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COMMUNITY LIFE

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History
An Interview with
Roland Trevitt

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Part of an Interview with Roland Trevitt

Interviewee: Roland Trevitt

Interviewer: Pauline Curby

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I was born 1 November 1916 at a nursing home in Summer Hill. My parents, being residents at that time of Concord. My father was a blacksmith, employed by the Australian Gas Light Co. at their Mortlake works. My mother was a milliner and had been employed up until the time of their marriage by Hordern Bros. of Pitt Street Sydney. We lived at Concord only for a short time until my maternal grandfather had built a cottage for us in the north west corner of his estate at Ryde. We moved into this in, I think, 1919. Not long after my sister was born, my sister Marjorie. She was born on 3 March 1918. Subsequently all the other children in our family, Reg, Vick, Allen, Geoff and Doreen were born at Shirland Cottage as the new house was called with the assistance of mid-wives. It was called Shirland Cottage after my grandfather's house in England. The house he grew up in a suburb of Sheffield in England and he built this place and named it Shirland Cottage.

Q: Mr Trevitt could I stop you there for a moment and ask you to describe this cottage to me. What was it like? Was it a weatherboard cottage?

Yes brand new weatherboard cottage and it had two bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen and a laundry and a front verandah. I think that's all. Then more bedrooms were added as - you heard there's seven in our family, seven kids, so we had two more bedrooms added and a back verandah was filled in. So it became a dormitory too. We had one tank. Whereas my grandfather's house had four tanks, but we had one tank anyway. Water came out of the tank there wasn't any laid on water.

Q: Were you ever short of water with all those children?

Not that I remember as a kid.

Q: Now you mention the number of children in your family, they were all born at home.

Yes, after me. I'm not sure about my sister I think she might have been born at a nursing home.



Q: So you were the eldest. And you must remember quite clearly when some of the younger ones were born? What actually happened do you remember the event. So you remember someone coming in to help?

Yes, oh yes.

Q: Where were you? Did you go down the backyard or hide under the pillow?

This lady would come and I was introduced to her. This was Nurse Crosby, I remember her. I think she was the first one I remember. Things went on in the front bedroom but I wasn't - I was separated from. I was usually taken down to Palmyra, which was down the bottom of the hill where my grandfather and grandmother and aunts lived. My father's parents in Shepherd Street.

Q: Get you out of the way.

Yeah

Q: Were you puzzled? Did you understand what was going on?

Not really.

Q: At what point did you realise your mother was having another baby? When this happened? Did you notice she was pregnant?

No - but as life went on and the younger kids were born, well then one began to enquire and one's friends told one all about how it happened. (Laughs)

Q: Were you shocked?

Mostly disbelief.

Q: When the new additions to the family came did you ever feel resentful that you should have known more about it, or did you just accept it as one of those things?

No - no I was prepared by the fact that - I'd been told I was going to have a sister or a brother or something and it was discussed but not at a level that held the attention of a small boy I imagine.

Q: Can you tell me some other details about the house, this cottage that you lived in? For example, did you have floor coverings, or lino?

It was my job to polish the lino after once or twice or three times, but as we grew we were allocated jobs and my brother and I were responsible for the firewood and so we used to go and get sticks from the paddock which went down to the creek.



Q: What creek was that?

The creek that runs into Buffalo Creek. Under Buffalo Road which is just down the hill from here. We would go down that part where the gum trees were and there were plenty of sticks usually underneath and we'd pick them up and chop the stick up. Life depended on the fuel stove so there was always a demand for firewood and my father would go and get logs in the weekend. We didn't see much of him actually, he went to work on Saturday morning and he had from Saturday till Monday before he went back to work. But anyway he would get the heavier logs and bring them up and saw them up. He'd do that. With the assistance of one of us we'd have a two ended saw that we'd saw the wood up with. We'd take one and steady the other end. My brother and I, Reg.

Q: Was this down in the backyard?

Yeah.

Q: And did you learn to chop wood with an axe?

I was given an axe for my birthday - I'm not sure which birthday. But I was given an extra birthday present. [Laughs] A new axe. That was something I was very proud of. My brother was given a tomahawk. I was 8 or something like that.

Q: They didn't consider that too young. Was it a full adult axe? Full size?

Oh no, it was a small axe.

Q: Did you have any accidents at all?

No

Q: Did you get pocket money for doing those jobs?

No I never thought of that. We didn't get pocket money when we first went to school at all. We didn't buy our lunch so we didn't get any money until later on. While I was still at Ryde school, several times, might have been when mum was preoccupied having babies, might have been other reason why we didn't take our lunch, and we'd be given money to buy sixpeneth of lunch. Which was fantastic, we could go and buy chips like the other kids did.

Q: Did your mother have someone to stay for a while to help her with the babies, to do scrubbing or washing?

Yeah, she had four sisters down at Palmyra. You don't know the topography do you but Palmyra is in - do you know Lane Cove Road that goes - well from the tram terminus it went out to Chatswood and there are two little hills between the tram terminus and Palmyra. Palmyra was built by the Jupp family



in 1830 and it was built away from the creek up and away from the creek, and it was built there because the family lost the original house which was built too close to the creek and floods every now and again and that took away some of the house and they re-built this about 1830. And it's a beautiful old colonial place. It's three courses of bricks, clay bricks made on the site. And the water was mixed on the site because - in my time, I bought that off my mother that place. And when I cleared some stuff out where there had been a hedge growing and underneath this we found a whole lot of oyster shells. And they were surrounded by bits of oyster shells and lots and lots of broken up oyster shells. And apparently they'd broken them up to make mortar.

Q: And this was where your grandparents lived?

This was my grandfather's property. He bought that after the Jupp family. And it went from Buffalo Road to the top of next hill, half way to Quarry Road - what brought this up?

Q: I was asking you about people, your aunties you implied came to help your mother after the babies.

Yes she had four - she had one sister and three half sisters that lived down at Palmyra and so they'd come and help her. And they did, they'd send meals up to her and got milk from there. They had cows, we didn't have cows. But they sent us milk up every day.

Q: They sound like they were a very supportive family. Could I ask you now about the interaction in the family? Who was the disciplinarian? You mentioned your father wasn't there a lot of the time. Did it fall on your mother to discipline the children?

