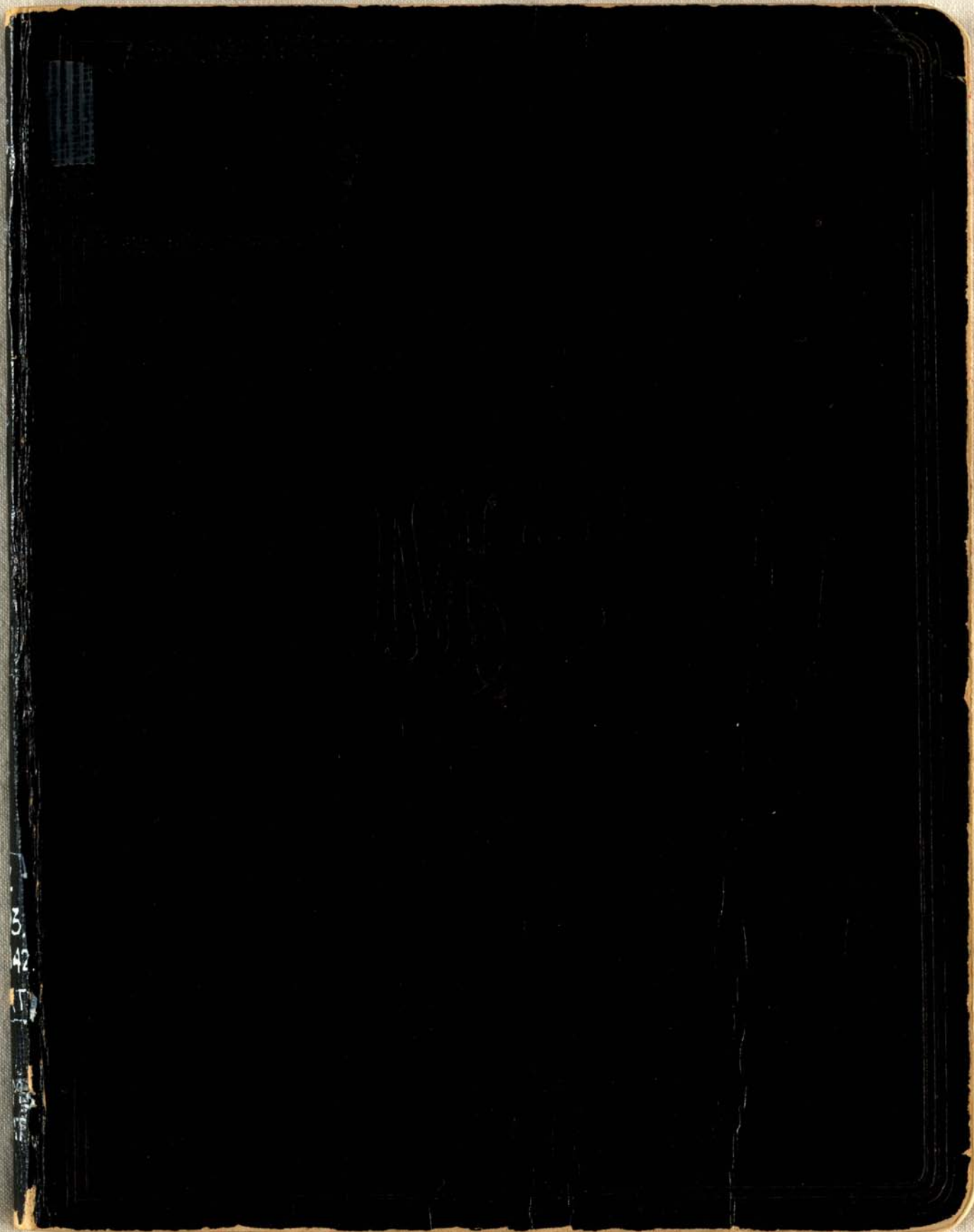




Reminiscences



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Reminiscences of early days at Brookside

Canterbury New Zealand.

1863-1939

Thomas Watson

Some time ago I received a letter from my brother Lancelot, in which he made the suggestion that I should write a short history of my early life, and also my recollections of things as they were in those early times. This more particularly for the benefit of my children and also of theirs, & of those to come in later years. This suggestion I realised was a very reasonable one, because, I now regret very much that when I was young I did not get the information, as to the early life and conditions of things in general, of my father and mother in their early days which is now a long way more than

one hundred years ago, and it is between thirty and forty years since they passed away. There are a few things, however, that I can mention, and that is that the conditions of things when they were children, must have been very hard in deed, and child life in general must have been almost beyond our conception. Little children, being compelled to work in factories & in the coalmines, at from as early as six and seven years of age and also from fourteen hours a day and over, & little to eat and little to wear, the death rate must have been appalling.

"Oh God that bread should be so dear
And flesh and blood so cheap."

In the following pages, I will endeavour to recall many little things which may be a source of interest. It requires a good deal of thinking, for all that is recorded is from memory, and as I have tried to focus different things; other little matters seem to come up, & it scarcely possible to

record in consecutive order, seeing that they extend to a time over seventy years ago. Briefly then as to my father and mother. Father, whose name was William, was born on December 31st 1821 at a place called Hesketh in the county of Cumberland England. His father (my grandfather) died when he was very young, and later his mother married again to a man called Davies. Father I think had only one full sister, Elizabeth, but there were several ^{brothers} ~~others~~ in the second family, Nicholas, Lancelot, Joseph. I cannot recall of any others. ~~From what~~ Mother, whose name previous to her marriage was called Elizabeth Lancaster & was born at a place called Buttermere, in the Lake district of the County of Cumberland England. Her father and mother, both died when she was very young, and she was brought up by her Grandmother. Mother's birthday was December 28th 1828. Married in 1849. There were four children three boys and one girl, the eldest boy, died

Landed March 31. 1859

4 When four years old. The others, William, Ann Elizabeth, and George, came to New Zealand with their parents in 1860. 1859
As to father's occupation whilst in England, I think that he was mostly connected with horses, & was doing carrying work. I have heard him speak of one of his employers as a John Jennings of Lorton, whose business was that of a Brewer. Whether before or after I do not know, but he used to deliver coal from the pits at Workington. It was this period that I could have wished to know more about, for it was a period when there were few railways if any in those parts, and also it was that period when distress & hunger were rampant, when wheat was a pound a bushel & there was a high tariff on rather no importation allowed under the Corn Laws, when rioting and bloodshed were common experiences, & which only ceased when the Corn Laws Act was repealed, and Free Trade became the policy of Great Britain. I had a letter

5 some little time ago, from a cousin, with which she said that she could remember her father Joseph (my uncle Joseph) saying that he remembered father deciding to come out to New Zealand in order at any rate that his children might have a better chance than ever he had. I can remember father saying that after coming to New Zealand, he might have had better openings. I could have had them had he gone away from the centres - but he was ever desirous that his children should have the benefit of an education which had been denied to him when he was young.

