys were very happy as we would leave Forrest Park to catch the place at South Bunbury. We would call in to a home that was called Hennessy's. We would have a glass of Sasparello and Water for a penny and a pie for threepence. So we had a party on the way home. As we grew older and got up to the age of 18 we still went in to Bunbury to play football but it was 6 or 7 of us and some wouldn't have any money but between us we would make up enough to get in to that football game.

JC What sort of transport were you using then?

WP Rail and we had to pay one shilling towards the services of the umpire. That came out of our pocket. Anything else we needed we had to pay for ourselves. There was no such thing as the club providing any amenities at all. Hence today the sport has gone out of it. We played for sport - today it is a money making turnout.

JC Did you play any other sport besides football?

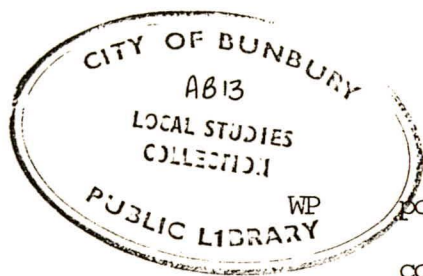


Yes, we played cricket. We had 3 cricket teams in Dardanup but previous to me being born there was a cricket pitch in Hayward Street but I have not met anyone who played on that pitch so it must have been there in about the 1870's but however there was no cricket for a number of years until 1920, ah, the Venn Estate was sold up and when it was sold there was a Mr. Goodin, he took the hotel on - and he had 3 sons and he wanted to get a cricket team going so he bought the block of land where the hall now stands and so the cricket team went on and it has flourished ever since thanks to Mr. Goodin.

JC What was the Venn Estate?

WP The Venn Estate consisted of the land down to where Jock Johnston lives and from there from Jock's property straight up Italiano Road over to Paradise Road, from the Paradise Road back to the turn on the Fergurson Highway where it turns to come back to Dardanup and then it owned all the land across to where the Recreation Ground stands plus the land where all the houses are going up in Hayward Street and also the land where the big two storey house is, from there out to Gavins Brook, that's on the way to Boyanup. That was all owned by Mr. Venn but it was sold in 1920 and split up by the Government. That's how all these little farms were brought about namely there's Freddie Clarke lives on one block, brother Dan on the other and various other farmers but I do remember these English people coming and taking these blocks up. A lot of them were never cut out for it. I remember one fellow - he was with my uncle planting some





potatoes and he got very thirsty. He said "Mr. Slattery, where could I get a drink?" "My gad old man the river is running there." "But, he said "I haven't got a cup." "Well," he said, "if you look at the cattle they find out how to drink and you do the same" so naturally they were never cut out to be farmers.

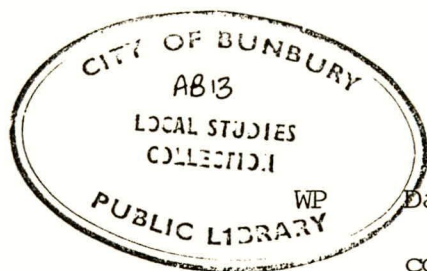
JC Do you remember the names of some of these people?

WP Oh yes I can give you all the names if you should want them.

JC Well, just a few.

WP Alright. Well as we went up past which is now the Recreation Ground, Bob Taylor took a block up there. The first block over the bridge was taken up by Mr. Hayward and Mr. Craigie. Ah, then there was Mr. Leonhardt, he took another block up. Paul Italiano and Loui Rechichi - they took a block up. Phillips took a block up, Butcher, Mr. Woods and so on. All very familiar to me these names. Farming in the district came into its own when they discovered the clover. They planted that then the next great thing was the Super Works. By putting the super on they got a lot of grass then eventually the irrigation and drainage and that made the district. Some people started dairying and they can grow things, potatoes, anything at all, so that's what made this area here. Lots of things stand out that I remember has happened to the older people. In Bunbury there was a Mr. Parks and he was the Chemist working for Carr & Company on the corner of Wellington and Victoria Street. He boarded at the Rose Hotel and he had the same room for 40 years so he must have been well satisfied. I do remember when the Prince of Wales came through on the train through





Dardanup and we were all waiting to see him and it was shockingly cold weather. When the Prince of Wales arrived in Bunbury the Mayor of the town was a Mr. Baldock so to show him some of the sites they took him by car around the back beach and it was a shocking day and he said "For God's sake take me back to my room" so Bunbury never had a lot to show a royal visitor.

JC What year was that?

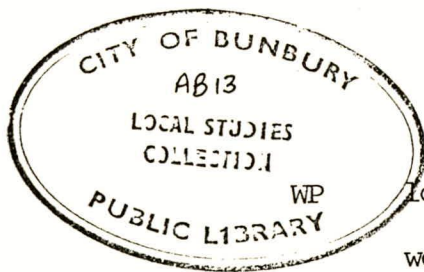
WP Oh now, '25, '24 I think.

JC 1924?

WP I think that was right. However, our amusements - we used to go dancing at Brunswick, Boyanup, Capel, Bunbury - all by horse and cart. And then one evening there was a funny episode in the Waterloo Hall. When they were cutting the meat up or they had killed the bullock and they were bringing it down to the Dardanup Butchers Shop, they used to throw bushes on the top of the cart to put the meat on. Anyway, one of the lads decided he was going to Waterloo and he was taking a young lady. He threw the bushes off, forgot to wash it down. He marched into the Waterloo with his young lady and from her bottom down was all blood so it was a rather embarrassing evening.

