

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES

COURSE: Open Foundation.

SUBJECT: Australian History.

CLASS: Wednesday evening.

TUTOR: Ms. Margaret Henry.

TOPIC: Regional History - The Masonite Factory,
Raymond Terrace.

DATE: Wednesday, 7th September, 1988.

STUDENT: Dorothy Harrison.

Availability of timberlands, water supply, coal and electricity were the main reasons Raymond Terrace was chosen as the site for the first Masonite factory in Australia. While this factory became well known in the district, it only directly touched the lives of a few, especially being almost insignificant in comparison to the numbers employed by B.H.P., or even Courtaulds. The Masonite factory has, however, continued to employ a steady number of people, whereas Courtaulds is no longer operating at Tomago, and B.H.P.'s employment figures have decreased.

Situated twenty-seven kilometres from Newcastle, Raymond Terrace was discovered on the 29th June, 1801, by Lieutenant-Colonel William Paterson and named Green Hill. Although there has been some debate as to when and how the name was changed, it is generally accepted to have been prior to 1812, and named after a Lieutenant Raymond. The first land grants were made in 1851, with the first sale of land 9.8.1838.⁽¹⁾ The land was heavily timbered and was to become the centre of a large dairy industry, with the first cheese and butter factory built in 1903.⁽²⁾

Although a kind of fibreboard had been used in some buildings as early as 600 A.D., there were no further developments until 1906 when the first pulp board was marketed. Called "wall board", this product replaced traditional materials such as lath, plaster, wood panelling and metal ceilings. It was not until 1924 that the next significant step took place.⁽³⁾ After his retirement from the Edison Laboratories in America, William Mason began experimenting with sawmill waste in his home town of Laurel, Mississippi. Using what is now known as the 'Mason Gun', William Mason found a way of breaking down wood into fibres. Mason's "gun" allowed the manufacture of a "dense, flat, sheet board product, which was held together by natural resins in the wood fibres

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- (1) Raymond Terrace 150th Anniversary Celebrations, Pamphlet, Newcastle Region Public Library, Local History Section. p.7
- (2) 'How Does an Industrial City Begin - And Why? Raymond Terrace Industries-Hardboards Australia, Ltd. Newcastle Region ... p.22
- (3) 'Report to Employees, 1983', Hardboards Australia Ltd. C.S.R. Head Office, Sydney. p.6.

and was therefore of reasonably low cost".⁽⁴⁾ With family and friends, William Mason formed a company which continued to grow until, in 1948, it was comparable in size to B.H.P.⁽⁵⁾

In 1936, two years after B.H.P. was working to full capacity in Newcastle,⁽⁶⁾ the Masonite Corporation (Aust) Limited, formed in 1937 by Masonite U.S.A., which at that time owned 29% of the Australian company, purchased land at Raymond Terrace on the corner of Williamtown Road and Pacific Highway. The Raymond Terrace Examiner reported, 17.2.38 that the clearing of the land had begun the previous Monday, with woodcutters expected to begin operation within weeks, and the factory within six to seven months. This expectation was not realised in that production did not start until 1939, the year Labor Prime Minister Curtin took office, equally determined to win the war and "that the depression and all the suffering it entailed to the working classes should not return".⁽⁷⁾

Masonite gained ready acceptance in Australia, with expansion encouraged by the increased demand brought about during World War II. With full commercial production reached at the Raymond Terrace factory in January 1939, buildings and machinery had doubled by 1947. Forseeing this post-war demand, the then Manager of the factory, Mr Harry Morgan, visited the American Industry in 1944-45 so that when hostilities ceased, the company was sufficiently cognisant ^{OF} ~~with~~ the latest developments in the industry to expand quickly. This expansion was able to take advantage of the "spectacular suburban growth based on immigration" from 1945 onwards.⁽⁸⁾

The Masonite Corporation was welcomed by the local community as providing employment for many residents⁽⁹⁾ and in turn, the Corporation saw itself as being instrumental in the population growth of the area.

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- (4) 'Report to Employees, 1983', Hardboards Australia, Ltd. C.S.R. Head Office, Sydney. p.6
- (5) Harry W. Morgan, 'Masonite - A Romance of Industry', Timber Journal, September and November 1948. p. 2.
- (6) J.C. Docherty, Newcastle, The Making of an Australian City, Sydney, 1983 p. 74
- (7) Manning Clark, A Short History of Australia, 3rd. Ed. New York, 1987 p.240
- (8) J.C. Docherty, Newcastle, The Making ... p. XV
- (9) Raymond Terrace 150th Anniversary ... p.25

In 1933, the township and district had a population of 918, which had increased to 1459 by 1947. By 1959, the Corporation employed over 500 people at the factory and a further 100 in timber cutting and hauling within a radius of sixty miles. They also provided housing for people working at the plant and constructed social amenities for its employees, including gymnasium, social hall, picture theatre, tennis court, play centre, as well as football and cricket ground, and swimming pool.⁽¹⁰⁾ The Swimming pool was opened 9.3.51,⁽¹¹⁾ and was used to give swimming lessons to children from the area until the town built its own pool.

From its success in Raymond Terrace, the Masonite Corporation commenced operation of a dry-process plant at Eildon in Victoria. Meanwhile, C.S.R. had built a hardboard plant at Pymont in 1948, with expansion in 1952. A year earlier, Bernie Board & Timber, Pty Ltd, commenced operation of a hardboard plant at Bernie in Tasmania, and in 1956, built an additional plant at Ipswich, Queensland. Due to difficulties encountered by the Corporation with the Eildon project, the Masonite activities were merged with C.S.R. in 1959. The Bacchus March mill commenced two years later, with the market for hardboard, in Australia, reaching approximately 255 million square feet per annum by 1963, with a per capita consumption the fifth highest in the world. With the merger in 1959, the hardboards industry was separated into two groups and were manufacturing under the brand names of 'Bernie Board' (Australian Pulp & Paper Manufactures) and 'Masonite' and 'Timbrock' (C.S.R.). These two companies combined their hardboard manufacturing resources in 1967 and traded as Hardboards Australia Limited. With the decline in exports, the Bernie mill was closed in 1978 and operations cut back at Raymond Terrace.⁽¹²⁾ While there was an improvement in the industry in the early 1980s, by the end of 1982 a further seventeen people were stood down at

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(10) 'How Does an Industrial ... p. 23

(11) Newcastle Morning Herald, 9 March 1951. Newcastle Region Public Library.