She said 'I'll tell your father on you'. [Laughs] And father was the disciplinarian and he came home, mostly after dark because he worked at Alexandria and he had a good hour's trip to come home in the tram. An hour to an hour and a half I think. And we used to run down the hill to meet him actually. He worked five days during the week and Saturday morning and he came home Saturday afternoon, went to church on Sunday and didn't do any work on Sunday. That was the rule, we were Methodist and if you've heard of wowsers, well we were wowsers. We weren't allowed to play games on Sunday.

Q: And he came home every night from his work?

That was about 48 hours then and it was reduced to 40 hours later, I think, just before the war.

Q: Could you give me a picture of those Sundays? You weren't allowed to play games, you went to church. Did you have Sunday school as well? What was your routine on Sunday?

Went to Sunday school, Sunday morning.



What did you wear?

Sunday suit, what else? Shoes and socks. Cause we didn't wear shoes to school always. But we did to Sunday school and church, and then church after that and then Sunday school in the afternoon.

Q: A hot midday dinner?

Yeah. Oh yes, Sunday was the day when you had a beautiful dinner.

Q: Tell me what did you have? What did it consist of?

Roast usually and vegetables. Which my father mostly grew in the backyard. He had a good deal of soil cultivated in the backyard. His brother Roy Trevitt lived next door to him and he - Palmyra Estate had been divided into two estates and the Judd family sold one half of the estate to my grandfather, that was the Buffalo Road end. The Quarry Road end, that's the northernmost end, he sold to Mr Walters, I don't know if he was the first owner, but in my time it was owned by Mr Walters who is my father's brother's father-in-law. So my uncle lived there. He had a peach orchard there.

Q: Did he give you peaches?

Oh yes. Oh yes, we used to go over and help - help ourselves. No we used to help too, we used to turn the handle of the grading machine and stuff like that. To grade the peaches.

Q: Did they pay you to do that, pocket money?

No - just a few peaches.

Q: So you had good fresh food?

Yes.

Q: Did you consider your mother a good cook?

Oh yes - who is a better cook than ones mother?

Q: So on Sundays you had church, you had hot Sunday lunch, you had Sunday school in the afternoon. What would happen in the evening? Would you have a bible reading or -

No I don't remember, except later on as we got older we went to church.

Q: Again.

Again yeah, four times a day. Two Sunday schools and two church.



Q: Did you enjoy Sunday?

Oh yes. The whole family, the whole extended family adapted to that routine and we knew know other and we expected little different. We were conscious that not everyone did that and other people did things differently, but we did it this way.

Q: And that was considered the right way to do it?

The rest of the friends of the family were church people one way or another, my grandfather had a friend who was one of the Hick's and they were staunch Baptists and they had a similar routine as far as I remember.

Q: There was absolutely no drinking?

Alcoholic liquor? No. I've learned that since. [Laughs]

Q: Do you remember any occasions when the whole extended family ate together for family occasions?

Yes at Christmas time.

Q: Tell me about those days. Was that done at your grandparent's house? Where would it be held?

Christmas dinner would be at the maternal grandfather's place.

Q: Where was that?

At the bottom of the hill from our place, in Lane Cove Road, on the creek, between two arms of the creek. My grandfather's - my father's father, his parents lived in Shepherd Street down towards Ryde station, just about in West Ryde and so we'd go there for Christmas tea. But that was changed about by arrangement from year to year. But when we did go down to the Trevitt's place for Christmas tea, the other cousins, - this is where I'd meet all the other cousins. The ones who lived next door to us in Lane Cove Road, we knew them better than we knew some of the others because they were next door to us. But the Barr family, that's my father's youngest sister's family, they would be there for Christmas tea.

Q: Was there ever any family arguments?

Mostly repartee, but not arguments.

Q: - and never a drop of alcohol?

No - oh no



Q: What did you have to eat on Christmas day? Chook, turkey?

Not turkey, but chooks. Everyone had chooks and so the chooks would almost always be on the menu for Christmas. Never anything else that I can remember except there would have been mutton or -

Q: Ham?

The Cravens used to have ham and stuff. Grandfather Craven was English and so he'd have a - my grandmother was English as well - and the first two of my mother's step sisters were born in England and came out here. So they had a proper English Christmas dinner. All except the holly. But even that - the Trevitt's Christmas dinner, we'd have holly that was grown on the place too, but there wouldn't be any berries because it's the wrong season.

Q: Did you get many Christmas presents. Elaborate, or some very small presents? Around your bed or around the Christmas tree?

At the end of the bed in a pillow slip that was hung on to the end of the bed. No Christmas tree. I'd never heard of a Christmas tree till later on.

Q: Would you like to tell me about your early memories of going to school?

I was just going to say at Christmas, our mother would wake us up always, they'd fill these pillow slips up with stuff the night before and then she'd always be there up before dawn or round about dawn to try and beat us and she'd go to the piano and play. 'Hark the Herald Angels sing' or something like that, I can't remember just what she used to play. Always the same one, I should remember. To wake us up on Christmas morning it was the best joy we had because you knew there should be presents, so we'd get up and find these presents and it was on.

Q: What a great thing to wake up to. Was she a good pianist?

Well she and my father were both musical, I think that was the big thing they had in common. He was a choir master and they both graduated in singing at the Conservatorium. His family were quite musical and he had a sister who taught piano and another sister who taught violin. And they were all graduates and so music was a big thing.

Q: You must remember sing-a-longs around the piano?

Oh yes we had sing-a-longs too on Saturday night. I daresay we did it on Sunday too I don't know. But Saturday I remember. But yes we were taught songs and we were responsible for knowing them [laughs].



Q: Who taught them to you, both parents?

My mother. She'd normally find time in the afternoons until the work load got too high but at the stage when I was growing up - I think when you go down the line with seven brothers and sisters the youngest ones missed out on that because the work load was too high for mum to find time to do that.

Q: So she actually lined you up and formally taught you to sing?

Well we were taught music too. I went down to my Aunty Leonie down at Shepherd St to have music lessons. She taught the piano and stuff. I learnt the piano with her and my sister Marg. did too.

Q: How long did you learn for?

I don't know but I was allowed to give it away when I went to High School, when I went to Eastwood and I did and my father used to enquire 'have you done any practice today?' 'No'. And he said, 'Well you'll be sorry. You'll be sorry when you're as old as me. You'll be sorry'.

Q: And are you?

Yeah, I suppose so, yeah.

Q: So did you enjoy learning? It sounds like you thought it was a chore.

It was a drill as much as anything. She'd sit with a ruler and thump your knuckles, and my father, if you didn't get things right you got a ruler on the knuckle.

Q: Your father would do that, would your aunty too?