Jc Yes.

WP But these are the things that happened - it's like going to Ferguson I recall one time where they put the horse - took it out of the vehicle - put it one side of the fence and then reharnessed it. Of course it was very dark and the people who owned it came out and they couldn't get it to move. It was tied up. So we had



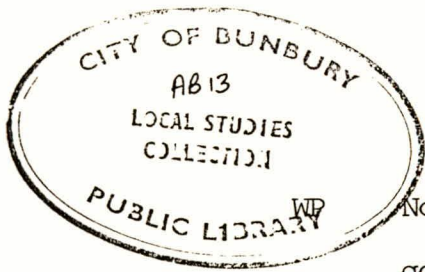
lots of fun in our way. It never ran us into much money but we were always very very happy. Ah you might say 'what did we do on a Sunday evening?' We went to church and after that we came back to the hotel, cleared the diningroom and then we had a dance and a singsong. We never knew what drink was and it cost us nothing for that evening. That was on every Sunday night. So you can see we were never short of entertainment.

JC What church did you attend?

WP The RC church.

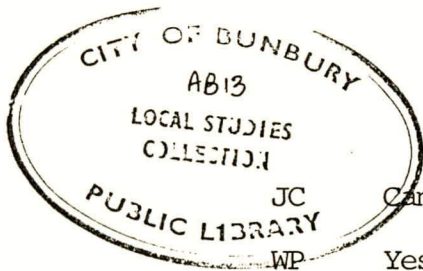
JC Is this the one still over here?

WP No, the old one but denomination didn't come in to it. We all went along and then came back and enjoyed ourselves. There was some bigotry in the district. I'd heard of it but it never affected me or my family in any shape or form and happily today all that has gone by the board. At the age of 16 I used to do a bit of stock work for Lew McDaniell who at that time had Belvidere. Now to save a journey we would go down to Johnston's place at Leschenault, give a signal across to Turkey Point. Lynons would come over with his boat, we would hop in the boat and then have the two horses swimming behind us and that is how we would get over to Belvidere and to the Estuary and we would ride from there up to Belvidere and stay the night there, do the mustering the next day and then we would go right up to the head of the Estuary down through Australind and back to Dardanup. It was quite a journey.



Now we will get on to sport again. When I was about 10 I remember going out to the Dardanup Race Track. It was called Mc Guire's Paddock but it was a very good track and they used to have a couple of meetings a year and another one over at Waterloo, Capel Donnybrook and sort of made the round. But it was considered a great day's outing to go to the Dardanup Cup. I well recall one of the horses which one was trained by a Miss Crigland from Bunbury. She and her father trained this horse. Mr. Morrissey, the butcher that I referred to before, he had 3 racehorses and they were quite good. He had Little Carbin, Wangaretta, Sparella and Forence - they were all very good horses. They were all sportminded around the district at the time. The jockey that Morrissey employed was George Tyrell of Waterloo. Hence you notice George has got very bent knees and bandy. Well it wasn't from catching pigs, it was from riding racehorses! Yes well the races at the Waterloo Racetrack was almost opposite, well it was where the Recreation Ground is at Waterloo now, that was the Waterloo Race Track. So they all liked their sport in the old days and cricket, they were mad about cricket, the older generation. Of course it would all be done, they would travel by horseback or horse and sulky. I recall when I was about 17 going over to Brookhampton and I went with the Fergurson team and we had a had a great day and of course the meal had to be a banquet - sucking pig, turkey, everything that was imaginable was on the table. But one chap, he could eat like a horse and when the meal was near finished he would call out 'Aint there any plum pudding?'





Can you tell me the name of some of the fellows in your team?

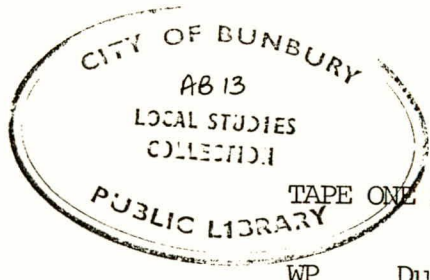
Yes, well one great old chap was Harry Gardiner. He was known as Carbine. There was Charlie Flynn, there was Wonga Butt - his name was Walter Fowler - there was Hal Gibbs and Noel Gardiner - oh, quite a number of Gardiners - and a Mountford - and that practically with all the Gardiners made up the team but they were a hard team to crack.

JC This is a second interview with Mr. Prout held at his home July 3rd, 1986.

WP I think now as I was growing up to manhood I will start off by saying that I well remember the Depression Days and it was very hard going for farmers and all concerned but they had a great spirit and they decided that they would do what they could for themselves and I know a lot of my friends had to go away to different parts working in timber mills and so forth. I had, and still have, a very good friend whose father and mother, a brother and three sisters were all at workable age and they had to live through that Depression but fortunately the father had a license to cut sleepers and his son by borrowing some money got sufficient to get him away and from there they got over all the difficulties of the Depression. They were all very well respected members of the community. There were several other young people who had to do likewise. Now during that time of the Depression a lot of people who were ex-Bank Managers, School Teachers and so forth came into the district to dig drains.