(12) 'Report to Employees, 1983'... p. 6-7

the Raymond Terrace factory and shift operations cut to a four-and-a-half day week. (13)

Newcastle's history is one of high unemployment and subsequent social problems. It is therefore logical to conclude that any industry would not only be welcomed, but also worth a mention as part of Newcastle's history. This is not the case in J.C. Docherty's history of the city, in that the Masonite factory is not mentioned. The factory is only three kilometres further west from Newcastle than the site left vacant by Courtaulds (Aust) in 1975, twenty-six years after commencing operation. (14) The Masonite factory continues to employ approximately one hundred and ninety people, and during its peak period over five hundred people. Since 1986, the factory has traded as C.S.R. Timber Products.

(13) Newcastle Morning Herald, 10 December 1982 ...

(14) J.C. Docherty, Newcastle, The Making of ... p. 44

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'How Does an Industrial Centre Begin - And Why?' Newcastle Region Public Library, Local History Section.
'Raymond Terrace - Industries - Hardboard Aust. Ltd.'

Newcastle Morning Herald. Newcastle Region Public Library, Local History Section. Microfilm - 1939-1952, plus photocopied articles - 'Raymond Terrace ...'

SUMMARY OF TAPE - INTERVIEW WITH MR. DAVID BOWTELL.

David Bowtell was born in Newcastle 30.4.30. His parents had moved to Newcastle from Sydney earlier that year so his father could take up a position as head machinist with the Newcastle Morning Herald, where he remained until his retirement in 1965. His mother was a full-time housewife and mother, having worked as a nurse in Sydney before her marriage. David is the youngest of two boys. He and his brother Kevin attended Newcastle Tech. High and Kevin went on to become an A Grade journalist with the Newcastle Morning Herald from 1946-1956.

David spent his early years in the suburb of Merewether, where he recalls the pit paddocks near Hillcrest Hospital, the pit ponies, and the 'coffee pot' which travelled from the Junction to Glenrock Lagoon. He remembers the tram lines and their termination points.

From Frederick Street, Merewether, the family moved to Cocks Hill, then to Watkins Street, Merewether, Oxford Street, New Lambton, and finally purchased their own home in November 1940. Situated in Harriet Street, Waratah, this house was purchased by David's daughter when his parents died.

Unlike his brother, David had no set career plans. After five years at High School, David was unable to start an apprenticeship in a trade because of his age and eventually obtained a position with the Bank of N.S.W., earning £8/10/- a fortnight, working a five day week, plus Saturday mornings. He was later employed as a clerk with the N.S.W Government Railways where he earned £14/10/- a fortnight for a five day week, plus an extra weeks annual leave to what the Bank offered, and free railway passes. To gain promotion within the Railways, workers had to be prepared to move around the State. Because of David's personal and sporting commitments, he was not prepared to do this.

Following a suggestion from his brother, David applied for a position as clerk with the Masonite factory. The interview was conducted at the stadium opposite the Park Royal. Commencing as a

clerk in 1951, David later became Assistant Purchasing Officer and, when Mr. Gordon Anderson resigned to accept the Office of Lord Mayor of Newcastle, he became the Purchasing Officer. He was in the first group to successfully complete the Purchasing Supply Management Certificate Course at Newcastle Technical College.

Following *their* marriage in 1952, the couple lived in one of eight Company houses from 1953-1956. They then bought a house in Charlestown where they lived until 1987, when they purchased their current modern home. Mrs Bowtell comes from a family of school teachers and, except for several years when their two children were young, she continued teaching until she retired several years ago.

David explains how Masonite is produced, gives a history of the factory's management changes, the amenities made available for employees, his world travels and plans for the future, as well as information regarding the origins of his family.

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TAPE PRE-SET AT \* PAGE 11A (3rd last line)



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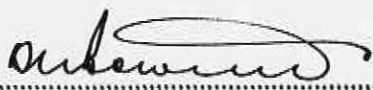
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1988

I, DAVID NICKSON BOWTELL give my  
permission to DOROTHY HARRISON.

to use this interview, or part of this interview, for  
research, publication and/or broadcasting (delete one of  
these if required) and for copies to be lodged in  
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.....  
for the use of other bona fide researchers.

Signed 

Date 18/7/88

Interviewer D Harrison

SIDE A:

The following interview was conducted by Dorothy Harrison with Mr David Bowtell at his home in Warrabrook, a new housing estate in the suburb of Mayfield, Newcastle, on Monday the 18th of July, 1988. Mr Bowtell has been working at the Masonite factory Raymond Terrace since 1951.

David, I thought we might begin by you giving me your full name.

David Nickson Bowtell, that's n,i,c,k,s,o,n, and that in itself, I was born in Newcastle Hospital ... and the Nickson comes from the Dr Nickson, my mother named me, the second name, Nickson after the Nickson Wing at Newcastle Hospital.

Right, so did your mother know Dr Nickson or ...

Oh I just forget the background to that but ...

Right, I see.

that's how I come to get Nickson anyway.

I see, some special significance, yes.

Yes.

Where were your parents living at the time you were born?

We were living in Merewether ...

Right.

Up in Mitchell Street, Merewether and dad had just, my father, had just been transferred from Sydney, in the Evening News in Sydney ...

Right.

up to the Newcastle Morning Herald in Newcastle

Oh, Really?

Now, dad's father, prior to he moving up here to Newcastle,

dad's father was the head machinist on the Evening News in Sydney and dad was sent, came up here in 1930 as the head machinist on the Evening News and he printed the Newcastle Morning Herald from 1930 to when he retired in 1965 I had another brother, an older brother, Kevin, who was a journalist in Newcastle on the Newcastle Morning Herald, he was an A grade journalist. He eventually left here in the early fifties and went down to Geelong as the publicity editor of the Ford Motor works but he then got out and got into his own business, he has his own stud cattle place and meat exporting business now. He was born in Newcastle, no, he was born in Sydney rather, he moved up here when we moved, when the family moved up here in 1930. My early recollections of Merewether, you know, there was the mining pits in the pit paddocks there up near the Hillcrest Hospital in, its all built on now, just up behind, you know where the Henny Penny is in Mitchell Street Merewether?

Yes, yes.

Well if you kept going further up there was pits in those areas up there and there was always pit ponies in the paddocks there that came out of the workings of the pits there, 'cause in those days too there was the old "coffee pot" used to go from the junction where the Star picture show or the Star, I don't know what it is now, there's a motel there now, used to be ...