Oh no, she wasn't as strict as him [Laughs]

Q: So she'd teach you and then you'd come home and you'd have to perform for him?

Well we'd usually do our practice after tea anyway.

Q: So if you hit a wrong note -

No - if we weren't doing it well enough well he'd come in and say, 'Do that again.'

Q: Did you do exams?

Theory exams you mean? Yes.



Q: So did he play the piano as well?

No, he didn't play the piano. He could play a little bit of piano, but he was singing, that was his thing.

Q: What were some of the songs you sang when you had family gatherings?

Holy smoke, I wouldn't know. My father and mother's songs. (Laughs)

Q: And the whole extended family, were they all musical?

There was a fair bit of musical amongst them, yeah.

Q: Would you like to tell me about those early memories of school now? Do you remember the first day you started? Did you mother walk you to school or did you go by yourself?

Oh I don't remember it all that well. I think we would have been driven up the first day. Driven in the horse and sulky. But it was my job to take my sister to school. I was older. I was six and she was five when we started school. I'd been held back a bit so I could start with her. And I was responsible for her so I trotted up the hill with her. Went through Palmyra, there's a track through Palmyra, Smith Street. up to Ryde school.

Q: Did you wave to relations as you walked past, say hullo to them, call in?

Oh yes.

Q: Were you and your sister in the same class, or did they skip you on?

No she was in the infants and I was in the first class when we started. I don't know why they did that to me, because I was anxious to get to school as you normally are I think at that age. You've heard a lot about school and you've learned your ABC. You've learned to count and you can't get to school quick enough. (Laughs). That soon changes.

Q: Do you remember the first teacher?

Yeah. Miss McPhail.

Q: Was she strict or kindly?

Oh no, she was very good. She used to play the piano for us to march in. She was pretty good. I started off liking school. Until I started having trepidations, if I didn't have my homework done.

**Q: What happened to you if you didn't have your homework done?**

Oh - I don't remember any trouble until I got to high school, then it wasn't a matter of caning but other punishments. I don't remember what they were.

Q: Why didn't you get your homework done? Too busy at home? Or you just didn't like it?

We had to take turns with the washing up and eventually I got - at high school I was allowed off that if I had plenty of high school homework. The dining room table was cleared, a tablecloth put on it and we were allowed to use that for homework. After we'd done the washing up. The kids that didn't have much homework, if any, well they did the washing up then and I was allowed to get straight on with my homework. But you often ran out of time you know, if you weren't very fast and you had too much, and the teachers didn't take this into consideration, then you had worries in the morning that you hadn't finished some of your homework. You thought, 'Gee whizz, where am I going to find time to do that?' And you'd do it in the train, on the way to school, on the bus or something. So that when I got to high school, the school was distant, Eastwood was a bus ride or a train ride, we used to have a pass and it cost us a penny I think to get the tram down to Ryde station. It was Ryde then. It's West Ryde now and then that would take us up to Eastwood and we'd walk to Eastwood school from there. And then when we got to third year we went to Petersham. We went to Strathfield. There wasn't a steam train then, it was an electric train and changed at Strathfield for Lewisham. So there was a bit of opportunity to catch up on homework.

Q: That must have been quite a long journey for a child, or a young adolescent. How long did that take you? To get to Petersham?

I think it was less than an hour and a half. Round about.

Q: When did you stop enjoying school? You gave me the impression you liked it to start with.

It got too hard.

Q: You couldn't cope with the academic side of school?

I couldn't cope with the whole job always. I had trouble when I got to high school eventually, I got a dilated heart and the doctor said it was athlete's heart, a thing you can get when you're growing and I played football and I had a bike and he said to cut them out, that he rather blamed that, that I'd been playing too strenuously and so that the heart had become enlarged, and so it was uncomfortable. And so I was taken away from school for two or three months. Seemed like forever. And I missed out on the Intermediate for that reason. When I got back to school they were just about to have the trial Inter examination and I failed at that, failed in mathematics **(tape break)**



Q: So you were talking about how you failed your Intermediate, you were going to repeat it the next year.

Yeah, but I found that I didn't fit in with a whole new year of kids all my fellows had gone on or left and there was practically none of them that had to repeat, so I was all by myself and I didn't like it at all. So I asked my father if I could leave and this was in the bad part of the depression and so kids were leaving if they heard about a job, and they were a bit more support for the family. Kids tended to get jobs because they were cheap unlike this depression. The wages were very small. I think I got seven and sixpence a week, my first week. But that didn't seem bad to me. It was a lot more money than I had before. I had to give my mother five bob board out of that.

Q: Could I just go back a minute to ask you, those two months when you were off school. What did you do? You were resting up at home were you?

Yeah. First I didn't rest enough so the doctor said, 'If you're going to make any progress you'll have to stay in bed'. Stay in bed and that was awful. I had to get myself a stack of books and just sit in bed, feeling sorry for myself.

Q: Bored witless, but you were a keen reader?

No, but I became a reader.

Q: What sort of things were you reading at that stage?

Mostly about aeroplanes. I'd been a member of a group at Petersham that made model aeroplanes and so we went to each other's houses and showed each other our models and flew them a bit till they got broken or something and I got quite an enthusiasm for this and of course I lost them when I was having to repeat.

Q: Did you keep in contact with any of those boys later?

Yes, I married the sister of one of them. He lives at Ryde and so we used to visit each other's houses. Not too much to my place but I'd go to his house quite a bit. And I'd go to the other chap's house. He lives in North Strathfield and he had the best model. He was an only child. He had the best model of the lot. He was the most spoilt. His mother used to give us beautiful afternoon teas of cake when we got home, cake and tea and biscuits and stuff. Wonderful. And his father used to take us out to the aerodrome sometimes. He did a couple of times. At Mascot.

Q: What was Mascot like then?

It was a big paddock, a great big paddock, at the edges of Botany Bay. You went out to Mascot by tram and then you walked to the aerodrome from there. I still kept in touch with them even after I left school and Gordon Phillips got a



job - that's the one whose sister I married, he got a job and he saved up and got a motorbike, out of his job. I eventually got round to wanting a motor bike too so by the time I had a job and saved up enough I bought his little 250 cc Matchless off him and I think that cost me ten pounds.

Q: Just going back to the model aeroplanes for a minute, do you think you were inspired by Kingsford Smith?