In these days when we have the motor car and the aeroplane, so that distance can now be accomplished, in what might seem "like a flash of lightning," in comparison to those days of three quarters of a century ago. What must it have meant, to break off the old ties and to even think of such a thing as to propose to take a long journey into the unknown a distance of sixteen thousand miles

6 There were no luxurious steam boats in those days, with all the accompanying facilities newspaper, radio, & always in continuous touch with everything that is going on in the world, to the very moment. In those times it meant a complete cutting off from all the outside world. Good bye to everything, & committed to the mercies of the sea, with all its dangers. It required a great courage, to launch out into the unknown. But those early pioneers to New Zealand were made of stern, good material.

On leaving their home in Cumberland they first went to Newcastle in Northumberland, & took a coastal boat to London, & transhipping there into a vessel called the 'Mystery' of something less than three hundred tons. They also brought with them, all their household utensils, bedding, &c. (I have recollections of an old grandfather clock, a four poster bedstead, something also what they called tally iron, (this was an iron to do the pulling work on shirt collars &c) &c, &c) They had to do their own cooking and washing, & no conveniences whatever. Huddled together, little or no privacy

7 What a time for the little children, & what wonder that sickness should break out; which it did & many little ones died. In the hot weather, the scorching heat, and little to make a shadow, and then ^{driving} the storms to be battered down below decks. What a time, & what a life? It was late in the year 1858 when they left England, & it was in March 1859 that the ship came to anchor in Lyttelton Harbour. Well might another say, that she had no wish to take another journey nor had she ever a desire to see England again. At this time, New Zealand was not under one united Government, but it was divided into Provincial districts, or Provinces, & each one had their own provincial Government. There was one Governor appointed by the British Government, as representing at that time Queen Victoria, but each Province had its own Superintendent, & the Government legislated alone for that particular portion of the Colony. At the time of which ^{the} seat of the Canterbury Province was Christchurch, & there the Government Buildings were erected, & together the foundations

8 of the Christchurch Cathedral were laid.
It had been the intention, to found purely
a Church of England community & a Bishop
was appointed to Christchurch, giving it the
dignity of being called a city. The first
immigrants had arrived in 1849, & at this
time (1860) possibly there were not many
more than ten or twenty thousand people
in Canterbury. There was not in existence
in the whole of New Zealand a railway.
There was no communication between the
port of Lyttelton than by going over the
top of the hills which were called the
port hills. On landing at therefore father
undertook this journey, & on reaching Christ-
church, not knowing that it was the city. He
enquired how far off, but was told that
he was right in the Centre. The place
where he then was, is certainly even now
the Centre. The White Hart Hotel: As to how
Mother & the children got there I have no
clear idea, but I think, that their goods
&c were taken around to what is now

but this is
only a
guess now

9 Summer. Their first home was at Waltham.
It was here then that father and mother made
their first start in their new country. I
have no idea what ever of their resources
but their first employment was with
a man called Fisher (Captain Fisher) I
have no idea how long this occupation
lasted. The wages were I understand six
shillings per day. Their dwelling place
was a building 24 ft x 6 ft subdivided,
but with three children there would not
be much room. It was not very long before
there was an addition to the family
and my brothers John and Joseph (twins) were
born, so that there would be further congestion.
Being used to horses, it was only natural
that, having a liking for them, he would
seek that employment, which gave him
the opportunity. Later on, therefore, he was
occupying and working a farm at Waltham.
And it was on the farm that I was born.
on Sept. 29th 1863
I understand, (of course it was long after this
before I understood anything) that he had ac-

10 quired some cows, & had a milk run in the city. The farm being in close proximity, he may have still kept in his employment as well. In later years, & at the present time, that farm is now all built over, & on it the present Waltham school stands.

I sometimes try to conjecture the doings of those early years, and what they had to put up with, for it was not a question of sitting down and enjoying luxuries, but every one would have to be at it and doing their bit. And coming so recently as they had from a place where the conditions were hard, & hard work was essential, the children even would all have to help and do all the little jobs possible.

With the continual arrival of fresh people from overseas, with their families, the children I presume would occasionally have a chance of having a little pleasure, & I have wondered sometimes whether William & Annie & George would

ever go with their dad to the Heathcote river and fish for eels. I know that eels were a consideration in the domestic menu. I remember mother telling of a big Maori coming one day with a big eel to dispose of. He had very little clothing on beyond his natural garb plus his tattoo & she received somewhat of a shock. How very little ^{things} ~~events~~ transpire to turn the course of events in ones life. It was somewhere in these early years, just before I was born. The report, that gold had been discovered in Otago at Gabriels Gully, caused quite a stampede and people from every direction were on the move, & thousands flocking into the country. Father was inclined to be struck with the fever and arrangements were being made with a neighbour to go, provided he could, ~~go~~ would he wait for a few days, until ^{he} Father ~~had~~ was ready? So great however, was the urge that he could not wait, & was off the next morning. Father never got away, but ultimately became the possessor of one of the finest herds of

12. Short Horn Cattle in New Zealand
He should have been partner settled at Lawrence
in close proximity to the mining district
& taking up farming also. I never heard of
his making a fortune at the gold; but was
later considered somewhat of an expert in
geology.