Yes, yes.

the Star picture show, well the coffee pot terminal was there right at the Junction and that used to pull coal, skips full of coal from out at the lagoon or where the boy scouts, Glenrock Lagoon, used to bring coal from there, used to go past Merewether Baths, there was a railway line ran right by Merewether Baths there ...

So, the coffee pot, was a ...

It was an engine ...

Oh, right.

with coal skips, it drew them. It was a train load of coal. Used to go out daily to the Glenrock Lagoon and bring coal back to town in the early days. That was my early recollections of Merewether.

Mmm. Yes, so it would have changed a lot since then?

Oh, golly yes, you know, all of that area that I'm talking about now. See, and also where the, (cough) pardon me, where the Henny Penny place is in Merewether there, you turn left to go up to the beach where that hotel is, the tram used to terminate there, right at that, right in front of that hotel and there was another tram line run up past the Junction school, up past the Prince of Wales Hotel and that, and went up to what they call Glebe, well that's now where the Pacific Highway runs up through Merewether Heights. Well, that's where the tram used to be in my early recollections there of Newcastle.

There was only just you and your brother?

Yes.

There was only the two of you?

Yes, and then ...

Which school did you go to?

Well we both went to Junction school, primary school, and we both went to Tech High.

Right.

Newcastle Tech High then, that in itself, Newcastle Tech High in those days, Newcastle Tech High didn't have high scho ... or a building, Newcastle Tech High in its early days, and I suppose, oh, I couldn't tell you how long it was, but it might have been

ten or fifteen, twenty years, I think about ten or fifteen years, Newcastle Tech High was in the Newcastle Tech College over at Tighes Hill. You know where the Sir Edwards David Building is and so on ... that's where I went, both my brother and I went to high school for five years over there.

Mmm. So that you went from primary school to Tech high ...

Newcastle Tech High. Yes.

Yes. And how old were you when you sort of started at Tech High?

Well ...

What was the average sort of age ...

Well, my brother, Kevin, was two years ahead of me at school, now Kevin was in I think in the second, he was the second group that went through Newcastle Tech High School, in other words I went to high school at '42, probably 1940 is when that high school opened.

Mmm.

Either '39 or '40 ...

So, you were the second batch ...

Kevin was, I was about the fourth or fifth batch that went through.

Mmm. In what year were you born?

1930, 30th of the fourth, 1930.

Right, right. And what is your brother, after your brother sort of graduated from Tech High what did he do?

He went in as, he became a cadet journalist with the Newcastle Morning Herald.

Mmm, Mmm.

And became, eventually became an A grade journalist, well when I say an A grade journalist he became an A grade, B Grade, C grade and so on well he was an A grade.

Working mainly in Newcastle area?

Only in Newcastle.

Right

He never worked on any other newspaper other than when he ... he worked on the Newcastle Morning Herald from about 1946 through till about 1956. I suppose he had about ten years as a journalist in Newcastle before he resigned and took up, he became publicity editor of the Ford Motor works in Geelong in Victoria. They produced I think two monthly magazines, the Ford Dealer News and the Ford Gazette which is a publication they send out to all Ford dealers such as Klosters and anyone else ...

Mmm, Mmm. And why do you think he changed jobs at that sort of point?

To go do ... down to there?

Yes to leave Newcastle to go down there?

I just don't really know why he changed, Kevin was always a chap that was looking to go higher ...

So he was fairly ambitious?

Oh yes.

Yes.

Very ambitious and that was a, see his story in itself, like he was with Ford for a while, well four or five years or something but he then got out of the journalism. There was a mob called Ian Hendy Industries opened up a, not opened up, but they did the heating ... industrial heating of that new Ford plant at Broadmeadows in Victoria at the time and Kevin went with them for

a couple of years and it was then that he got into ... ah ... made contact with the meat industry, up at Wodonga ...

Right

through this industrial heating, they did some work up there and he got interested in that. Just on reflection, he bought a little, he went up there as manager of Wodonga Meats which was a abattoirs, an abattoirs at Wodonga in Victoria and also at Shepparton. Now, just on reflection, he then bought a little part-time farm, like a, what do they call them? Pitt Street?

Hobby farm.

Yeh, a hobby farm which became ... and that's his full time job. But see before we came ... before dad and mum came up to Newcastle, my dad, before he became a newspaper person, dad had a dairy farm in Pennant Hills in Sydney and this is, we're talking about the early 20s.

Right.

So dad was always interested in the land and cattle and so on, perhaps that flowed on to Kevin and that's how he got into the business ... But he started out with a little farm and now he's got a very, you know, he's got his stud cattle farm, he has been a past president of the Australian Meat & Livestock Corporation, so he's been ambitious and done very very well.

Did you continue living in Merewether until you left home or ..

No, we lived in ...

did you move around a bit?

We lived in about four or five different spots in the early days. There was Frederick Street, Merewether, we moved to Corlette Street in Cooks Hill. It was a time at those times when people, you know, it wasn't long after the depression I suppose

we didn't have the money to ... buy a house, buy a home ... but we lived in Frederick Street, Merewether, we lived in Corlette Street, Cooks Hill, we lived in Watkins Street, Merewether, we lived in Oxford Street, New Lambton and then in November, 1940, we bought, mum and dad bought a house, a new house that was just built, in Harriet Street, Waratah, looked straight into the Western Suburbs Hospital, now, mum and dad still, like they lived there until they died, and when dad did eventually die my daughter, Anne, bought dad's house ...

Oh right.

Anne was then, of course Anne has extended out the back and done alterations and so on, but it is still in the family, that house, that new house that they bought in November, 1940.

Mmm. Was your mother a full time housewife or, your mother ...?

Yes, full time housewife, she never had any other, she was a nurse prior to being married but she never worked after she was married

Had she done her formal training as a nurse, or ...?

Well as far as I know, yes, but you know, that would be, you know, towards the end of the First World War or after the end of the First World War ...

She would have worked in a Sydney hospital then, wouldn't she?

Oh yes. Yes. We did have another brother but I never knew him, that was before we came up here and Harry, Harry died with scarlet fever or something like that in around about 1925/26, you know ... long before I was born ...

Mmm. After you finished at Tech High, what did you do then?

Me?

Mmm, mmm.



Well I had a ... I didn't have any great plans like, whereas Kevin always knew that he wanted to be a journalist, I didn't, I didn't have any clues what I'd like to do, although I did express the wish to ... mum and dad that I did want, I would like to have done a trade, particularly, say carpentry, but dad said, dad and mum said no, you had to have the same education as Kevin had and therefore I went to five years high school. Now when you left at five years in those days you were too old to do a trade, eh the ...