I was inspired by all of them. As a matter of fact we became very au fait with the history of aviation in this country and our involvement in the first war and generally speaking we were very knowledgeable about first war air combat, flying by and stuff like that. I knew all about Baron von Richtoffen. I'd read his book and I have a copy of his book. I still have it. The Red Baron.

Q: Could I ask you now about that decision to leave school and getting your first job. Were both parents supportive of your idea of leaving school, did they have doubts about it?

Yeah they had doubts about it. My father wanted me to think about a career, and what was I going to do for a career, and we decided I seemed to be good at drawing and stuff and I'd gone all right with the manual training planned work, that we had to do, drawing to scale of the things you were going to make. Technical drawing. So they thought of architecture and when it came to this stage my father fossicked around to see who he could find that knew something about architecture and got me a couple of interviews, but they weren't taking people in the usual way then, being the depression jobs were at a premium and so you paid the architect a premium. So my father was about to cough up with more money than he felt like spending on one child, and you get that back in wages. So the first year your parents have contributed.

Q: But you would have had to have the Leaving for that.

Yes, that's why he wanted me to go back to school. So when it came to leaving it was no push over to convince them that I should leave.

Q: What was your mother's attitude? Did she feel the same as your father about it? And of course being young you didn't realise.

Well you don't know. You think you know more than your parents. You think you know better than your parents.

Q: Tell me about this first job you got where you earned seven and six a week. Where was the job and how did you go about getting it?

That was working with my father. My father had left the gas works when I was quite young and he and a partner - formed a partnership and started out on their own and they got some premises out at Alexandria and they built bridges and all sorts of things, out of steel. Anything that involved forgings, they did so they started to specialise in forging. And they did all right, they got quite a business going but by the time I was at high school, my father's partner



wanted to leave. He became involved in a project to start another company that was going in for welding and so he wanted my father to buy him out, buy his share out of the firm, which my father did. And the next thing that came was the depression and he was landed in a situation where he had to pay the Ryde Mayor - he had to keep up the payments to him as well as make enough to keep us going at home. That was getting to be pretty hard. So when it came to the crunch - I had no experience - I didn't have any prospects of any jobs. We went to see some people about architecture, we went to see some people about window dressing. Window dressing because my father took me to a psychologist, an industrial psychologist, they called them then and his job was to read your ability tables and give an opinion on what you'd do best at. And so he put down a number of things, architecture and window dressing was another one. Although there would have been about five things he said I could do well in. Commercial art, but he didn't know how the market was for commercial art, but anyway we tried out the window dressing, we tried out the architecture and found a blank there and so my father got me to enter the tech. The tech weren't taking kids except apprentices. They had a rule that they weren't allowed to take kids - but the Government fortunately at that time waived that rule so that if you could prove that you were - had a likelihood of being employed in this occupation you could do the tech course that went with it. So I went and enrolled for art at East Sydney Tech and because you'd had no lettering and no means of making any money immediately - because you did about a four year course or something before you got good enough to get anyone to employ you, in commercial art. They said, 'You need lettering as well so you can do sign writing and you can get some money'. So I went to Sydney Tech for a signwriting course for the best part of two years.

Q: During the day at this time were you working for your father?

During this time I worked for my father. Didn't do any blacksmithing because that was heavy work and I had a 'heart' and they thought the heart condition was made worse by effort, by expending yourself in strenuous effort. So I was no good for a blacksmith, so I did the office work, writing out the invoices, writing up the journal and delivering the products. We used to have a man to deliver in a horse and cart but I liked delivering and I would do it by tram. I used to catch the tram and take six wedges to Anthony Hordern's and this sort of stuff.

Q: Take six wedges? These are the things your father made?

Yes, wedges for splitting logs. And all sorts of things like that. I can't remember what else he made but everything - all sorts of forgings, from little bits of locks to pieces of machines. Like creating razor blades and stuff like that.

Q: How did you feel when you had that first pay packet in your hand? Did you feel proud?

Oh yes, but my father gave it to me. He said, 'Now you've got to give five shillings to your mother, that's your board'.

**Q: And this is what people did in those days?**

Yeah, I used to get taken to work because he had a car by that time. We got a car, I can't remember what year it was, but it was a 1920 model Chev. When he bought it, it wasn't in working order, but it was redeemable so he took me in there a few successive Saturdays to help him clean it down and he cleaned all the oil and grease off it and I used to rub it down with a piece of waste in kerosene and get it all clean again. Then he got a mechanic to fix what was wrong, I don't remember what, it wasn't anything terribly serious. He paid ten pounds or twenty pounds or something like that for it. It took him to work then for a while, for some time, and in 1930 my grandfather Craven died and my mother inherited some of his estate and part of the money she inherited she bought a car with, and that was a current model Oldsmobile, and so by the time I'd left school he was driving to work in that and so I got free transport.

Q: Did your mother drive?

Not then, no she didn't ever. That was a very memorable old car. We used to go away for holidays sometimes and we went to Woy Woy and he had some church friends who had a cottage at Killcare and so we hired their cottage for two or three weeks for one Christmas and he was going to take us off in the car. So he had the car all tuned up and all ready and I forget how many kids we had then, whether we had all the family or not, but there was some babies anyway and we got this thing packed up to the gunnels, absolutely packed up with food and blankets and everything you could imagine and it was two wheel brakes, not four wheel brakes. No brakes on the front wheel. It wasn't self starting, you had to hand start it. And it just had a little radiator and so he anticipated as it was boiling. We had to take a water bag full of water for the car in case the car needed it. And you went up around Wiseman's Ferry, up through Castle Hill and McGraths Hill and then out to Wisemen's Ferry and then over the Hawkesbury river in the ferry and then Mangrove Mountain, Gosford and all the way round Erina, all round that. A long way it was then. And it took us all day and we were lucky to make it because when we got to Mangrove Mountain the car was boiling and we had to stop it and let it cool off for a while and then he filled up the radiator again and then - it was a very eventful trip - I don't remember all the things about it, but when we got to Erina, coming up towards Killcare, very hilly, and there was one little red hill, red gravel road, a steep hill and so he saw this and he picked up speed all he could and he got about two thirds of the way up the hill and it was cough coughing and wouldn't go any further. So he stopped and he said, 'Well you kids will have to get out and we'll have to have another go at it'. So he turned it round, skewered it round backwards and then went to the bottom of the hill again, turned round again, and he said, 'Now you kids, you walk and we'll drive - your mother and I'. They were the only ones in the car [Laughs]. My sister had to hold the baby, I can't remember which one was the baby then.