Part 2

I come now to that period in which embrace
the more active period of my life, although
for a considerable time not in any wise
cognizant of them. Being born as previously
mentioned at Waltham, six months later
in March 1864. Father & mother together with
the family, now numbering six, moved to
our new home a farm of sixty five acres
situated twenty five miles to the south of
Christchurch, & two miles on the south side
of the River Selwyn. At that time the only
name given to that portion was South
Selwyn, & some years ^{later} when the first public
school was erected & called South Selwyn

13 school, it had the honour of being the first
school erected in that quarter & the name of
district was changed to that of Brookside, and
still continues as the Brookside School.
The land was purchased with freehold title, & I
think the price was £2 per acre. There were
no easy methods of financing in those days, no
such thing as State Advances Departments
through which to deal. The land was in
its virgin state, but I have no recollection
of, beyond learning later, that it was rather
heavy land, with a mixture of flax, wild
irishman, a prickly scrub, & also an occasional
plant of which I have forgotten the name, with
immense dagger like spurs, & which went
by the name wild Spaniard. When drained
later, it turned out to be one of the best
grazing farms in the district. The dry spot
on which the home was erected, turned out
later to be slightly lower than the other portion
of the farm. All the timber and material
for the house, together with the bricks for the
chimney, had to be carted in a dray from

14 Christ Church, & there must have been several journeys backwards & forwards to get the whole together. Some of the dwellings which were erected about the same time by other settlers were either made of sods or cob & thatched with rushes or raupo. Our house of timber was 24 ft long, by 12 ft broad, with eight-foot studs, a gable roof ceiled & roofed with split palings or shingles, divided into two rooms, with half of the portion ceiled off to which a ladder was erected, & this was a sleeping portion for some of the children beneath the attic. There was no lining what so ever for some years, a chimney of brick was built at one end of the house, & that room was, kitchen, breakfast room & sitting room combined. Later on when the family increased, other rooms were attached, It must have been very cold in the winter time for there was no shelter timber in any direction as far as the eye could reach nothing but open plain in all directions. There were no land marks, to guide

15 or to denote where the section was, & one journey that father made, he found himself half a mile out of his object. Later when the house was built, it was mother's duty to pull up a lighted lantern by a small pulley to the top of the house & thus act as a direction finder, after father had crossed the river Selwyn & two other streams to be forded before reaching home. This continued for a long time, for there was no other means of getting supplies in, or of taking in to market anything that was marketable, such as butter & eggs. & later other farm produce. The first rail way in the country was ^{opened} ~~commenced~~ the year I was born, but it was not until 1869 that the railway reached as far as the Selwyn, & we were then only four miles from the station. I should imagine that one of the first things to be done would be to enclose the house with a fence, & also allow sufficient room, in which to grow some vegetables &c. There being no timber of any sort, & the ground requiring to be drained

which was
often very
late com-
mencing the
distance

16 ditches were dug, & the sods placed in position along the side, & the loose earth thrown behind, as this acted as a drain as well as a fence, on top of the fence, were planted gorse, & in a couple of years there would be a complete hedge & a first class shelter for stock, several other very small paddocks were enclosed close by, to run the calves in & also to act as a stockyard, & later to be used to build hay stacks & grain stacks as well. ~~On~~ Inside of these were planted a double row of blue gum trees which grew up very quickly but were not altogether a success, as to providing shelter. This was the commonest tree planted then, although there were poplars and willows, there were no pine trees nor Macrocarpa at that time. These plantings of gum trees, would show up all over the country where the homestead of every farm was situated.

There was one very wet piece of ground running across the farm about the centre, at first it was thought that this would be

17 permanent; & so father planted weeping willow cuttings or branches along the line of bogginess. However after the place was drained, this particular piece of land sank considerably, till it settled to about eighteen inches below the general surface, and became what was called a Blind Creek possibly it might have remained a water course but the ditches in the vicinity took what water there was, there was only water running in this after heavy rains. The willows soon died out, but this was because there was no protection for them from the horses and cattle, I think that it was these willows, that suggested the name of "Willow Holm" to the farm. Why the "Holm" instead of "Home" I do not know. There was one tree however, which was planted close to the house & developed into a very respectable ~~tree~~^{one} until the gum trees in close proximity, put certain check upon its growth. There was abundance of water for

18 Household and other purposes, obtainable by sinking a well to the depth of about nine feet. The first well was sunk in close proximity to the house, but the roots of this willow found their way to the water, and the sides of the well not being in any way protected either with bricks or slabs, it ultimately caved in at the bottom, & evidently it was an easier method to ^{sink} ~~make~~ a new well than to clean out the old one.

A second one was sunk, & I think even a third, until it became a habit (almost of sinking them, so ultimately a pipe was driven down and a pump attached. So this is a bare description of the surroundings with which I was brought up, & was my home for nearly twenty seven years. My childhood days before, I could retain in my memory any particular happening, were I dare say like a good many other, settled and made much of until the arrival of others, one brother and three sisters, one of whom

19 died early, & there were therefore nine of us to be provided for, the older ones as they grew to usefulness, had to assist in the general work of the farm. In a later chapter I will give further descriptions of the place & the various things engaged in, & also the district in general, its people, institutions and other matters.

Chapter 3

Now I come to the incidents of early life and the dawn of recollection, as far as possible I will divide this into two parts, the first dealing with incidents at home & ^{then} reminiscences of school life. I have a very hazy recollection, of having crawled out of the house, & making my way to the gate that was not far from the back door of the house, I seem to remember climbing up this gate, but this may be a myth, it may have been fostered by being told that I could climb before

20 I could walk. But I really developed into being able to climb up the tallest gum trees that were about the place, this was an asset later on when we were paid threepence a dozen for sparrows eggs, and many of these were obtained from the high trees. What I can remember, was looking down the well, and seeing the likeness of myself reflected in the water. Unfortunately I overbalanced and fell in. Fortunately my Brother William was near by, and also mother, but I was nearly a "gone" before they were able to clutch hold of my petticoats and pull me out. The well lid was studiously kept closed afterwards. Then there was the first occasion of remembering getting a spanking, & that was when I and my younger Brother were having great fun in a neighbours paddock, chasing the little lambs, it was great fun until mother chased us, & then the fun was over. There was a great day in 1868, when the Duke of Edinburgh. I think the second son of the