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TAPE ONE SIDE TWO

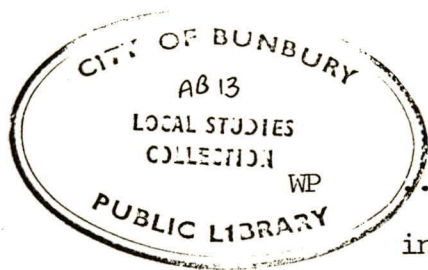
WP

During that time when the drains and that were being dug, that was in 1930, that was in the height of the Depression, it actually started in 1929 - those drains were dug by shovel and wheelbarrows. Also they had a horse scoop. And that was all very hard work. They were all very happy people - they had to be contented with their lot and I think it would be well for the young people of today to hear about the way these people went about their living. Now the farmers, they had it very hard too. Much the same as what they are having today, and I have no doubt that they will overcome the difficulties of today because they are men of the land and if you are a man of the land you overcome all adversity or you wouldn't take the job on. I think they are all very dedicated people. They will do the best they can for their families and their country and through that spirit they will overcome all adversity.

Now I will go from there to my own life. When I was 20 I bought a truck and I started off carrying in the district. I was well supported by the farmers and all others. I carted their super, cattle, gravel or any commodity that had to be moved. I was always very happy doing this work, at least at work, but later in life I may not be such a happy person. I carried on until one night I went to a dance up at Fergurson and I met a very lovely girl. I finished up that girl became my wife, bred four children, and we were quite a happy family and this year we celebrate 50 years of married life.

JC

Congratulations.



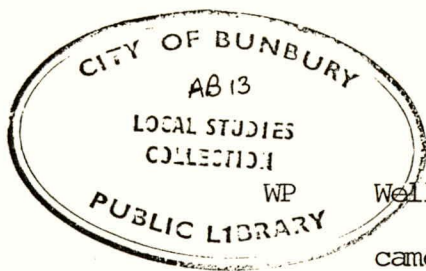
... and I would like now to thank my wife for the wonderful way in which she looked after us all because no farm, no business or anything can flourish without the assistance of the other partner. When we got married of course we had to have a house so we built on Lot 8 Hayward Street Dardanup. We were like the young ones of today. Money wasn't plentiful. However we did have a little advantage - although wages were only 3 pound 12 shillings a week, we survived. We paid a lot for the block of land. It cost 50 pounds. On that we built a house and that was built for 429 pounds but in those days that amount of money was equal to where the people have paid their 45 and 40 thousand for their homes but we were like all others; we had to be content with our lot and do without things. When we were married we had the barest of necessities but gradually every second year or so we would get something new in to the home. It might be an ice-chest - sometimes you had ice, other times you never. Then I remember when the wirelesses were around we had six wirelesses in the house but none of them would be purchased until we had the money put aside. So it went on with everything else we got - there was no such thing as booking it up. We may have been wrong on that score but I'm happy that that's the way we've done it and I instilled that into my own children and fortunately they don't get into difficulties.

Now, I think I've said enough about my family.

JC     You didn't tell me your wife's name.

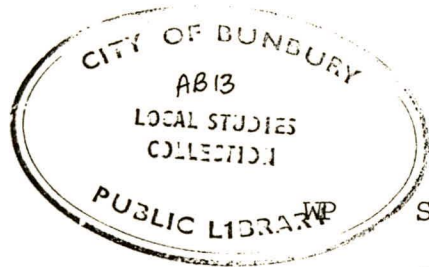
WP     Oh, my wife's name was Lorna May Beer.

JC     Where was she from?



Well she was from Bunbury when I met her but from that she just came up from Margaret River. Her parents had a block of land there but they were like a lot of the other people that came out, migrants from England, they found it too difficult to carry on so they came in to Bunbury. Now during this time of the trucks it was quite a pleasant sort of life and lots of fun, lots of funny incidents. I remember when the War was started off there was one family, this chap joined the Airforce and he was worried for his family so they were shifted, or wanted to be shifted, up to Dwellingup so I arrived along to pick up their belongings and it was a work of art to get it all on the truck. Lots of people as they went by; we were going up the hills, they would be all looking out waving, laughing. The lady and the children couldn't understand but I could see the joke. Out of the back of the truck I had to take a board off to put the cow's head out through the back and a crate of chooks on top of the bonnet of the truck so it was a real picture show but, however, we got them people out to where they wanted to go and fortunately they all survived very well till the husband returned from the War but during that trip there was a funny episode. The station, it was very wet weather, and I thought I'll have to get some more covering so from the station I got a couple of railway sheets to cover it and also a license from the Secretary of the Board Transport Office and a railway worker saw me going through the district and, of course, he reported it. In due course the police arrived and they were going to prosecute for doing that trip. I said nothing doing, I got a permit. "How would you get a permit?" I said from the Transport Officer, Mr. Hayward.



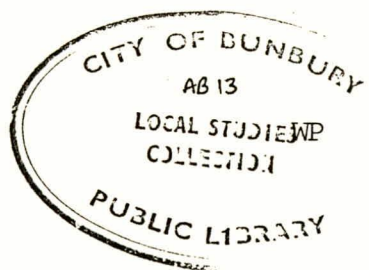


So they went over to Mr. Hayward and told him what they were going to do. "Well Constable, as far as I am concerned you can go to buggary." He said "I'm a duly appointed Transport Officer". He said "Here it is, there's the book. C.T. Hayward you are appointed as a Transport Officer during the War in times of emergency." So he said "It was an emergency and I gave Mr. Prout the permit." "Now", he said "you can see where you stand." So the officer could go no further but, however, Mr. Hayward was a great old fellow and he liked his joke so he wrote to the Department and he said "Dear Sir, I thought I was a wonderful person. I have this authority on Government print to say that I am a Transport Officer but," he said, "I may have been wrong but I have to thank the powers that be that the dear little Japs didn't arrive in this country so that I could show my ability as a Transport Officer." Signed C.T. Hayward, Transport Officer sometimes.