**Q: Did you have one to hold too?**

I don't know I had to carry something. Anyway to cut a long story short he finished up beating us by going back far enough and getting up all the speed he could get and with just himself in it and I think he finished up, and Mum joined us, and he got up to the top of the hill. Coming home again, we'd been there about three weeks for the holiday, he decided that was too much and so he'd ship it back by the shipping line that went down there then, the SS Gosford used to run from Gosford, used to come to Killcare and pick up things, so he put the car in the hold and tied it on. So we came down by ship. It was fantastic, except we were sick. It was fantastic because we had flying fish and all. [Laughs] It was quite a saga, going away for a holiday, that way.

Q: Did you have regular holidays or was that just one in particular you remember?

No that was just one before we run out of money. I think the next time was after he had the Oldsmobile, but things were pretty grim. But that would have been around 1931 or something like that. Things were pretty grim and it was terribly hard to make money. I worked for him a couple of times, but that was the end of the episode. I got another job then.

Q: Do you want to tell me about the next job?

There was a man named Lalchere. He was my Grandmother Trevitt's friend, they were all workers in the Methodist church and when the depression came, Mr Lalchere had the task of trying to find jobs for the boys who were leaving school and couldn't find a job, and he was very good at that and so my mother sent me in to see him.

Q: He'd find jobs for Methodist boys?

He was doing that as a spare time activity, but he was a solicitor's clerk at the family solicitors. He got an interview for me with Bill Sparks who was the manager of the display department at Woolworth's. The interview was fairly successful. He was a Methodist from Eastwood, and so the Methodists looked after their own, to some extent. He introduced me to his superior and recommended that I be given the job that was going in the display department and so I got the job on trial and I held that till the War.

Q: And was this in Woolworth's in town?

Yeah, the Woolworth's in Oxford Street. I worked in the display department and they provided all the display material and the tickets and the show cards for the various things, and the posters for the bargains and stuff like that. The display department produced those. They had a silkscreen processing plant. And we did that.

**Q: So you used your skills from East Sydney Tech. in sign writing?**

No, when I started sign writing you couldn't sell what you did at all you were just learning about lettering and all about it and the trade calculations that went in that, and by the time you got to your second year you did some finished work. And so I started looking out for jobs then and I got quite a few odd jobs. If people were painting out a new building, or a building that had just been renovated, up railway square I remember, and I got the job of painting all the fire exit signs and all that sort of stuff. All the lettering work that the painters couldn't do themselves. I got another job, people were doing an electrical warehouse in Bourke St, got all the lettering to do for that. I got a window to do in one of the arcades, and jobs like that, that would last about a week, but that was about all there was in it. And then I got a job in a place called Tube Electric signs. They advertised in the Herald for a junior sign writer, and I thought, 'That's me' so I went for an interview and did that for a while.

I got a job from the YMCA - before Mr Lalchere got me this job at Woolworth's - he sent me to the YMCA, they had a program on physical culture for an hour in the morning, you'd have to be there at 8.30. In town. You had a speaker, and then prayers, and then they'd have a learning something, depending on what your background was. And they'd have a roll call for people for jobs and they had a lot of jobs that were brought to them because people reckoned if the YMCA recommended you, they thought you were ok. The YMCA had very nice premises and it was very agreeable. I was in Pitt Street just near Bathurst Street, just near the Bathurst Street corner. I got a job from then and that was good too. I worked for a manufacturing company.

Q: So you felt the extended family were a bit disappointed that you hadn't become an architect.

I don't know, but I felt - I remember being conscious of the lower grading.

Q: Do you think your parents felt this too?

No doubt they did but they didn't make it apparent to me.

**Q: We've been talking about the depression, quite a number of things. Could you give me some idea of what impact it had here in the Ryde area? What were the sorts of things you saw that reminded you there was an economic crises?
(tape break)****Q: You were telling me about the dole queues.**

I didn't see that much of it because I was employed, I was actually able to get jobs. And I was rather pleased about it because I'd been dejected in the time I'd spent at home doing nothing, and I thought, with a bad heart I thought I'll



never reach old age, and you know I was really down in the dumps and here I was bouncing back and so I was rather pleased about that.

Q: Could we go back to talking about the depression. You were talking about seeing dole queues in Ryde. Would you see people you knew personally, or perhaps people from your extended family, who were affected by this?

Very few people that I knew, that were. But there sure were, so that - Dad gave a job to the members of his choir who were out of work, everyone of them were, one after the other. When he could do it, he'd take them out there and pay them, and he got some work - he went back and did some work, he'd given away before, but he soon got enough work to keep him going. One chap was a builder and he couldn't get any work and he worked for Dad for sometime. My mother for a long time had someone to come and help her with the washing, and so she got other women to come and help her. She'd bought Palmyra after my grandfather died and my aunts moved out. My mother bought Palmyra off the Estate. Because we had a family of seven kids and we wanted a bigger house, we needed a bigger house. And so we moved down there, and in the moving and subsequent cleaning up and stuff like that she employed some of the women that she knew from the church to help her. Some of the chaps who helped Dad, they had the dole until then, I'm not quite sure what the rules were, but anyway they had got the dole, which wasn't much. You got a vegetable ticket and a meat ticket.

Q: Were any of the family out of work at all - the extended family?

Uncle Roy was out of work so he started a butter and cheese run around here. Because he knew Ryde and he knew the people in Ryde, and he soon got a few customers and that went on to enough customers and he gave me a job, when I didn't have a job. And that was driving. I used to drive so he could do the run uninterrupted. At least that's what he said. I think it was just to get me a job. And he knew the run. Half of which was in Bellevue Hill and half of which was at Ryde. He had two runs as it were, so on different days he did different districts.

Q: And was he successful in that?

Yes.

Q: Did you ever hear or see anyone get evicted from houses during the depression? Around the Ryde area?

No I didn't see any.

Q: Did you hear of it at all?

Oh yeah, but I didn't hear of anything direct.



Q: Do you remember people camped - but you never saw it?

No I only read about it.

Q: And people getting relief work, were you conscious of that at the time? That later on in the depression the Government was creating relief work for the unemployed? Roads etc.

No.

Q: And other than - I suppose there was a certain anxiety during the depression about jobs. Do you feel it had an impact on your family's life style? Did you cut back on certain things in the household budget?