21 Late Queen Victoria, who made a trip & came to New Zealand, on the ship "Galatea" He commanded the vessel himself. It was not that we had any connection with him, but it was that Father had gone to Christchurch to the celebrations that were being held & taking all the rest of the family with the exception of Mother, my young Brother Lancelot & ^{my} sister myself. Mother had just removed a lot of hot ashes from the fireplace, & Lance tripped over & sat down amongst them. I cannot say whether the marks of the burns still remain but they were pretty severe. Then there was the experience of a very severe earthquake, which shook down a good many chimneys. Then there was a very disastrous flood, which occurred in the month of February when the river Selwyn overflowed its banks, and came rushing downwards through by our place. The crops at that time were cut, but I can call to mind seeing the sheaves

22. being carried along by the rush of the water. It was the farmers first experience of a big flood, & most of them moved from their homes & congregated at an adjoining farm^{house} which was on higher ground. A lot of damage was done & fencing destroyed. This I have been told but I can remember the flood.

There is one happening that left its impression on me, & I seem to see it with all its clearness. My younger brother & my young sister Margaret, (Maggie as we always called her) & myself took out our little baby sister, Caroline as she was called, and had not been able to walk very long, but we were all having such a happy time. At the lower end of the garden was a gap in the fence, and a ditch on the opposite side with just a little water in it, but a board had been placed across, in the crossing, somehow or other, we must have let her fall but it was only a very slight wetting that she got, we took her back as quickly as we could, & the damp clothes were as quickly taken off.

23. But it had the effect of bringing on a cold and afterwards dysentery, but in three weeks she was dead, our darling little sister. Nearly seventy years have passed away since then, in heaven we hope to meet, where "their angels do always behold our father which is in heaven". This calls to my mind a memorial that was always hanging on the wall in our house, & it was to the memory of the eldest one of the family, who died in England at the age of four years. The first verse I can recall. "My lovely little Lily, thou wert gathered very soon, In the fresh and dewy morning, Not the glare of noon, The Saviour sent His angels to bear thee hence my own, And they'll plant thee in that garden where decay is never known". Then there was another sad happening about the same time, and this was to Sister Maggie. She & Lance were playing out side one day, and got to the hand chaffcutter & began to turn the handle. Then, putting in some flax sticks they

turned the handle, having seen Father cutting the chaff for the horses Maggie put her hand forward to pull the pieces out, when somehow the wheel moved forward & cut ^{off} three of her little fingers & ^{also} the thumb ~~off~~. She was taken to the doctor as quickly as possible. The doctor was not as clever in those days as they are now, and the fingers might have been replaced, but as she grew up, she was not greatly inconvenienced & learned to write well with her left hand & also to do all sorts of needle work.

With this chaff cutter, were several extra parts which might be required, should breakages occur. These for safety were put what we called up-stairs, where Lancel & I used to sleep. It was the rule of father, that we had to go to bed at eight o'clock or thereabouts. Should we be making too much noise, Father would say "Up them steps" and up we went to bed, but not always to sleep, for we sometimes got these odd pieces of the chaff cutter & would play with them unconsciously to ourselves, making a good deal of noise, and bye & bye Father's head would

appear at the top of the stairs, & sometimes after a short spell the noise would cease and then off to sleep.

We never went to bed however, before we knelt at another's knee, & said our evening prayers. "Gentle Jesus meek & mild, Look upon a little child, pity my simplicity, Suffer me to come to Thee". And then there would be the kiss all round, & Father would say "Good night Honey." ^{"God bless you"} Even now when I am old & grey headed I have never forgotten.

"In dreams I see my mother now, her locks were silvered gray, I see upon her placid brow the cares of many a day". And now that I been through, the like experiences as theirs. One could almost wish, that it were possible to revert to the early times. "Backwards, turn backwards O Time in your flight, make me a child again just for to night." But yet there were our own children & now theirs, & we can live again in the enjoyment of their young lives.

26 There being such a big family, there was plenty of us to play with & have a good time, & we made our own ~~ple~~ jolity. It might be hide & seek which was very popular, as there were plenty of hiding places, around in the stackyard. Getting on the top of a straw stack & sliding down, was most delightful. Then we had ourselves yoked together with flax as a team of horses. We got plenty of fun out of it all, As children we were a happy family & could sing & whistle, which now a days is a rarity. Yes, we also got into many kinds of mischief as well, for which we were reprimanded by various methods, perhaps being sent to bed, but these punishments are not enumerated, as the punishment did not remain in our memory so well, as the enjoyment of the offence committed. My two Brothers John & Joseph one day caught one of the hens, & ~~pro~~ proceeded to pluck the feathers from it. As the feathers seemed to take up more room, after being pulled out, they moved away with the hen, & made other heaps

27 until there was a string of feathers all over the place. Just at this period Mother came upon the scene, and they quickly let the hen go (with all the distinguishing features of a new breed.) and took to their heels, but were not quite as nimble at that game as Mother. I think they were tanned before, matters were evened up. The original breed of that hen, was a Dorking famous for her laying qualities, I have no recollection of her after fate. But this just reminds me of something similar kind of fowl that had been stolen. Somebody's stole my old blue hen, I wish they'd let her be; she used to lay two eggs a day, but on Sunday she'd lay three.

I sometimes see my own grand children enjoying themselves making houses with sacks and ^{any} other material to hand. I remember Lancelot and myself doing the same things, but only with the loose hay about the hay stack. One day we had a very comfortable little house made, and

we decided that it would be a good place to sleep in all night. So we put it into operation, but the charm faded soon after it became dark, and with so many possible bogies around, we thought it much safer to be in our beds in the house. I can recall that at that time the word Bogle, put a lot of fear into us, and it was frequently used.

As children we were inclined to pair off. There was William & George. Then John and Joseph. Lancelot and myself. And my mate in mischief as well as in other things was Lance.

We were sometimes told to mind the cows in certain paddocks, after milking was finished in the morning. One night the cows had broken through from their proper place, and got into a field of oats & did considerable damage. As they had got an extra good feed and gorged themselves, one of them died soon after being removed. Father had the hide taken off the

animal, & left the carcass lying in the field for the time being, before being buried. This particular day, (we two) had to mind the cows in an adjoining field to the one, where the dead cow was lying.