So how old would you have been?

Oh, seventeen ...

Right.

I was seventeen, you see, most, in those days I think, apprentices started about fifteen. Now, I didn't really know what I wanted to do I had no definite thing in mind but I did, I eventually applied for a job as a clerk with the Bank of NSW, now I worked with the Bank of NSW at the Bank Corner for six months at something like £8/10/- per fortnight and I eventually left the bank and I started with the NSW Governement Railways, as a clerk ... at Port Waratah six months later. Oh, and in the bank I worked Saturday morning, five days a week plus Saturday morning up till midday at £8/10/- a fortnight. Now I left the bank on the Friday and I started at the railway on the Monday and I got £14/10/- a fortnight plus only a five day week, I got four weeks holiday, or three weeks holiday, another weeks holiday more than what I was, had in the bank, I got free railway passes and so on, this is all part of ...

So, that would have been a fairly prized job then? I mean, you were getting more money ...

Oh, much more money ...

better conditions ...

Much, much more money, better conditions and everything than where I was so I became a junior clerk in the railway and I probably may have still been with the railway and the only reason I left the railway, I was in, a clerk in the railway from 1948 to 1951 and, you are a junior clerk in the railways until you're twenty one and then you become a seventh class clerk, and then you work your way up, a seventh class, a sixth class and so on ... and mainly to advance in the railway, you have to take opportunities when they come, like for instance there might be a sixth class clerk job is advertised at or becomes vacant say at Lithgow, so you've got to leave Newcastle to go to Lithgow ... Well at that time, I was playing first grade cricket and first grade football in Newcastle and all my friends were in Newcastle and I said well I'm not going away ... And my brother said to me at the time, he was on the paper, there's a reasonably new company opened up in Raymond Terrace, he said why don't, there was no advertisement for a job, he said why don't you write and ask them do they have a vacancy for a clerical, which I did do and I went up to Masonite in 1951 ...

Mmm, mmm.

I had my first appointment, interview rather, where the old stadium was opposite the Park Royal in Newcastle, you wouldn't know where it is ... it's now, actually where the stadium was is now a big Chinese restaurant there, opposite the Park Royal Hotel. When I went there applied for a, asked them did they have a job and they interviewed me and I became a clerk at Masonite and I've been there ever since. Now, I was a clerk and I did clerical work, well types of clerical work, I'm talking about

pays, wages dissections time dissections and so on, for several years. I did a little bit in the timber supply office for a while until 1957 I went into the purchasing office and I've been there ever since. I was, eventually became the Assistant Purchasing Officer to the then Deputy Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Gordon Anderson ... and eventually Gordon Anderson became Lord Mayor of Newcastle, of course he eventually left to become Lord Mayor of Newcastle and, of course, I eventually took over as Purchasing Officer then, so that's briefly my, the history of my ... when I did become, that's how I come to do the Purchasing Supply Management Certificate Course, because it was a new course, I did the first Purchasing Supply Management Certificate Course that was ever done at the Newcastle Technical College.

Right

Or was one of the first group to go through I mean ...

Mmm, Mmm, So, I guess the factory would have changed over the years, has it or ...

Oh golly, yes. You know, I mean its changed in many many ways, see you don't, you've probably never been through the factory, but just big changes for instance is that when I first went there we only had one boiler house, now we've got two big boiler houses there, we didn't, we had a very small 48" inch chipper that chipped the logs up and that was as you went in the gate it was right beside you but now there's a big chipper and conveyor, you know, over from the weighbridge where Kevin's office was, is a big chipper and it's got a big 84" diameter chipper in it that chips the logs or the billets up, (small cough - pardon me), now down, also in the earlier days we had a full sawmill down at the works with a big steam crane that pulled logs to the canadian saw with twin 6' canadian saws, gang saws, docking saws and

everything that reduced logs to billet so that they were small enough to go down the spout at the chipper. Now there were fourteen men worked in that sawmill until eventually it was replaced here about, oh maybe ten twelve years ago with a log splitter and that log splitter is worked by two men now and it splits the log up, it doesn't cut 'em up, it splits the logs into manageable size and two men now do the work that fourteen men used to do in a log yard ...

Mmm. You mentioned a billet, what ...

Well a billet is a, is a log reduced, is a piece of timber, reduced from the size of a log into the size of a billet. See the chipper will only take a maximum diameter of about 12" ... the spout will only take a log 12" in diameter, you might have a log this round ... so you've got to split it into billets that'll go down the tube ...

About 10" long?

No, no, no, about 10" square, they can be 8' long but they go down, they've got to go down the spout.

Oh, I see, yes, right

Have you got a bean cutter, you know the old the old bean cutter you used to put down at an angle and you'd turn the handle, that's what the chipper spout's like. The log goes down that and chips it up.

So that the wood actually gets, <sup>the</sup> timber gets chopped up literally into chips?

That's right.

\* And what happens to the chips then?

Well they're made, they're reduced to fibre. See, that's the difference between our mill and Bacchus Marsh and Ipswich ...

in that our chips are reduced to fibres by the addition of steam and, heat, steam and pressure and they're absolutely exploded into fibres by what they call the mason gun process. Now the other two mills, Bacchus Marsh and Ipswich, they have a, their chips are cooked but they're ground to fibres by what they call the defibrator process ... in other words they grind the chips to fibres whereas we, we release a valve at high pressure and reduce the chips to fibre that way, it's a complete different, completely different method to what is is at the other two mills ...

So is Raymond Terrace factory the only one, the only factory in Australia that does it that way?

Yes. The only factory, was up until ... many years ago, I was going to say it was the only factory in the Southern Hemisphere who used that type of method but there was a Masonite, South Africa, you see Masonite Raymond Terrace is an offshoot, was an offshoot of the original Masonite factory at Laurel in Mississippi ... and that was, that had a mason gun too, now we have stuck with the mason gun process whereas they still, I think, they still use a mason gun process for some of their work in Laurel in Mississippi but they have added defibrator processes too ... But yes, it's the only hardboard factory in the Southern Hemisphere that does use that method of breaking down the chips to fibres.

You mentioned Bacchus Marsh and Ipswich, are they the only two sort of masonite factories in Australia, or on the eastern seaboard...

Well, Masonite is a brand name ...