Oh yes, we cut right down. My father - I remember this - my father had a budget of one pound a week, so if he had to pay ex-partner and he had to pay his rent and stuff, his running expenses for the overheads for the factory, and he reckoned a pound a week was as much as could take out of the business, and so we used to keep a family of seven kids going on a pound a week. He kept the garden going like crazy. He had the fence extended so we had two hundred feet deep by fifty feet wide and we had all that backyard then. He grew asparagus and stuff like that so he had a variety of stuff, not just potatoes and pumpkins and cauliflowers and cabbages.

Q: Did you help in the veggie garden?

No. Oh yes - I'd help Uncle Roy steering a horse, ploughing. He ploughed all this land up and so he liked someone to steer the horse to keep him in the furrow. Between the chooks and the vegetables that he grew and the wheat that he bought we managed to eke out a living on a budget of one pound a week, which is pretty phenomenal if you ask me. For two adults and seven kids. So he used to take me on the tram - this was before he had a car to go in, he'd take me in on the tram to the railway and he'd go down to Sutton Forest meat shop which was just near Orchards you know, the Orchards building in the Railway. Near Quay Street. They used to advertise over the radio. They used to specialise in cheap cuts and he used to buy half a sheep and the butcher used to cut it up in big lumps and wrap it up, and I would bring it home in the tram. That was about the only thing he bought - meat, the rest he used to get out of the garden, and the chooks.

Q: If you bought half a sheep, how did you keep it refrigerated without fridges or freezers?

We kept it in the meat safe, and they used to cook up a fair bit straight away. That was my mother's problem.



Q: You'd have a lot of cold meat then.

We used to have an ice chest, but we didn't have the ice chest going a lot of the time, cause it cost money too. A shilling a block to buy the ice. It would last two or three days.

Q: In the larger house did you mother have domestic help there? It must have been a very big house to clean? Did she get anyone to help her?

Yes that's when she had some women that she'd met at the church come and help her with the work.

Q: Now Mr Trevitt you are very anxious to tell me about 'back to Ryde week'. Would you like to tell me about that now?

That was in 1926 being the hundred year since St Anne's was founded. It was actually built and the first service was held in 1927. It was built in 1826. So 1926 was the anniversary, the centenary and it was to be celebrated and a committee was formed and they had a number of things organised to celebrate it. There is a 'Back to Ryde' book here. He had the job of writing that and there were lots of other celebrations including one for the school kids and so - I was in Ryde school and we were given a free lunch and marched over to the park and we had sport all day, that is running races and wheel barrow races [Laughs] and all sorts of things like that. That was the thing I remember most about it.

Q: Must have been a great day for you.

Oh it was, it was fantastic.

Q: Did your parents come and watch you in the sports?

Yes my mother did. I think some of her sisters did too. But anyway there was a lot more than that. There were fetes and balls and dinners that the adults knew about that were not a lot of interest to me.

Q: And do you remember your parents perhaps going to a ball? With your father in a dinner suit and your mother in an evening dress? Did they do that at all?

No, oh no, Methodists didn't dance. (Laughs)

Q: I had forgotten - that's right. So they would have missed out on that sort of thing. Do you remember them being disapproving of people who danced?

In a mild way. In a mild way, we were told - we felt restricted by some of these rules and like not being able to play ludo on Sunday and stuff like that, we thought that was a bit over the top.



Q: But you could sing on Sunday couldn't you, you could sing round the piano on Sunday? It sounds like a very close knit community the Methodist community in Ryde.

They certainly all knew each other.

Q: And looked after each other by the sound of things.

Yes I hope so. Well they did.

Q: In your family circle did people mix with other religions? Like for example with Catholic friends, with Anglican friends, or did they stick pretty well with the Methodists.

Well I'm pleased to say we've made a lot of progress since then, but gee whizz it was awful then. It was - being a Catholic was like being a heathen to my family, at first. At least that was the impression I had. My grandma had come from the Evangelical Methodist Church in England and she had no time for Catholics at all. But the attitude to St Anne's was quite different, she was Chapel and she thought - well the liaison between St Anne's and the Ryde Methodist was pretty good really. So they were all members of Ryde Choral Society for instance, the St Anne's singers as well as the Methodist singers. When I was a teenager we had finished the Sunday School syllabus and we had what was called the Bible class and that was superintended by a man named James who was very well up in things like Egyptology, archaeology and mathematics and things like that, and so he was able to keep we boys interested, even though we were rebellious teenagers then, as teenagers always are. He kept a peripheral pressure on the subjects that were on the edge of the religious part of the study. The religious was downgraded - religion which had been given priority in the Sunday School syllabus was now put mostly to one side and we had much more interesting things to study. So much so that it grabbed us. It certainly did me. But also he was known beyond the Methodist fold and St Anne's boys came over - a lot of families sent their boys over to Mr James. That was very good for me, personally, my personal development, like most people when they get to a certain age have doubts whether God really exists and stuff like that. Well I did that and this gave me a lot of reason to understand rather than doubt my beliefs at that time. It was good.

Q: You were talking before about being a rebellious teenager. At this stage of your life were you rebellious and other friends of yours, or were you too caught up in having a job and the responsibilities of going into adult hood? Did you feel you went through rebellious years, through those really carefree years?

I'm sorry to say I was rebellious too, like most kids when they get to that age. Puberty blues and stuff like that.**(inaudible words due to train noise)** My father in Palmyra had a lot of ground there that he could turn into vegetable garden. So he ploughed a good bit of that up and made it into vegetables and



stuff and he gave me the job of sign writing labels for them. And I did this, but unwillingly. I wasn't getting paid for it, and I'd been out earning money getting jobs, so I thought I was due to be paid for this. Oh no - you did that for the family. Just like you do things for the church you don't expect to be paid for that either. Anyway, as I said, I'd bought this motorbike from Gordon Phillips who had had it for maybe a year to go to work on. And so he got a better bike and he sold this one to me. That gave me more mobility and I was less subject to the whims of my parents, like where I was supposed to be and not going out or anything like that. I had freedom that they hadn't conceded and I was expecting.

Q: Were you about 17 at this stage?

Yes, sixteen or seventeen. One Anzac day we went to the dawn service and coming back the Phillips's car broke down and I walked home. It wasn't all that far, just down the bottom of this hill. I walked home and said could I borrow our car to take them home in. You know I just thought it was a good thing to do, but my father wouldn't go along with that at all. I'd just got a licence, just got a licence and he didn't think I could cope with that and I thought I could cope perfectly well, but anyway, he let me have it begrudgingly. Shortly after that, after I had the motor bike we had an argument and he hit me and I shaped up to him to hit back and I thought better of it, but he damaged my nose and so that caused a wholesale family row and I said, 'I'm not going with you anymore' and I went and got my pyjamas and stuff and went. And he couldn't really stop me. But it was a terrible family blue. I went across to my aunt's who had built a house in the Palmyra grounds on Lane Cove Road only a hundred yards away, and I stopped off in there to tell them what had happened and they persuaded me to stay there overnight, whatever I was going to do. They said, 'Well what are you going to do?' And I said, 'I'll go and board with my mate who is living at Kings Cross'.