Some time during the morning, we had a sort of brain wave, and we thought it would be great fun, if we let one of the other cows through to get at the dead one. We had an idea that she might make a little noise (Mayflower was the name of the chosen cow for the purpose) But who could ever imagine that one cow, after having such a big gorge the ~~for~~ the early morning, should have space enough left inside for all the noise that came out? We gently let her through a gap in the fence, and with a Toish and a Baa-a-a she made straight for the dead carcass, and before we could say Jack Robinson (although we didn't know him then) the whole of the cattle (about forty head) had rushed in also

to join in the fun, I partake in the general uproar. Yes? The sound is still in my ears, or the remembrance. But the cows had a glorious time, and so had we to get them out again.

Watching the cows one morning (this time by myself when it all happened)

At one corner of the paddock underneath the sod fence, ^{a hole had been made} so as to let the water, that was dammed up on the opposite side, divert into the ditch to supply the cows with their drinking water. The water so dammed up would be at least about two feet deep. This particular morning, I was standing on the top of the fence leaning ^{over} a rail (which had been placed there and nailed to two upright stakes, placed there really to "mend a gap") & admiring myself by seeing myself reflected in the water. In the same manner as the stag mentioned in our school book.

This stag quenching his thirst in a clear stream was struck by the beauty of his horns at the same time reflecting on the slowness of

his legs, said. What a pity it is that so fine a creature as I am should be furnished with a so despicable set of spindleshanks, just then he heard the cry of the hounds, and he made off with all speed into the forest, but his horns or antlers, of which he had been so proud, became entangled in the branches, and he was held there until the hounds came up, and killed him. He realised when too late, that his legs had been made for use, & his horns for ornament, & the ornament was of little use in danger, and but for them he would have escaped the hounds. But to get back to myself, whilst reflecting & viewing myself, suddenly the rail I was leaning on broke, and I found myself floundering in the water below. However I got out as quickly as possible, stripped myself of all my wet clothes and laid them out on the fence to dry in the sun, & continued to mind the cows, naked

32 as I was born. The cows didn't seem to mind, so far as I can remember. It was real fun to us two ^{when} one day ~~we~~ whilst still engaged in the same manner of rounding the cows. A little boy came to play with us, and we thought of having rides on one of them. The cows were very quiet and we had often been on their backs when they were lying down about the yard. But this day we put the little boy (Jimmy Begg) on first (he being our guest so to speak) & we smacked the beast to make her get up which she did in a very leisurely manner, & then stood still. At last however we got her started off, & at a good pace. Just when we were thinking what great fun it was & what a good ride it was, the cow suddenly stopped and Jimmy went on and over her horns. No harm was done but we thought that was enough, and I think so did Jimmy.

But what an event it was in our

33 young lives when harvest time came and was over, and we were expecting the machine to come to thresh out the corn in the stacks. There would be the engine to come, and the combine, (that was the thresher) and the elevators. The engine and combine each required four horses to bring. But it was, when the smoke came out of the funnel, & the belts put on, & then the whistle blown, and the wheels to go round, the hum of the combine as speed was got up, the chugging of the engine. Life was real. Life was earnest to our young selves, and last of all the enormous long whistle given to notify the next farmer to bring his horses to take the machine away (This whistle was sometimes about half a mile long) and ended much of our joy, for there was a gloom came over all when the machine had gone away. But for days after, & even at nights after

we had gone to bed, we would amuse ourselves acting as the machine had with its hum-ma-mung and chugg. Chugging and noises, and even afterwards we had lots of fun, sliding down from the straw stacks, and playing "hide and seek in the straw."

Christmas time was one of rejoicing. But it was without the presents that are so much the order of the present time. There was no hanging up of our stockings, in anticipating a visit from Santa Claus or Father Christmas. In fact I cannot remember even the mention of his name. It was the custom with us of which I do not know the origin, the being the one who would first open the door on Christmas morning. I could never see much in it, perhaps because I was not always up first by any means, and there was a condition attached that when once the door was opened and "letting Christmas in", there was to be no going back to bed, so it was scarcely worth while getting up too early. The same

applied very much the same, applied to letting in the New Year. Only the one who had opened the door had to have five little sticks, & to take each one separately, & make some wish. I forget what the names were, only the last one which was a Happy New Year. Suddenly if the thing were properly done, a bright flower of some sort, would suddenly be seen. I must confess that whilst I had opened the door and gone through the proper formula, yet I never saw any flower. Later on I had my doubts. But Christmas day was altogether different. There was a gathering of a few neighbours, & various games played in the afternoon. A couple of geese were generally cooked for dinner, and boiled ham, together with the big plum pudding, but without coins of any sort being included in it. Afterwards there was a big mince pie, the mince about two inches thick. It was a great day altogether and the after thought was; what a long time until Christmas comes again. I cannot remember anything out standing

96 on my first day of going to school. I presume that there would be my sister Annie, & brothers George and John and Joseph. It was a question of us walking, and as I would be five years old at the time, two and a half miles, was a long walk, the only pony to ride was Shanks. There was no public school building in the district at that time, and the school was held in what at that time was called the Scotch Church. The first public school teaching was begun in 1864. The Church must have been built only some little time previous to that. I could not have attended there very long, for early in the following year, a school building was erected and opened for teaching ^{May} 1869. I cannot be certain of the name of my first teacher, but I think it was a Mr. Smith. The discipline in the school could not have been very good, for I can recall, some of the children running outside, and getting some lollies from the pedlar that used to go about with his goods. I can well remember giving the teacher a punch on

97 the shin, and he pulled up his trousers & let down his sock, and sure enough I had drawn blood. Well it was no wonder for at that time all the boys' boots had a copper ^{toe plate} ~~band~~ in the front called a "corker". I cannot say how many children would be attending at this time, but the number must have been increasing rapidly which necessitated a proper building. The families were much larger in those times. The first teacher in the new school, was a Mr. Elman. A splendid teacher, & a man whose influence for good is reflected in the district even until the present time. Under his tuition I made great progress, and when he left after being in charge for eighteen months or so, I had at that time a very retentive memory and knew my multiplication tables up to 20 times, yes actually every one I could also do big addition sums, even to four & five figures across, and six lines or so deep. Later under another teacher of little ability I lost ground very much. This same Mr. Elman

38 was a strict disciplinarian, but never once did he use either a cane or a strap. His methods of punishment were unique and altogether different to ~~the~~ ^{those} later adopted and practised by other teachers, which was to drive it in from different quarters, some of whom were unduly severe, and sometimes given in real anger and not altogether justifiable.