Right

but they are the only, there's only three, there were four, that's wrong, here, when hardboards was formed in 1967 there were five mills making hardboards, there was Bacchus Marsh, Ipswich, Raymond Terrace, Piermont in Sydney and Burnie in Tasmania. Now Burnie in Tasmania and Piermont in Sydney have stopped making, well the Burnie mills been sold and the Piermont hardboard mill has been sold, hardboard plant has been sold so now three mills in Australia that manufacture hardboard, that's Raymond Terrace, Ipswich and Bacchus Marsh, they're all hardboards too.

Mmm. So, Masonite is a hardboard?

Yes, Masonite is a brand name for hardboard, see in the olden days there an old hardboard made from chips and reduced to fibres. In the old days, in the days of competition, there were three companies manufacturing hardboard, there was Masonite Corporation making Masonite ... There was CSR making Timbrock and there was APPM, which is Associated Pulp & Paper Manufacturers were making a product called Burnieboard. Now, they've all been combined or taken over and become one company which is Hardboards Australia Limited and now of course we are back, actually we are back now in 1986, where we were in 1957. In 1957 that company at Raymond Terrace was a hundred percent owned by CSR and then in 1967 CSR amalgamated or joined forces with APPM to form two companies, sorry, to form one company called Hardboards Australia Limited and that meant that it bought Masonite, Timbrock and Burnieboard together as one company ...

They reduced the competition in actual fact.

Yes, that's right and also the geographics of it, you know, you didn't, we weren't sending board from Victoria up to Queensland because you had a mill in Queensland making it ... that was ... And the company was making money in those days, before the amalgamation?

Well, Masonite was always ... Of course what really made Masonite so popular and so on, in the early days, was ... The Masonite factory at Raymond Terrace started in 1939, that's when it first started to produce, now Masonite being a sheeted board and so easy to handle and use and cut and put up and so on, it had, it really blossomed with the war, you know, prefabricated huts and all this type of thing. It made money and was a very viable proposition until, my memory slips me as to just when it was but ... (silence) ... 1957, I suppose, there was more than, we couldn't meet the market ... So they made another mill and they made a mill at Eildon Weir in Victoria, now there's a lot of effluent comes from the manufacture of Masonite because its what we call a wet process. So there's a lot of waste waters and wood sugars, and so on, a lot of effluent comes from the manufacture of hardboard, well being on Eildon Weir, they couldn't get rid of any of that and they had to put in a dry process down there and it was a total failure. It didn't, the board, because it wasn't a wet process, the board didn't suit the Australian climate and so on. Now, I think that hardboards, or rather Masonite, got into difficulties there and that's when they were taken over, or subjected themselves to taken over by CSR, cause they took them over then ... Now that meant that when CSR owned the Masonite making plant they also owned the plants that made Timbrock. So they were making Masonite and Timbrock and of course APPM was making Burnieboard.

But up till the time they opened that second mill in Victoria , you know, we were going well.

And what were the working conditions like at Raymond Terrace in 1951?

Well the working conditions at Raymond Terrace were quite, if you're talking about the office they were good by those standards and then, as a matter of fact, our office at Raymond Terrace has only been renovated in the last four years from what it was when I first started there, that's not quite right because we did add front offices to the offices ... that were there, but I mean they hadn't spent any money on the whole of those offices in thirty odd years ...

Mmm. Is that something the company didn't do sort of normally? Were they not into spending money on the factory and on the premises? or was that just ...

Oh well in the mill itself, you know, union by union pressure they've always had to abide by the union rules and by, you know, the statutory regulations and so on but the office was never like that. See we were never in the union or anything like that, nor did we want to be in any union.

So, compared to, say the office situation at the railways, was it on a par?

Yes, they were on a par. On a par. See the railways was nothing brilliant either in those days, then I was only, I was only a kid of course at the time.

Mmm. Now I of course having visited, but not actually gone through the factory, but visited the area, there seems to be a large complex on the other side of the road ... tennis courts and ... what was all that about?



You know, back in the early days when Masonite was just a, a single Masonite company, we weren't owned by CSR or anything then but when Masonite was first, became a company they built that amenities area over the road and we had a bowling green we had a swimming pool and we had ... and in that hall that is now, well its a dance hall and a function hall and it did have, it had two projectors and it also ... When I first went there it wasn't near as big as that hall, it was only about half that size and they had a, the current manager at the time, or the manager, the first manager was Harry Morgan and Sam Rogers and they were both fitness fanatics and we had a full, completely fitted out gymnasium with boxing ring and punching balls and everything ...

To be used after work or before work?

And at lunch time.

Weekends?

We used to use it at lunch time, weekends, any time you wanted. and there was tennis courts ...

Were families involved, wives and children?

Yes, anyone who wanted to use those amenities could use them ...

Anyone in the community?

No, no. Anyone in the, at the mill ...

Right, they had to be employed by the mill.

Yes

Yes

And like, like they are now, you know, our families now can go out and use that, those, the swimming pool and things like that ... And, of course, we had much more in those days but the amenities area has been badly neglected in recent years, up until the last two years there was never any money spent on that hall

or anything and of course the gymnasium was eventually, when CSR took them over in 1957 naturally they didn't throw any money in as far as amenities were concerned

Mmm. There's some story, I think, attached to the swimming pool ... ah ... had the swimming pool opened when you started there?

Yes, it was.

Was that the swimming pool used by, to teach children to swim from the local town, Raymond Terrace, or ...

I've no doubt that at different times that they did teach children to swim there because ... ah ... that pool was there before the one was in Raymond Terrace, so any family members or anything like that would bring their kiddies out to have them taught ... there, but ah ...

Did other factories sort of provide those kind of amenities?

No. no, no. We're a one off I think as far as having a swimming pool or any amenities like that were concerned. I would say that companies in later times ...

END OF SIDE A.

SIDE B:

... have amenities like that, for instance I know of people in Sydney, for instance ESSO, were they have ESSO Head Office in Kent Street in Sydney and they have a downstairs gymnasium and so on with these peddle bikes and so on for their senior staff to keep fit and exercise on. But back in our days you didn't have, people didn't have for amenities like we had up there ...

Mmm, so the company must have had a fairly positive sort of view of their employees ...

In those days, yeh, in the early days, yeh, but ...

And that's changed? Through the years?

I would think so, yeh and more so in recent years. I mean, the current situation now, I mean I .... The new General Manager, for instance, of CSR now, Ian Burgess, he's been only General Manager since December this year, he has stated in the Business Review Weekly and in the Financial Times that, you know, he doesn't mind having the reputation of a hatchetman and, you know, they're totally different. You're just a number on the books now, whereas, you know, in the olden days of course ... Well, CSR themselves, they had a reputation back in Knox's time, Sir Edward Knox's time, if you had a job with CSR you had a cradle-to-grave job but that's no longer the case ...