JC Can you just tell me who Mr. Hayward was?

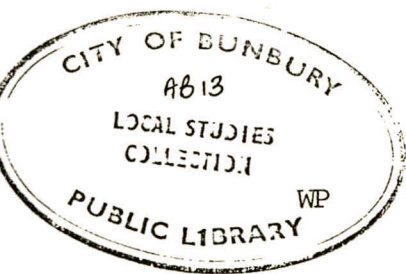
WP Mr. Hayward was the, when he resigned from the Teachers' College or organisation, he became Permanent Secretary of Dardanup Shire Council. It was then known as the Dardanup Road Board but he carried on his position as Secretary at the home where he lived in Hayward Street, Dardanup. He had a small room aside there where people came in to get their licenses. I remember him telling me one time of a migrant that came in to get his license and when he made out the account he said "Would you like me to fill it in for you?" "Oh no," he said "I can do that quite alright.





"By jove," he said "when I looked at that signature I was ashamed of myself." Now Mr. Hayward was a brilliant exponent of the written English. So Mr. Hayward carried on with the Shire work for a long while until they built the new offices in Dardanup and they are a credit to the Shire of Dardanup or I feel that way about it.

I referred to our marriage there, well I think it is appropriate to say that after a person became married they had to have what they call the tin kettling. The tin kettling was a great night, played all the jokes that one can think of on the newly weds and had a particularly nice evening and this carried on for, oh, many many long years but over the last 20 odd years it appears to have died out. Now they refer to it as a house-warming. I suppose they have quite a number of jokes as the time goes on but that was a great tradition that they had then. Another tradition of the district was when a person became 50 years of age. They would all have a party for him that night. They'd come to his home and all bring some food and whatever they might like to drink but that was wonderful to think that when you were 50 everybody thought so much of it that they think it worthy of a little celebration. I don't hear of that happening today. I remember one tin kettling, the husband was expecting it and there was one of the young chaps working on the farm so he was asked to let him know when the tin kettling might be on. The husband went off to get some refreshments and while he was away the fellow filled the chimney up with wet bags. Course when they all sat down it started to smoke and the head of the house could not understand it because he had had a couple of fires going and when the joke had gone far



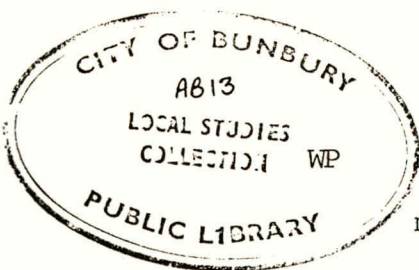
well he had wire attached to the thing and pulled it out and continued on with the party. That was one of the jokes they played. The others they used to, if you weren't wise enough to lock the bedroom up they would tie the sheets up, tie the person's pyjamas up. They would attach a couple of bells under the bed.

JC What make of trucks did you have.

WP Well the first one was, a Rugby but that was a real disaster. It broke down the first day I had it so I went into Kashagen and I bought a Ford truck, 30 cwt. Ford. I carried on with that. Work got more plentiful so I employed a driver and I bought a second truck. I did a lot of work, I was probably one of the first if not the first to cart the super away from Cumming Smith - Mt. Lyall when it opened. I also carted quite a bit of the timber to build the Cresco Fertiliser Works at Picton.

JC Cresco?

WP Yes. Now the site for Cresco was where the SEC headquarters now are but they never produced any superphosphate there. They came to some agreement with Cumming Smith - Mt. Lyall. So I did quite a bit there and furnishings, people shifting. I remember I went up to Carnamah to bring down a load of furniture for Freddie Roberts and his mother. That was a long journey up there and when I got there everything had to be packed up. One of the things that worried me was a grand piano. But however, we packed everything up, duly delivered some of it to Mr. Ernie Forrest at Picton and the balance went in to Mrs. Roberts, Freddie Roberts' mother but I must have delivered it in pretty good condition because



my next assignment with furniture was to shift Fred Flanagan's mother up to Perth so I got quite a name for shifting furniture and so forth. I had one funny episode. I shifted a couple through to Perth and I pulled up in Pinjarra to have a cup of tea and what should happen but a crowd all assembled around the truck. The wireless had been left going. We couldn't unload to stop it so that is how I transferred on into Perth. But all these were amusing.

JC What years was that?

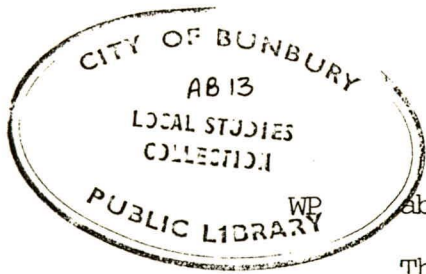
WP Oh that would have been in about 1940. I also left here one evening - I used to cart pumpkins and potatoes and fruit to the markets in Perth and at that time it was all gravel road until you got up to Amadale and I tell you it was pretty rough going.