On one occasion he detected several of the boys amusing themselves by shooting the pencils along the groove in the desk in front of them. The punishment was being kept in the school after dismissal, of the rest of the scholars, for half an hour to spin pens & pencils along the groove. Or it might possibly to stand the culprit on the form or seat, for a like period. An extra bad offence, I cannot remember what, but imposed on the biggest girl in the school and she was mounted upon a very high stool as near as I can remember about three feet in height. This stool was principally used for to place the black board

39 on, there being no desks at that time for a while the girl seemed to think it quite a joke, and laughed & giggled, and until a sense of shame apparently dawned upon her, and her laughter turned to copious tears. A very common form was to stand the child in the corner of the school with face to the corner, sometimes more than one corner was occupied & sometimes they would be three deep one behind the other. Half an hour meditation on our wrong doing, but one compensation there was no lesson to be done in the mean while. One particular event in which I was implicated had its amusing side. It was the custom for the larger boy to exercise some authority ~~over~~ over the children on the school ground during the dinner hour or recess. Between the school ground, and the adjoining section upon which the Wesleyan Church was built (called Chapel at that time) there was a very deep gulley. At any rate we

40 thought it deep at that time. We were strictly forbidden, to go into this gully, however I and another boy disobeyed this command. At the call to go into school after the dinner hour, we were missing, and the "monitor" as the bigger boy was called, was told off to call us up. Instead however of calling us to come up, he himself came down to us & told us to come up. When we got into the school, we two boys were sent in to the corner for half an hour, and the bigger boy was sent along with us and stood behind. He had exceeded his instructions and had broken the order along with us. "The way of transgressors is hard."

I call to mind a stubborn girl, "fibbed" in her reading lesson. There was a word ^{yes} in the lesson. She was tried in all ways but without avail. The school porch when the doors were closed was in absolute darkness. So into the black hole ^{she went, but} this had no effect. The next day the same thing happened. She absolutely refused to say "yes". So it was the black hole

41 again. Hord was evidently sent to her father & he punished her. Told the teacher thinking that he had now an easy victory. ~~So when~~ in school the next morning. He asked? Did your father punish you last night? She replied "He did". There was a little further "solitary," but about midday she surrendered.

I remember one ~~wet~~ day at school when it was too wet to go outside at the dinner time. When duties commenced, the teacher noticed a slice of buttered bread on a desk. He questioned every child as to whether it was theirs or not. But all denied. So to find the guilty one he resorted to the method of drawing lots. Slates were used in those days to do most of the arithmetic on, & not in exercise books. Pencils (slate) were used but when these got short, we had pencil cases, about five inches long given to us, these were really just made of tin and rounded. So that we should not lose them invariably there was

42 a tiny hole in the end in which to insert a string and tie the pencil case to the slate. It occasionally happened that an odd case would be minus this hole. The teacher to find the culprit, got out a goodly bunch of these according to the number of children that were under suspicion, & amongst them there was one minus the little hole. Well when the lots were drawn, I was the one unfortunate to draw it. And the piece of bread was given to me. It certainly wasn't mine for the butter on it was vile. However I took it home, & told another, & she said throw it out to the hens & was quickly disposed of. We had copy books in those days, as we proceeded in our improvement we got others of a higher order, until the later ones had beautiful copper plate on the head line. My first book started with the strokes and pothooks. I had not proceeded very far on the first line of my book when a big blot appeared and instead of using the blotting paper I used my thumb

43 I imagine I can see that long black smudge even now. When I got to making the letters about three quarters of an inch long there was the big letter ~~M~~ M. Between the lines there was a tiny space and in this space I made a very small ~~m~~ m. and very neatly done. Just then the teacher looked over my shoulder and asked, when did you make that? please Sir, Yesterday. I was very quickly bowled over and my little lie detected when he placed the blotting paper & it came off wet. There is still in existence the old blacksmith shop, that went in those days by the name of "Smiddy". Well But, the anvil has long ago ceased to ring & the bellows to blow. In those times it was occupied by a man named Kidd, and from daylight until dark, & often after dark there would be the roar of the bellows and the clang on the anvil. I remember getting a rivet put in a pocket knife that had come apart. To go inside this "smiddy" after

school was a delight, to hear the bellows blow & the fire roaring, & then the sparks to fly when the iron was taken out, was a real pleasure. The clang of the hammer on the anvil was lovely music. But not because of these things was it so deeply impressed on my mind, ^{because} but what still lingers with me a very cruel joke played on me. This particular afternoon, just as I was going in ~~that~~ he, (the blacksmith) had just taken a piece of iron out of the fire and had cut off a small piece. I did not see this done, nor know about it, but when I got beside him at the anvil, he said, pick one up that little piece of iron off the ground. So immediately doing as I was asked, I picked it up to give to him, but I did not know until I had it in my fingers that it had just come from the fire. My little fingers were badly burned. But the man laughed at seeing me drop it so quickly, told me in future ~~too~~ to be sure and spit on it first. I sometimes think of the saying of one who said, "See that ye offend

It was somewhere early in 1871 when a new teacher came to the school, a man called Mr. Grossman. From what I learned from others & also my own experience, he had no special ability as a teacher or a scholar. But in those times there was not the facilities for educational training, as there is now, & teachers were appointed as they could be procured. Under this teacher we had rather a sorry time, & he seemed to have no control over himself when things went wrong, & his methods were to drive it in instead of shewing us how things should be done. The cane was in constant use, & sometimes for very trivial things it was a flogging. One I received myself, & a terrible one it was but I was marked all over, black and blue. I did not go back to school for a fortnight. Another victim was Henry Tabling, who for making some small mistake in the writing was ordered to come forward & receive some punishment. He did not respond immediately and protested that the mistake was only

46 The Letter A. However, the teacher, began to ~~flag~~ him where he was, & the boy catching hold of the cane, (which had a slight bend at the end) was pulled away, & left a very big gash between the thumb and forefinger. The boy was then dragged from his seat & over the desk, and ~~was~~ mercilessly flogged. Another was a boy named Crowe. I can recall his first day at school when asked his name said "Master my name is Michael John Crowe. For something or other that had happened on the road home the evening before. He was ordered to hold out his hands alternately to receive twenty strokes. I remember, he held out until about sixteen had been received, & then collapsed, but the teacher finished it off with flogging over the shoulders.