How many people would have been employed at the Masonite factory when you started?

Well, I think ... from memory, that we would have at one time gone up to, to close to four hundred ...

Really?

in our place, we would have had round about three hundred at the mill and we had about fifty people were employed full time in

the bush, they were either roadmaking or timber stand improvement or civi culture, in other words making the, replacing the forest as though, forest regeneration I suppose but there was roughly three hundred and fifty at the mill, or over three hundred at the mill and fifty out in the bush so you're getting close to four hundred ... I might also add that at that time of course Courtalds was always at Ray ... at Tomago were the aluminium smelter is now and they had something like two, two and a half thousand people there ... And they've all gone, 'cause they folded up.

Yes, Raymon ... the Masonite factory has stayed on hasn't it? Would there have been an increase in numbers after '51, or did it remain stable for a while and gradually reduce, or how would it go?

No, it remained, it eh, in the early fifties was when it had its highest number of employees and then I suppose it gradually ... oh ... I suppose automation really ... brought the numbers down eventually but then we've had two or three dramatic changes due to economic circumstances, for instance just the last one of which was in 1978, were we put off roughly, well we had two hundred and fifteen employees, eh, two hundred and five employees and we reduced them to a hundred and fifteen, in one go ...

Mmm

Now that included from the office, people who had twenty five years, fort ... up to thirty five years in ... work in the place, and they were just given three months notice to say that they had no job ... and that of course was due to economics ... So that was happening all over Australia generally ...

Yes, oh yes. We weren't on our own but all the same ... Now we went down to a hundred and fifteen, we're back to something like a hundred and eighty now, a hundred and eighty, a hundred and ninety maybe, now again but ... ah ... ahm ... the office staff haven't grown that much but the work, the workforce have ...

Mmm, mmm. Does the factory sort of work a seven to four day, how does the ...

Oh look, back in the old days and when we were at our peak, probably the peak at Raymond Terrace, peak operating at Raymond Terrace would be 19, round about 1973/74, and we did work up to, you must go in shifts and the ideal operating for that peak would be fifteen shifts a week, that's five days, three shifts a day, umm, but back in the early 1970s and probably at other times before that we've been up to twenty and twenty one shifts a week which would be five days, three shifts a day plus the Saturday, Sunday shifts, you know? And that's the peak. But we have also been at our lowest, say in 1978/79 down to three and a half, four shifts a week at the press ... now that's a ... a dramatic drop. As a matter of fact those people who work up on the production floors go down into the warehouse and do the finishing area too. So ah, its really been ...

There's been some changes. Going back to when you sort of were at the bank and the railway and you were obviously playing, you were playing first grade cricket and football, what was sort of happening for your social life in those days?

Well you see, ah ... just before we leave the Masonite part of it, probably one of the most dramatic changes we've seen in Raymond Terrace since I've been there is in, we talked about the the sawmills and the wood ... back in the early days, of course, we used to bring all the logs in and reduce them to billet size

and chip them ourselves, now with the ... because of a lot of reasons it became necessary for sawmillers, not our, not just us but other sawmillers to put chippers in because, you know, they bought in the different state regulations and so on, the Clean Airs Act, they weren't allowed to burn their ... their sawmill residues and so on, so they begin to chip wood, you see ... They export the chips, or its used for this that and the other, you know, garden ... exported and of course, we eventually, we started to buy chips from the sawmillers, so we, instead of chipping all of our chipping needs ourselves ... we eventually got quite a large percentage, I can't, couldn't tell you off the cuff just what that is, of chips brought in by lorry loads ... that are actually chipped other places. But getting back to your question about our social life, you know, I sometimes think, and you see it these days when you watch television and you see these kids, how about a thing on Sixty Minutes or on Four Corners, or something, the other night about the kids at Blacktown and they don't know what to do and ... and they bash one another up and all this ...

Yes

but you know we had a marvelous of social life and the people that we knocked around with as friends when we we young and in our courting days, we still knock round with them now, they're still here for Christmas and they're still here for New Years Eve and so on ... Now my, Marie and I, we didn't have cars or anything and we used to do all our courting on a push bike. We'd ride the push bike in, I'd double Marie in to the, I was a member of Nobby's Surf Club ...

Mmm, mmm

I used to double her in to the, to Nobby's Beach every weekend for the swimming and so on, over to the cricket, over to the football on the bike. We didn't have cars. I had a surf ski, my first surf ski like from when we lived at Waratah. My first surf ski I had with Nobby's Surf Club, the brother and I made that surf ski at home, marine ply and vanished it up and so on and put it on a billy cart, towed it behind our pushbike, down through the railway gates there at Clyde Street ... to that big storm water channel near the Tech College and I water rode it down the storm water channel and out the bloomin' heads and round to Nobby's Beach ... that's the only way, you didn't have any car to take it in to the beach ... So we had a very full social life in those days.

Was Marie as interested in sports as yourself?

Oh yes. Yes, she followed along, followed us to cricket and football - always.

Mmm. So with first grade cricket for example, I'm a bit of a cricket fan myself, did you, you would have played other towns, country towns, or ...?

No, just in the Newcas ... well visits by International Teams but I never made any of those, but back in my hay day, of course, I played on the cricket ground as a junior ... um ... but ah ...

So it would have been just teams around Newcastle ...

It was Newcastle District Cricket First Grade Competition.

Right

That's Hamilton, Waratah, and so on, they're still, the same teams are still playing today. I was in a premiership winning a team when I was eighteen years old, in Newcastle ... Waratah team, we had a very good team. And Marie followed all over,

matter of fact, the night mum and I got engaged, I missed me engagement party, I was, woke up in Mater hospital, I was knocked out on Waratah Oval, had, just about had one ear torn off ... Ah ... but Marie followed us everywhere.

So did you, were there dances and ...

Oh yes ...

and movies and those kind of things? Were you ...

on Saturdays. Our stable social life was one or two balls a year ... which were very big, matter of fact, Masonite had one of the top and the biggest ball in Newcastle in the early days and it was always held at the Palaise. But apart from that our social life was the dance at the, there was two dances, or two main dances in the early days, each week of a Saturday night, one was at the Town Hall and the other one was at the Palaise. If you were any sort of a snob at all or anything like that then your mother, Marie's mother would let her, Marie go to the Town Hall but she wouldn't let her go to the Palaise, you know? The Palaise was a bit rougher than the Town Hall but we always went to the dance of a Saturday night. Occasionally there'd be a dance say over at Mayfield Bowling Club or something like that were two football teams'd have a cabaret of some description ... What's something from those sort of, I guess those courting days that sort of stands out in, anything spring to mind?