JC How many hours would it take you to drive to Perth?

WP Oh it would take about 4½ hours to take the loads through.

JC I also carted, there was a strike by the Railways and I was engaged by Cumming Smith to cart 300 tons of tobacco manure to Michael Eddy's tobacco farm at Pemberton. On the way back I would bring potatoes and things so that was quite a lot of work and I also delivered super over as far as Kojonup, down to Margaret River, Bridgetown and then eventually a carrier started up in those districts and they came up to Picton to cart down and do what I was doing which was only fair and reasonable. It was only fair and reasonable. The strike was over but that service by all the carriers had been so good that it eventually became a permanent thing. One of the old time ones that started off

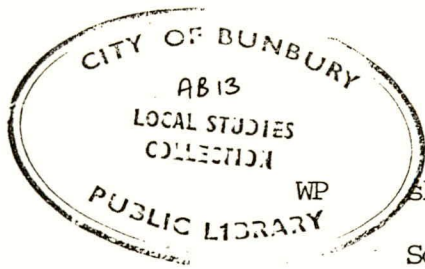




about two years later than me was Bill Morgan of Brunswick.

Then there were others started up but, however, we all got a good living and there was no animosity between us so it was quite good. I remember one night I left here about 8 o'clock for Manjimup and I was to pick up potatoes on this piece of ground but oh, it was so wet, I had no chance of getting in to it so these Yugoslav people they said you stack them, and we'll carry them out. And I had a job to keep up stacking while they were coming in with them. That was about midnight when we finished so we had to go in and have a meal so they had their eggs and bacon and home made bread; they had everything laid on and there was a young girl there about 12. Oh she said, you'd better come back next week, we are having a big party. I said, oh yes. She said, my sister is getting married. I said, where is she? That one over there. I said, isn't she too young? Oh no, she said, the country where I come from they like them young. I never went back to the party but I take it they lived happily ever after. While the war was on we were limited to the amount of petrol we could use so we had to purchase gas producers. They have got part of the mudguard was cut away and these gas producers were put there and when you lost your power you discovered that you had no gas so you had to get out and reload it with charcoal and, of course, you looked like a nigger in those days with this charcoal but however we continued on during the war like that and at night time it was very difficult because you had to have a hood over the headlights because lights weren't to



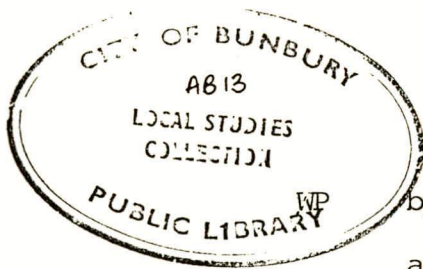


Shine at night but however, we got through all these difficulties.

So anyway with the trucks I carried on right from the War on and I also then when the War finished I had the agency for the Mobil Oil. I delivered it in drums and then eventually there was the tanks were put on the farm so I used to go round and fill the tanks up and I did that for 39 years and I had the trucks for over 50 years. Fortunately I never had an accident in all that time. The trees by the roadside, they stood firm. They never rushed out in front of you on the road and caused someone to be killed or was it we took more care but, however, the people on road, be careful and you will find the trees will be no worry to you. Speaking of truck work we had a lot to do during the Wartime. Produce had to be grown for the Army and civilian people but this area was noted as a potato growing district. We carted about 300 ton of potatoes down to the Swanto Orchard at Argyle because they had the refrigeration there to keep the potatoes. Another 400 tons were carted up to Fergurson and they were underneath the big peppermint trees along the river to try and keep them cool.

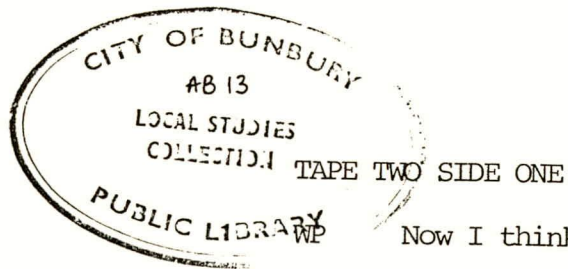
JC Who grew those potatoes?

WP They were grown by, oh there was a lot of people growing potatoes. One of the biggest growers was Jack Shine of Brunswick. He grew a lot of potatoes up at Maxicar but all these potatoes were stacked there and they had to be passed by a Government Inspector and were okayed to go into the stack and then as they were needed



by the authorities we brought them back and put them on the rail at Dardanup and away they went through to Perth or wherever they may be wanted. By the way, these potatoes were all planted by horse and plow, they were cultivated by hoe or manpower and when it came to digging they were dug by fork and picked up and if you got a good price for your work you got a shilling a bag for digging and picking them up. Today I have noticed where they have people picking up the potatoes off the ground after they were dug by machinery and the were getting a dollar a bag for their trouble. Now these people that used to do a lot of the digging were people who came into the district just for that purpose. Their honesty was beyond reproach. They could go to the butcher's shop or the store, ask for what they want and it would be paid for when they got their cheque after their work was done. There were some great old identities. There was Harry the step dancer - he would arrive with his kangaroo dog - he would be one of the diggers. There was Jack and Jill, Scotty Clarke the step dancer, there was Con that had the violin and the organ. There was the step dancer then there was Con that had just the violin. But all these people were real identities every year when they would come around and they were quite respected in their own right. They had these habits and, of course, most of their downfall was drink, but otherwise they were very very honest people.