But I think now it was in keeping with the stern punishments inflicted on the wrong doers in every phase of life. The Cat-o-nine tails was an instrument of punishment administered in the Criminal Courts, for offenders. There was no "First Offenders Act"

47 in operation at that time. Very long terms of imprisonment, were given, and the poor unfortunates, were branded for ever as criminals without much hope, of ever recovering their place in society. To day we live in a much more enlightened age, and the purpose is to give a chance for reform. So in school life, a different method of instruction is given & corporal punishment rarely resorted to.

But there was a dread in the very thought of having to go to school, never knowing what was in store for us.

But still we had our pleasures in the school ground. There were the games that we resorted to, & some of them have even continued until the present time. There was "Round about the Mulberry bush on cold & frosty mornings, and Oranges & Lemons, Cherry Chase" a fine game & a favourite. There was the "Running the gauntlet". Not so pleasant for the one who had to do the running. Spinning tops, playing marbles,

48 Running across the ring, and "Bull in the ring" This last was pretty popular, for it consisted in the boys forming a large circle with hands clasped together. One of the boys had to take his place in the centre, & he was called the "Bull". His job was to find a weak place somewhere in the ring and to break through, if successful the ring was broken up and all hands went full cry to secure the Bull. The one who caught the beast, had to take his place & become the next "Bull".

There was an occasional fight on the ground, but as I mentioned before the "monitors" were to keep a look out and to jot down on a slate, anything that was thought worthy of correction. I can remember, being the culprit on one occasion, when in this game of "Bull in the Ring" I gave the bull a vicious kick in the stern & made him roar.

In school afterwards there was quite a court case of enquiry into the circumstances

49 I cannot recall it all, but the injured person gave his version, conducting his own case. He (Davie Scott) of Scotch ancestry, began "We were playin' 'Bul in the ring & I was the Bul". The teacher immediately made the remark "And a fine bull you would make". Davie was a sturdily built chap much of the Shorthorn type. The funny thing about it is that I cannot recall whether or not I was found guilty & had punishment administered, but it is quite possible. The teacher did not miss many chances.

From the direction that we went to school there were not a great many children who attended, possibly twenty or so. Those from other directions would be at least three times as many, and later on, very many more. From those from the other directions, there were continual complaints made to the teacher of quarrels on the road. But on our side, we made it a rule never to tell. Once, however, there was a very near break,

50 of this rule. Several of the children had ^a long a distance to come, even as far as six miles but these rode on horses. There were two boys I particularly remember a George Wilson and also a John Kneeshaw. On going home one evening the rest of us boys hid behind a big bush & when these boys came riding up, we jumped out and frightened the horses. John Kneeshaw fell off ~~the~~ his horse, and immediately there was the threat of being reported the next morning. All that night & next morning there was the dread of this report hanging over us, but, the next day passed off without any trouble and he volunteered the information that he remembered our rule of the road to make no complaints.

On one occasion this said John Kneeshaw did me a kindly turn, which I have never forgotten. It was when I was kept in school one dinner hour, to write about Joseph. He had Scripture lessons at that time. I had not long been given an exercise book to write composition in and to collect my knowledge & write what

51 knew, and put it on paper was not satisfactory so after being in school for some time and still finding nothing to record, John came inside, & told me what to put down, about his "Coat of many colours," and being sold by his brethren. It made quite a good showing. Later in life I have the impression that he became the Chairman of the Sydney Tramway Company, and carried a high salary. The first house along the road side as we came home from school was occupied by a Mr. Cunningham. Later on a very large house was erected a little further away, and a special roadway and drive was made.

At this time of the sod house, it was enclosed by gum trees, and a gorse fence. In this fence or hedge was a gap where a few of the plants had failed. Inside this fence was a garden, and grew gooseberries in profusion. At this time, they had one little girl Jenny & she also went to school with us. She intimated to the bigger boys about the gooseberries, & she was bribed some

52 how to get some for them. This had happened on more than one occasion, but in the course of their waiting ^{one} outside for the usual supply to come, out rushed her father instead, and, what a scatter! He chased some of them for a quarter of a mile. I was only small at that time and he went for the bigger ones. There were no more berries forthcoming, nor waiting at the gap. Of Mr. Cunningham I remember going in to their yard at milking time when on my way home from school, and asking for a drink of new milk and she kindly gave it to me. In later years I got better acquainted with her, but a great change had come into her life. But what a long distance it seemed to be to the school. From one turn to another we seemed to know how we were getting on, as we came to each bend. We generally cut off as many corners as possible, by going across the neighbours paddock. But for certain we never ~~did~~ dawdled whilst crossing the same Mr. Cunninghams

53 paddock. We always took a good look to see that the road was clear. We looked upon him as a very stern man, and a familiar expression of his was: "By the hocky!" And later I came to know him better and to consider that his bark was worse than the bite. I heard of him as once shewing a very reasonable attitude towards a servant girl they had in their employ. It was in the evening when the cows were being milked, that the cow being milked by the girl, kicked a bucketful of milk over. "Kiver it up, Kiver it up quick, afore the old lady sees it." Presumably there was some one else that could bark as well as bite. Having been, comparatively recently over the old familiar grounds, I was much impressed to notice how short the distances seemed to be, how small the school ground. Why it seemed only a good "hop, step & jump" along the road to the old creek bed, where we used to play cricket

54 and where amongst the flax bushes we played "Hace and Hounds".
But now for a return for a little while to school matters. The teacher last mentioned was interested in soldiering, and ~~belonged~~ belonged to the volunteer corp. On part of a day in each week we had "drill" which consisted mainly, what was called "falling in" Quick March: Right turn Left turn, Right about face, form fours & general marching time, left, right &c. then forward and halt. Once I remember we made a good display on the occasion of a Sunday School anniversary celebration, when we marched in column formation, with nearly all the older people looking on. What a peculiarity it was that at that time we looked upon our parents as old people, when really they were only muddled and younger...
Occasionally there came to the school a drill instructor, a Mr. Walker. But his performances were mostly on the ~~parallel~~ parallel bars, and the horizontal ladder.