We were, mum and I when we were going home from the New Years Eve dance at Mayfield Bowling Club and we got half way down there, I know exactly where it is, it was right on the corner of the Show Ground, but the front wheel of the bike collapsed, you know ...

Right (laughter)



(laugh) ... and it was teeming raining, I'll never ever forget it.

I guess you wouldn't forget that.

No! You know, It stands out. Oh we had a very good social life and a friend, matter of fact, a mate I still play golf with, he was a, he had parents who came into a bit of money and he was the first of the boys to ever have a motor car. He had a motor car right from the day he left school, you know ... now he was, he was the standard transport for all of us, bit was nothing to have 6 to 8 or 10 people in his car ...

He wouldn't want for friends. (laughter)

Oh no, no, like, you know, we used to go to the dance Saturday night and we'd go for picnics up to Stroud or up to Allanbrook, somewhere like that of a Sunday but that was our interest ...

When, what year did you and Marie marry?

Well Marie, Marie and I married in 1950, gee fancy asking me that, 1952, I think it was, '52, I think ...

So the year after you started out at Raymond Terrace?

Yes, and Marie was a school teacher all her life up until about two or three years ago ...

Right.

It's probably more like three or four years ago ... And she, she knocked off for about 10 years. We had two children a boy and a girl, Anne and Jeffrey, and mum knocked off teaching for about 8 or 10 years I think it was when the kiddies were young and then when they went back to school, when they went to school she went back with them ... uh

And <sup>L</sup>were did she do her training? As a teacher ...

Balmain Teachers College.

Right. And she's a Newcastle girl?

Yes, and she had to go away to go to Balmain Teacher's College and come home every weekend. She boarded at ... uh ... oh, I forget where she boarded now ... (silence) ... she'd tell you anyway, I can't think now ...

And you ...

but, when we were, see in our courting days of course the interruption to the courting was the fact that she was transferred away, now she did a stint at a place called Toongabbie, which was half way between Seven Hills and Pendle Hill in Sydney. Toongabbie. She was at Woy Woy for a while, she was out at Toronto ... and of course that meant her travelling up and down to Sydney each week ...

So where did you live when you were married, did you rent or buy?

Well, when we were first married we moved in a company cottage. The company had about eight cottages at Raymond Terrace. We lived in a company cottage for about, from 1950, we were married in '52, we moved up there in 1953 I think it was and we lived at Raymond Terrace in a company cottage from '53 to '56 when we bought our house at Charlestown. Now, we bought a new house at Charlestown and we lived in that until twelve months ago. We bought this house, twelve months last May, we bought this house ... and my, my son bought the house at Charlestown

Mmm, so you keep houses in the family, don't you?

Yes, that's right

How did the company decide who got one of the, one of the eight, the company houses?

Well normally it was the staff people and if like, for instance when I got a company cottage it just so happened that, that there ... a house became vacant, I mean if the, the then forestry officer hadn't have moved out or resigned ... there wouldn't have been a house for me to go into, but he resigned at that time and Marie and I had just been married and we, I put in for that house and got it.

So, from the late fifties you travelled from Charlestown to Raymond Terrace?

Have done all my life ...

So ...

Apart from that period from 1954 to '56, I've always travelled, from about '51 onwards, I've always travelled from Newcastle to Raymond Terrace every day, now that in itself, see with this, this current regime we've got over at CSR now which is very very bureaucratic ... eh, eh, anyway we won't go into details about that, but part of my, or one of the conditions of my employment was that I would, they would provide transport for me daily from Newcastle to work and back again ...

(Mmm)

Now in, in all the times I've been there, up until this new regime took over this company two years ago ...

(Mmm)

I have always had company transport to and from work ...

Your own car in other words ...

No, no, no, I did not. No, in the ear ... up until about four or five years ago when a chap called Jim Brown retired, he was our accountant, there was always what we called a staff car ...

(Mmm)

which the accountant drove from Newcastle to Raymond Terrace and back each day and the accountant used that car and it provided transport for half a dozen staff people up and down to work. It also went and did the mail, like the office girl or the office boy'd take it in to do the mail. If there was a visitor to pick up from the train they'd go down in the staff car and that staff car was always available until Jim Brown retired about five years ago. Now, when he retired he bought that car and there was only myself then left that needed transport or that was entitled to transport up and down to Raymond Terrace and they gave me the company utility just to travel up and down in. And when I went away on holiday, or when, if someone wanted that ute, they took that ute ... but I only had the use of it to go back and forwards to work. Likewise, when it was a staff car and the accountant had it, when the accountant went on holidays he left it for me to pick up the other chappies to go to ... now this new mob we've got now they just wiped all that off ...

(Mmm)

took the cars, took the transport, it's now the first time, the last twelve months is the first and only time in thirty seven years I've had to use my own car for transport to and from work.

Mmm. So the early days they obviously had a policy to transport people from ...

Well, we always had a staff car ... but this new mob they don't ... as you can tell ...

They don't see that as a priority, yes

No, as you can tell, I'm not real impressed with the current management or their methods or procedures, anyways at all.

Mmm. And how much longer have you got to go over the factory?

Well, I'm supposed to retire, not supposed to, I have to, it's compulsory that I retire at sixty two which is four years time, four years last April ...

(Mmm)

I'm fifty eight now ...

(Mmm, mmm)

and you must retire at sixty two ... and eh ...

Are you looking forward to that, or ...

Oh my word I am, particularly in view of the current management.

Mmm. Have you any plans for what you're going to do when you retire?

Well, it just depends what you mean by plans, provided my health's o.k. ...

(Mmm, mmm)

I've certainly got sufficient interests in home, family and sporting interests to keep me well and truly occupied ... in my fit years. I mean it all depends on how well you are ... But, for instance I, I still, my son-in-law coaches the team, the football team I used to play with now, he coaches the local first grade Waratah team, we have an interest in that. I play, I play golf pretty regularly and I have a four wheel drive I'm very very interested in beach fishing, well fishing generally ... I would imagine, you know, that eh, provided the, that I'm fit and well enough and the situation's as is that I can retain the car, in other words that I can run two cars, I would probably go fishing two or three days a week. Ah, 'cause there's the house and the garden ... And one thing and another, so I'd ...