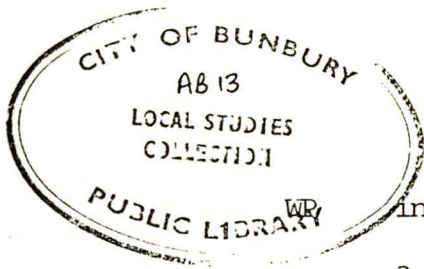
END OF TAPE ONE SIDE TWO



Now I think I should say a little bit about the history of Dardanup as some of it has been told to me. In the first instance I said I would only say what occurred during my life-time but now, thinking it over, I think I should say that Dardanup was probably very well settled by the Irish community. They came out here and there were such names as Foley, Cleary, Busher and quite a number of other Irish names so they settled down and made very good citizens. Now I must say that the early days of Dardanup they had a hotel and it was on the side of the road down Venns Road. Now that old hotel has since been pulled down and a new one was built in Dardanup around 1900. It was built of wood and iron but two years after there was a mysterious fire and it was burned down so around 1902 the new brick hotel was built there. The woman in charge was a Mrs. Coonan and she later, she had been widowed for quite a number of years, then she married a Mr. Skipworth and he ran the hotel in conjunction with his wife and family. Then for many years after it was always leased out to other different proprietors and they carried that on.

Now the Dardanup Road Board held its first meeting in 1895. I think Mr. McGuire was the first president but they have had some great presidents in their time, notably Mr. R.S. Palmer who was the Shire President for 40 years which is quite a record. After there was another man served for quite a while and that was in the name of William Ratcliffe - I think about 25 years, so you see the Shires had some very public spirited men to hold these positions





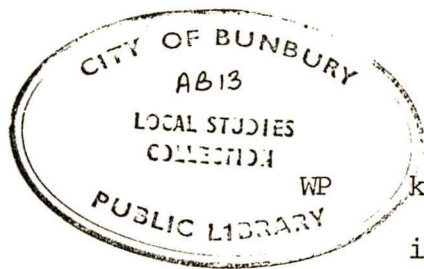
in such a long period. The young men of this district, they had a debating society back in 1898. I hold quite a bit of the correspondence that was in an old journal of theirs. I have these papers but they will be given to my eldest daughter so that they can always be procured from her if anybody wishes to have a look at them.

Now Dardanup had its own flour mill back in 1880. That was on the site near the Venn homestead. That is where the old flour mill was.

In 1930 we had the first bakery built in Dardanup; it was built by a Mr. Chuck Roberts and that was in Doolan Street and it was leased to Mr. Rickson and he carried on for somewhere about 25 years before he retired. Then it went over to, the Scriveners had it for a while. Then there was a new bakery built in Charlotte Street and that is where it now stands and we have had various bakers there. I don't think there is any need for me to tell you the names of all these people.

Previous to having the bakehouse here the bread used to come out from Bunbury by rail and it would be in crates. It would be carted over from the railway station to the general store and from there it was issued out. That practice stopped when they built the bakery in Dardanup. The bread that came out was from H. Rendell & Company.

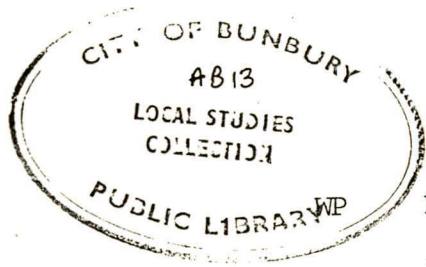
Then in 1935 Mr. John Davy started the first cream run service in the district to the Bunbury factory. The house in Dardanup



known as Dardanup Park was built by Mr. Little. Then afterwards it became the property of Fenn's and then Mrs. Venn, Mrs. Venn Senior as I knew her, used to take great pleasure of a morning to get dressed up and go for a drive in the coach. The coachman would come along with his pair of horses and she would duly get into the coach. They'd drive down one lane and on to the road that runs to Bunbury, back up the next lane and then back down another lane and then up the other one back to the house but they had about 10 acres of flower garden that was fenced off and it was quite an event for the old lady to go on this trip. I have met a daughter of the coachman that did that trip so that was quite an event for Dardanup.

JC Who maintained the gardens?

WP Oh she had quite a number of servants and they also had an old coloured man there known as Black Joe or Joe Carpenter was his correct name and he worked for Venns for many many long years and Jessica Venn, the youngest one who married Mr. Lee-Steere, she came down one morning when Joe was getting ready for breakfast and she said "When are you going to wash all the black stuff off Joe?" "Oh crikey" he said "I think she need to stay." The Venn's second son was Frank or otherwise called Gunday, and his first day when he went to school he went home and his father said "Well son, how did you get on at school today?" "Oh Dad", he said "I was sitting next to a Stallion." He said "They don't have stallions at school" and said "who was he?" and he said "Joe Stallion". But what it was was an Italian boy by the name of and he mistook it for stallion you see which was quite humorous but Gundy often told this tale on himself.