He was a New Zealander, who lived at Kings Cross. [Laughs]. They didn't want me to do that. They persuaded me to stop there overnight and the next day they persuaded me to stay. I had this job at Woolworth's at that time and so I was very pleased to stay. But it caused a big family upset.

Q: What was the argument about?

It was about getting permission from him.

Q: He wasn't usually a violent man I gather.

No. We had a confrontation. When I came home on the little motor bike and put it away he said, 'You went out without asking my permission or anything, where have you been?' I didn't want to be fronted up like that and so I resisted.

Q: What role did your mother play?

She was in tears.



Q: Do you think she was on your side a bit, or torn between the two of you?

Oh she was torn between the two of us. I'm sure.

Q: Kings Cross would have been a wild place in those days.

I didn't know much about it, except that I'd been at tech at East Sydney, which is Darlinghurst which isn't far away, which I'd been told was alive with the razor gang and people like that, so 'Watch your step all the way' you know, and I did.

Q: Did you ever see any razor gangs?

No, never saw anything to really worry about.

Q: How long did you stay away for?

Till I went into the Army.

Q: That was a few years then.

They moved up to the mountains then. They sold that house and moved up the mountains. Oh yes it was a few years. But it was a good arrangement.

Q: Did you go back home now and again?

Well my mother owned Palmyra and she sold Palmyra and bought a place at Croydon and they moved over there. I used to go and see them sometimes. Not very often.

Q: Did you make up with your father, or was there always a coolness after that?

Oh gradually it cooled down, yeah. So that by the time I went away I noticed - I've been going through some old letters there - and one I'd written to my father I was training to be a pilot and I had a forced landing, and so I wrote and told him all about it. So I must have been on good terms with him then.

Q: And you got on all right living at your aunt's? Did she give you a certain degree of independence?

Oh yes - no she'd always been supportive of us anyway. This particular aunt, which is the youngest one next to my mother. Like she had three step sisters who were older and then one sister who was more or less the same age as my mother. And she had a good attitude to me and she supported me right through that very well.



Q: So you had the comfort of a family home, but more independence? You had it made.

Yes I did. I didn't really appreciate - well I did appreciate how much, but not as much as I do looking back now, I can see that it was really very good indeed.

Q: So in this period of your life what did a young Methodist man about town do for entertainment? You didn't go to the pub I assume. You didn't go to dances, you wouldn't have been allowed to play cards.

Oh by that time I got a motor bike, that was part of the revolt really. Well the Phillips's were - you remember Gordon Phillips was my friend at Eastwood School, we used to get on the tram to go down to the station together. So we were fairly thick you know. And he had a sister who I discovered you know, when she became a teenager - [laughs]. We had motor bikes and he and some of the other motor cyclists took the girls on the pillion. Well the little bike that I had wouldn't take a pillion so I couldn't take anyone. So as soon as I got a bike a bit bigger I could. So I took his sister. And we were married eventually. But she died in 1959, she got an aneurism and passed out, just like that.

Q: You were saying how you had the block of land at Epping and when you came home from the war you decided to settle there.

Yes, so we got an architect and he drew up a sketch plan and when we got to that stage and came to agreeing on the details of it and of course talking about the cost of it and stuff like that. You've got to remember that after the years we'd been at war there were stringent regulations about - you couldn't get building materials and you had to wait in the queue for all sorts of things, everything that went into building a house there was a queue for, and so there was a lot more haggling about details than there might have been in normal times. But anyway we wondered whether this was the wisest thing to do and hummed and ah'd and in the meantime Palmyra suddenly came on the market. Palmyra had been let. My parents went to Croydon and bought his place at Croydon, it had been let and then we couldn't get the tenants out, they were protected, and you couldn't charge them any more rent and things were going up. And so all of a sudden we went down there to collect the rent, there was no one there. We pushed the door and it opened (Laughs) and found, sure enough the people had done a bolt.

Q: Left a lot of back rent unpaid?

No not a lot. But they didn't give any warning they were going, but it must have been paid a fortnight before, my father collected the rent every fortnight. Anyway there was no one there so we thought we'll grab this and so we took sleeping bags or the equivalent down there for the night and I slept there the night and we - no one turned up, didn't hear anything from anyone so we camped on it and eventually rented it from my mother and then I bought it from my mother. So that ditched the Epping plan. We settled at Palmyra



instead. Gwen didn't actually like it terribly much. It was a big house. A big house and it was surrounded by dirt, no concrete paths much. My grandfather had picked an area near the new kitchen and that part of the house and there was a flagstone track down to the laundry which was a walk away, three sheds away. He had a buggy shed and stuff like that. When they cut up the Estate they'd taken Myra Avenue past the house into a big U back onto the Lane Cove Rd, but this was only a blue metal road and it was more metal than blue. It was really mud, whenever it rained, and the gutters cut but no paving in them, no paving at all. So to get from the house from the street to the house you were never able to come in without your feet covered with clay. Clay sort of mud. Gwen didn't like this at all. So we put up with it for a few years. The kids loved it. Our first girl, she loved it, because she had mates and stuff like that and they used to go up and get lost in the long grass behind Palmyra and the big house she could easily get lost in all the rooms [laughs]. But, my wife didn't like it and so we hunted for a new house in the Ryde Council Housing scheme which was better. Better quality houses, very nice and desirable in every way. To cut a long story short, we missed out on the one we bid for, we bid for it, paid the deposit and waited for the transfer. We waited forever. The couple that found that this was leverage to - for the woman who walked out on the husband to get some more money out of him. [Laughs] So we missed out.

We had to vacate Palmyra which we'd sold in the meantime and we couldn't get possession of the house we'd paid the deposit on.

Q: You'd paid the deposit on the house in the Ryde housing scheme, but the people that were there, the lady wouldn't leave because the marriage was breaking up.

The marriage had broken up and she wanted more in the settlement from the husband, and so she wasn't going to sign this release because they had joint ownership. She wasn't going to sign it until he agreed to give her more.