Mmm. So, you're not planning to sort of travel ... necessarily?

Well mum and I have been there, done that and, you know ... in 19, in the last, what was it ... either '80 or '81, mum and I went to England with another two, a couple that we've know since we first moved to Waratah ... and we went to England. We had ten weeks away. We had three and a half weeks round England and Scotland and then we went over to the continent, and, we hired a car in England and we did two and a half thousand miles around England and Scotland ... then we went over to the continent and we hired another car in Cologne, we went to Amsterdam, we was to go to Paris but the, but we missed out because there was a blockade of the French sea ports, so we flew to Amsterdam ... then, we went from there by train to Cologne and we got a car and did two and a half thousand miles right down through Germany and Austria and right down the Rhine. Then we went by train from there to Vienna and Venice and Florence and Piza and Rome and flew home. So we done that stint, we're not very interested in, mum doesn't like flying very much ... Ah ... now recently, what, like the year before last, we went to Hong Kong, Singapore ... I had previously been to the east. The mate and I flew on the inaugural flight of the jumbo from Australia to Singapore in '71 or '72 and we went to Singapore and Hong Kong ... Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan ... back home again. And then three years ago, mum and I went over with another mate and his wife and did a, hired a car and did the north and south islands of New Zealand ... and then the year before that we went to Tasmania, so, you know, we've ...

You've done some travelling ...

no great really, no great wish to go away again although there were certain parts of England we'd love to go back and see again but it's that twenty four hours in the plane that Marie doesn't like ... So, you know, there's a lot, people say why don't you see Australia, but to be quite honest you can't afford to see Australia ... See we can, we just went to Singapore and Hong Kong recently for eight hundred bucks, to Singapore for seven nights, seven - air fare, accommodation, everything - now it's \$130.00 dollars a night in Sydney at the Travelodge, just for bed only ...

Mmm, mmm, it doesn't encourage one. Have you taken a interest in your sort of family tree at all ...

Ah ...

Your origins, your father and your great grandfather's origins, where they all came from and ...

Well before this woman came on the scene, this Kath Stevenson, who sent us that book and everything ... prior to that we did have a very very big mob and dad's mother, ~~Anna~~<sup>NANA</sup> Bowtell, she died in 1976 at 106 ... and she had fourteen children, of which three died in infancy and and there were, that left eleven and ten of that eleven were at ~~Anna~~<sup>NANA</sup> Bowtell's funeral at 106 years of age. So there is a history of long, longevity in both, in our family and Thelma Slap had a very good family tree, of our side of the family, and yes, we were very interested and kept a very good record and all of that. But, of course, we didn't know about this other woman and the other side of it, you know ... Ah ... for instance there's a boy, Jeff, my, I've got a lad, Jeffrey, now Jeffrey's spelt J,E,F,F,R,E,Y ... He's twenty seven years of age and the boy just recently, in the last twelve months or so, started at Raymond Terrace, at the Masonite ...

His name is Jeffrey Bowtell ... same age as Jeff, his dark hair and everything's the same ... And I can't just track down where he fits in the family and he doesn't know either ... but to my knowledge, he's no relation but you can bet your bottom dollar there is ...

Mmm. So how far back have you traced the family, or did this lady trace the family, your, say your father or your grandparents ...

We go back seven generations ... it all started with either, I don't know whether it's two greats or three great grandfather Bowtell? Jessie Bowtell came out in 1823 on the vessel, the Medway, from England. He was convicted of stealing a watch in London, and he was sent out as a convict to Maria Island in Tasmania. Now, whilst he was there, he met and married Sarah Davies who came out on, I just forget the name of her vessel, but she came out in 1827 - well, that's how far we go back. And there is a history of the whole family right from there, from there on ... so ... there's seven generations ...

So the book that this lady sent you traces ... um, Jessie and his descendents right through ...

Yes.

As many of them I guess as they could find ...

Yes

Yes, so I guess that is a valuable document

Oh, my word.

Is there a document in that that you think is particularly interesting?



Oh yes, well as far as my great, great grandfather was concerned the fact he was a convict and came out, I think that is pretty significant, I mean after it's all said and done Australia wouldn't be what it is today if we didn't have the early convicts, would it?

Mmm. Have you got a document that's associated with that, in that book?

What do you mean by that?

Is there any sort of, have you got a photo copy of the early records at all?

Yes, they're in there ...

What ... can you just read a bit from ... part of it?

Jessie Bowtell, this is dated the 7th session 1820, case number, I assume, 1122, Jessie Bowtell was indicted for stealing on the 18th of August; one watch, value one pound; one chain value, ten shillings; one seal value, five shillings and two keys, value five shillings and goods from Thomas Ingham, from his person and then it goes on to state the case as it went through the courts, the court was, eh ... 4th Middlesex Jury before J. Vallian, Esquire. He was, he was the prosecutor apparently.

So that's actually a copy of a document from England ...

It is. Yes it is.

And the same with, with eh ... copy of Sarah Davies trial on the 14th January 1830, 221 etc, fifth day, first session, 1829. Case number 215, Sarah Davies and Anne Smith were indicted for stealing on the 30th of November, 27 yards of printed cotton value 20 shillings, the goods of Benjamin Williams, and then it goes on to list the court case ...

Mmm. Perhaps before we sort of finish up ... in sort of all your sort of recollections. What's something perhaps really stands out in I guess your life's experience of living in Newcastle? What would be something that would spring to mind as something ... special?

Well, oh you know, there are so many changes today in the, in the methods of doing anything, for instance transportation, just take the work situation for instance. When I first started at Raymond Terrace, we had two vehicular punts crossing the river at Stockton, there were three vehicular punts at Hexham. Now it was nothing to, for instance of an afternoon, you couldn't, I couldn't make an appointment to see you tonight at 7 o'clock, because I couldn't guarantee to be home here at 7 o'clock. At certain times at the year, say, for instance, Christmas and Easter when there's a lot of traffic on the road, it was nothing to be held up for a couple of hours at the punt, waiting to get across the punt. Floods were another thing, if there was a flood on, you couldn't get across, there weren't bridges or anything to get across the river and we used to have to go either around through Stockton and up that way or you just did, couldn't get to work. So, transportation is a big thing, you know, a big change from what it was in the early days. And, of course, buildings and so on and, that's just one of the main things ...

Mmm. For you. O.k., well we might sort of finish it there. Thank you.

O.k

END OF SIDE B.