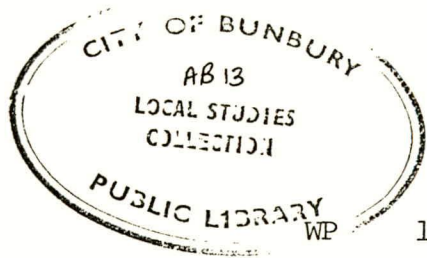
Now I think I previously stated how they had the timber yards in Dardanup and that employed about 25 people all the year round.

JC Where did they bring the timber from?

WP From Wellington Mills, I think I've said all that how it came down before.

Now the timber yards they were there and the timber was brought down from Wellington Mills. There were three trains that came down every day with the timber. Sometimes it would be taken straight in to Bunbury from the wharf. Other times it would be stacked in the timber yards to dry out or be available when the boat came in unexpectedly and then it would be reloaded and taken into Bunbury. Now that journey to Wellington was about 12 miles by train and that got rid of all the timber. That's when the big mill was going. Then it closed down, I think it was about 1914 the big mill. Later on they had a spot mill on the same site and the timber once again was brought down to Dardanup and it was taken overseas to many different countries and in fact I do remember where they cut pieces of wood about 8 x 4 x 3 and they were paving blocks for the roadways in London. This train when it would come down, the guard on board who was old Mal Biggs, and he would go to the hotel and he would have his little order made out from all the different workers up there and the hotel proprietor would pack it up and up it would go to Perth. They would be very happy when it arrived. Also that train was used of a weekend if there was a football match against Dardanup and Wellington, the train would come down to transport us up or





likewise if it was Wellington playing Dardanup it would bring them down here so it was a great day in the town.

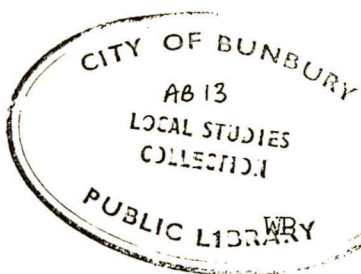
Now the railway line up to Wellington, quite a bit of the land was given by the farmers to Millars Timber & Trading Company and other parts Millars bought but in recompense for the land Millars would transport any of their produce free of charge down to Dardanup so that was a great help to the farmers in the Fergusson and Wellington district.

JC What, did the train stop at each farm?

WP No. There were several little stations or sidings as they were called. There was the Five Mile, the Eight Mile, Nine Mile and Ten Mile Siding and the next one you were up to Wellington but that's how every siding was distinguished by the miles from Dardanup. Now that train also carried the mail from the Dardanup Post Office up to Wellington and there was a post office up at Wellington so the workers or their wives went to the post office and collected their mail there. Likewise Millars had a store at Wellington Mills and they had a butcher shop as well and that was all run by Millars Timber & Trading Company.

Now Wellington Mills, there was four streets of houses there. They had a hall, they had the billiard room and the ambulance hall. They had quite a number of amenities there - it was a real townsite.

When the mill closed down quite a number of the houses and public buildings were sold off to anybody that was interested. Mr. Hayward, our Road Board Secretary who lived in Hayward Street, Dardanup,



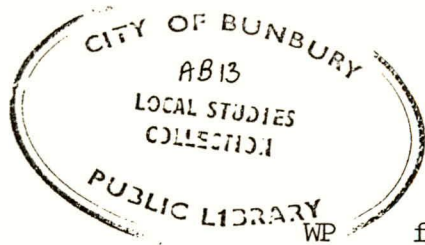
he bought one of the houses which was quite a big building, and rebuilt it in Dardanup. The Church of England at Wellington was purchased, transported and is now the Elgin Church.

Now when these houses were pulled down it wasn't a great expense to rebuild them because a carpenter's wage at that time was about 8 shillings a day so hence it wasn't the big cost as we know today. In 1927 Wesfarmers opened saleyards in Dardanup and where it was was in Hayward Street. Lot 6 in Hayward Street now was the first saleyards in Dardanup. Later on Dalgety & Company they built in Charlotte Street and then Elder Smith, they built over on the road opposite the Church of England in Dardanup and at that stage they were the largest saleyards outside of Midland Junction.

JC Have you any idea how many cattle were sold through there in one sale.

WP In one sale, I remember one time there was over 500 head of cattle sold and a lot of the cattle that went through came from Craigie Lea at Waterloo. Charlie Clarke owned the property and it was managed by Fred Williams. He used to go down south to the settlements that are all fizzled out, the soldier settlements or immigrated people, and they would be brought up here and then a week after or so out they would go again so that is where a lot of the cattle came from for the saleyards.

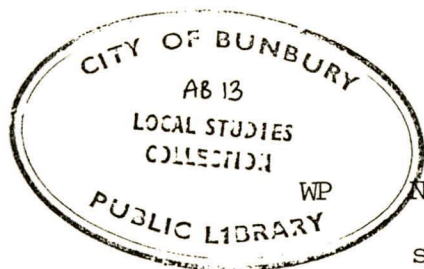
Some of the very early settlers of the district were the Clearys - they took up quite a bit of land in the area; the Fees - there were the two brothers Bob and George and they took up a lot of land and they done a lot of dairying and they reared, one had a family of



four, the other had a family of nine but they all grew up and eventually left the district because there was no work here for all of them. Another family was Mrs. Laura Dillon. She reared 12 children, got no assistance from the government, no handouts whatsoever. She milked a few cows and grew what she could in the way of vegetables and sold these things and a few of the grown cattle which would help to provide for food and as each child was old enough, they went out to work and probably sent some money home to mother. Now the house where they lived is still standing - it was built of mud brick. They dug the soil out and they made the bricks into about 12 x 9 x 4 x 6 and they built the house and that old house is standing to this day and I have taken people out there to see it. It is quite unique - I don't know of any other mud brick place around. There was bricks made of mud and burnt in a kiln to harden it but that has never happened to that building.