Q: Just going back to selling Palmyra. How did you feel about that? This house that had so many connections?

Well I didn't like it. I didn't like it, but then I had a wife who was unhappy you know. I couldn't get away from that.

Q: Did people in the extended family resent you selling it? Did they feel you should have kept it in the family?

If they did, they didn't say so.

Q: Just mentioning the Ryde Housing Scheme. Did you feel that this was a progressive idea at the time, this Housing Scheme?

Oh yes. And it was. See they had mass production. Mass buying available to them so they could get all the baths and shower fittings and door knobs that were hard to get, they could get them and so they were building houses - like a house on fire - very successfully. And they were very good quality houses



and the building was supervised by architects. All the designs were different in the street. They weren't like housing commission houses where you had three designs or anything like that. They were good quality houses and very desirable. So we thought that house was worth hanging out for. It suited us so much in every way. Everything about it was right.

Q: But you missed out on it?

Yep, couldn't get it. Couldn't get them to release it. In the meantime we heard about a house in St Margaret's cow paddock, was going to be sold, so we had a friend who was one of the Estate Agents in that team that had got hold of it, and so put a deposit on this block of land here. And eventually went through the trauma of building. At the end of the restricted time when all the things were regulated and you had to build - twelve and a half squares I think was the limit. Twelve and a half, or two and a half. Anyway it was a pretty smallish house, so you could only build two bedrooms and barely big enough.

Q: At this stage are you talking about the early 1950s?

Yes. And while we were building it the regulations were let up on this place and had we known before we started we could have made better use of the space. But as it is we just started with this house back to the room alongside where you came in. And their small rooms. Like this is the smallest room. But had we waited a little longer we didn't know, if we had waited a little longer we could have built it bigger and that would have made a lot of difference to it. The bathroom is tightly packed against this room.

Q: Could I come back to the Ryde Housing Scheme for a moment. I know you didn't get a house through it, but do you feel it was catering for people a bit better off than people who normally got Housing Commission houses? Like someone who got a Housing Commission house, would a house in the Ryde Housing Scheme have been out of their reach? Like it was more for people a bit better off.

A bit better off, yeah I think so. Better quality house. They were all small yards, and we didn't like that about it really. We hadn't got tuned in to the idea of a small yard. I thought this was a acceptable size yard, but the one next door has just got the fence ten feet away from the house.

Q: So you moved in, no chooks, no veggie garden?

That's right we didn't have any chooks or veggie garden. This is too big for me now. I'm eighty and it's more than I can do to keep it all in order. So I've learned.



Q: I was wondering about the social changes. You were mentioning that you had moneyed families, you had working families, you had more middle-class families, were you aware of class distinction as a child and a young person, did these moneyed families seem like a different class to you, or did they just all go to Ryde Public School with you and muck in with everybody else?

Well with the advantage of hindsight I now know that our conception of class wasn't half as harsh as the English concept of class. There was distinctions, but not too heavy handed. Certainly we didn't take our cap off - doff our cap to other people who might have been better off than we were. As I said I used to go to school in bare feet. I once got caught. It was my friend's birthday and his friend had given him a birthday party so I had my aunt waiting at the school gates when I came out of school and said, 'You're not to come home. You're to go to Robert - - - - birthday party.' I didn't have anything but my school clothes on and no shoes, but anyway I went like that. [Laughs] But they were the same class as us - workers.

Q: But you went without shoes I presume because you liked the freedom of it, not because your family couldn't afford shoes.

No we had shoes - but no - we couldn't afford them too often. So we always had best shoes coming on to second best shoes and maybe pass them on to my brother. But I always had best shoes. Sundays - always had shoes or boots or whatever. At school a lot of kids went in bare feet. There wasn't any social thing about that. Kids like to run, and besides, if it's raining or wet it's better to be in bare feet than it is in wet shoes. It's nice to come home and splash through the creeks and splash through the drains with your feet bare.

Q: On the list of things to talk about that we haven't covered -

I was saying about clothes. When I had the row with my father and I had to pick up my clothes and run off and I found a new lifestyle living with my aunty. I used to mow the lawn and pay them board.

Q: The same amount of board you paid your mother?

Might have been more, might have been less, but anyway I had a good job then and it carried increases in pay from time to time. So that I had a much more secure attitude. But anyway as part of the thing of working at Woolworth's and living at home with the aunt's I used to go shopping and look in the windows and see all the nice shirts and beautiful shoes and stuff like that and so I got to buy my own things. And that was a freedom I hadn't experienced before when I was at home with the family. My aunty Anne, the aunt that I lived with had contributed a lot of the clothes before, she was - my mother was a milliner, my aunt was a seamstress. She was the sewer of the family and she used to make our shirts and pants and stuff like that and then she'd cut them down to suit the next one. She used to contribute a whole lot to my mother's lifestyle because without Aunty Anne's contribution with sewing



machines there wouldn't have been so much to go around. Anyway this was a new freedom that I found and I thought it was nice to be able to choose your own clothes and buy what you liked and there were no consequences if they didn't turn out to be good. Not that my aunt didn't keep a pretty close eye on what I bought anyway. But she certainly didn't interfere with it, overtly.

Q: And do you remember the first outfit you bought?

No I don't. It was a gradual replacing of ties and shirts and socks and stuff.

Q: So she was there gently advising you, but not poking her nose in too much. And was she an unmarried woman?

Yeah. A lot of the women her age had lost out after the first war when the casualties were phenomenally big amongst men. There were a lot of spinsters about. She was one of them. The two older sisters were spinsters too.

Q: And she lived in the house with another sister. There were two of them, did you say?

One of my aunts died. Almost within a week of her mother. She died. Or was it her father? Anyway she died so that left two, at Jalambie, the new house that they built, with my aunt, they were step aunts to me, and the one whose charge I was directly was my mother's sister.

Q: And did she work outside the home? You said she was a seamstress.

No

Q: Did she take work in to do or did she have enough income -

She had enough income. While she was at home her father supported her. And when he died she inherited a good deal of his Estate.

Q: So she was an independent woman?

Yep.

Q: Do you think she regretted not marrying, or did she like her life as it was?

Most likely, most likely, but she didn't say anything to me. But the older one of the sisters had lots of offers. There was a lot of woman around who were my aunts from my father's side. One of them was a spinster and quite a lot of spinster ladies went to church. You know it really was an awful war of attrition. Stupid, absolutely stupid way of settling arguments.

END OF INTERVIEW