Now the Palmers, they had a farm in the district for a long long while. Well as I say, Mr. Palmer, he was 40 years as Shire President so he was probably here many years before that. The Riches - Mr. Riche owned the place that is now Taunton Vale and he passed on and that property went to various people until today it is owned by Jock and Marion Johnston. The Bushers were another very old family. The Foleys were a very old family. In fact I have a document here of the Foleys when they purchased some cattle from my grandfather, Mr. Slattery, and there was 8 of those cattle were sold for 34 pounds but it was a bit of a barter deal because it had to be paid for with so many bags of crushed flour and so many bags of chaff - that was in 1884.

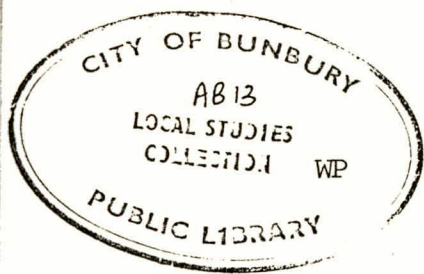




Now other families in the district, well they were up Fergusson say. There were the Coombs and the Houghs. They had quite big properties up there but Houghs' property is now known as Carlaminda and that has been subdivided on many occasions. In fact the flat, about 30 acres of flat that runs along the Fergusson River, was all in a vineyard and they had a wine crushing plant up there and that was - the vines were grown by a Mr. Stanley and the man that came over from South Australia to be in charge of the wine making during 1900 was a Mr. Trevena and he was the winemaker and he stayed there for several years and he left to take a property up at Preston and his son carried on when Mr. Trevena died. Now when the vineyard was pulled up I am not sure of the date but the wine was made there in 1900.

The clearing up in the Fergusson Hills I remember a lot of it being done. A lot of the Italians came out and they used to do that plus some of the old settlers' sons were there and they were very keen, the farmers, to always have a piece of wet ground so they had to divert the creeks to give them a straight run with the water so they would have that nice flat to grow potatoes and vegetables or whatever may be and I remember one fellow, he put through a lot of drains but on one occasion on this farm he had to dig the drain 4 foot wide at the top tapered in to 2 foot 6 at the bottom. Sometime it would be 2 foot deep and sometimes it would be up to 4 feet. Now he dug that by spade for 6 shillings a chain.

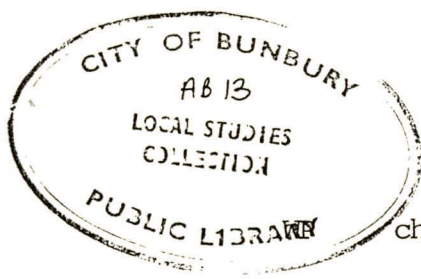
A lot of the properties had young saplings they called them but that was the young trees growing up. To kill these trees



they used what they called ring-barking. They hit the bark with the back of the axe and that got rid of them. Well to do that they got 2/6d per acre. To get anyone to have a look at it today would probably be \$260.00 just to look at it. As the farmers prospered, up in Fergurson they built a hall. It was called the Agricultural Hall and that was built in 1905. It has since been pulled down and rebuilt on the same spot. Now the people of the Fergurson may receive their mail twice a week. It was delivered by horse and sulky. I can remember back when a Mr. Gibbs used to do the delivery but later on his sisters took over and then after that Glad and Ellen Gardiner. They were the last to take the mail up that way by horse and sulky. Since then there has been various other people do it by motor car but today they have a delivery three times a week and that is left in their post box along the roadside.

The Miss Gardiners that were delivering the mail, they were also running the postal exchange or the telephone exchange at at Maxicar.

Before concluding this tape I would like to say that I have had 77 years in Dardanup and my wife and I have had 50 years here and on the 5th August this year we celebrated our Golden Wedding and it was quite a thrill to have those 50 years together. We had telegrams and letters and good wishes from many many people and it was very pleasing to us to receive all those good wishes. Now we reared 4 children and we have 9 grandchildren. Now our family have left this district - their occupation took them away so we are here together the two of us but we are very fortunate the



children had very good health and the grandchildren likewise. It is probably the good fresh air that they enjoyed in Dardanup in their younger days.

Our eldest daughter Patricia married a Max Henney; the second daughter was Merle and she married Ken McKenzie. Our son Keith, he married Bev Reid and Stan, the youngest one, he married Jannette Davies. Three of them are in Perth and the youngest one is over in Sydney but we do have the pleasure of seeing them now and again.

We have enjoyed our life in Dardanup very very much. They are friendly people and they are all very kind and I can assure anyone that wishes to live in Dardanup that they will be received into the community the same way as my wife was received here. Now these few stories that I have spoken of in these tapes I hope that they will be received by the community as truly as I could say and I hope that in the years to come it may be listened to by a few of the people and give them an idea of what my life was like in Dardanup and if people get pleasure out of listening to it I will feel that I have done a little bit towards the history of Dardanup and the good people that live here. Thankyou.

END SIDE ONE TAPE TWO