55 He was certainly a clever gymnast. But to me the most interesting and outstanding was his running about on his hands with his feet up in the air. I never managed to master this art, and satisfied myself that right side up was best. After a few days the ordinary games regained their proper place. I remember falling off the horizontal ladder, and striking my head on the ground. This nearly finished me. Luckily my head was fairly hard (perhaps something like a block) but I suppose that I should have been offended had any one suggested that I had a block head.

In the course of time exceeding three years, this teacher Mr. Mossman left and a Mr. Smith took charge. Under him I have nothing special to record, beyond that he was a kindly man and a good teacher, and under his tuition I began again to drink in learning, such as it was, but the few previous years was

56 almost a complete loss. It was those few years that caused me to lose something, that I was never able to recover. This Mr Smith remained with us less than a year, and was succeeded by a Mr John Baldwin, about the end of 1874 or ~~beginning~~ ^{beginning} of 1875. He was an English trained teacher and under his tuition, the school reached its palmy days of teaching, and its record was one of, if not the highest in scholastic attainments Under the Canterbury Board of Education I was under his tuition until for about four years or more, but he stayed in the district for nine years, and later became the Head Master of the Sydenham School, with a roll of nearly one thousand children. He was a hard master, in some ways, a strict disciplinarian, a good teacher, knowing how to impart knowledge, even if it had to be done from the head downwards to well below the shoulders. In addition he was a good cricketer.

On the whole, however, I liked him, others

57 may have had different opinions.

It was only those few years that I had passed through the highest standards, and, into Latin Euclid and Algebra. I never received any severe punishment from him, I do not know that I ever deserved it. But, later whilst in the upper standards, my mate at that ^{time}, the only boy in the ~~first~~ sixth standard, complained to him that I was being favoured. I had not noticed it, but evidently he had been thinking the matter over and had come to the conclusion that he was getting an undue share of the care. However, the teacher denied any favouritism. But I did notice afterwards that I did get a good deal more whacking than previously, until I at last turned on him and accused him of giving me for the same mistakes three strokes for the other boys one.

As I record these matters of very many years ago, there comes to me the thought of what a great difference there is now

58 in both the methods of teaching and what is being taught. Now a days these children love to go to school, there is no dread of what punishment we had to endure. The children are taught to reason and think things out for themselves. and in addition a good deal more ^{time} is spent in out door pastimes, and our bodies ^{not} to be but a recepticle in which to cram in a great deal of material, which in the long run has not been of much importance. In addition to our work in the school there was the work to be done in the evening at home, and this took up hours. But as I think of it this work is now mostly done, by those who have left the primary schools and attend the Secondary.

But our duties in addition to the three R's (Reading, Writing & Arithmetic) included Grammar (not essential) Geography, which included map drawing of practically all the countries in the world, but also the learning of the names of all the principal industries

59 ~~to~~ in those various countries, together with the names of the cities, the rivers and their length, the mountains and their height in feet, together with all the capes, bays, gulfs &c. History (Confin'd to English) The names of the sovereigns, when they were born, crowned King or Queens, the date of their death. The Chief events in the various reigns &c. &c.

There were certainly very many large maps on the walls of the school, but there were also very very many maps of coal industry, blast furnace & manufacture. Out of these we were never shown anything. What a large bundle of books we had to carry on our shoulders, backwards & forwards to school. Would it have been any wonder had we grown up lopsided.

I remember father buying me a knapsack to carry my books on my back & to walk upright, which I think I have done ever since. When the Inspector came to examine the school, which he did once a year, it was

ha, ha,

60 mostly to find out how much we had retained of all the cramming we had done during the year. We generally dreaded the day, but we were pretty well grounded in our work, and well on in the next year's duties.

There were some amusing incidents in these examinations. One in particular, on a certain question was asked in mental arithmetic. It passed around the whole class, until it got to the last boy, who gave the correct answer immediately. The Inspector put his hand in his pocket, drew out a shilling and gave it to the boy. This boy was not looked upon by the master as by any means the smartest ~~boy~~ in the class, but when the returns came out, ~~this~~ ~~boy~~ was at the top of the list.

On another being examined in history we were asked the ^{name} of a certain king who was ^{surnamed} ~~Crookshanks~~ ^{Richard}. We could not remember, but one boy had an inkling that it had something to do with the legs, so he answered Panty-legs.

Richard, surnamed, Crookshanks

61 The inspector accepted this.

One day on being lined up to go into school after the recess, I and my fellow scholar had a discussion about a French halfpenny that he shewed me. We were not supposed to talk after the bell had rung. But the master had seen us through the window, & when we got inside, he inquired what our discussion had been about. We told him a French half penny: Well you can stay in after school and translate a Latin exercise. ~~Well~~ We were not very quick at this matter so we chanced the device of translating one that we had done the previous week. Nothing was said, however, when we shewed him our work the next morning and there was no indication given that he had recognized the substituted exercise. Some how we had heard that lady teachers were not required to have a knowledge of Algebra. On a particular day the Head teacher was away, & the school left in charge of the Head mistress. He decided

62 To put her to the test, I boldly took our Algebra and asked for her assistance. We scored a victory and were very much elated, when she told us that she had no knowledge of the subject.

There was a bit of a squabble one day between my brother Joseph and another boy. I don't know what it was about, only my brother tried to force the other to do something, but it was no use. The boy said, "The more you try to make me do it, the more I won't so I will".

Reverting to punishments, the boy that I spoke of previously as receiving the stalling, was in disgrace & sent out by the teacher to procure a stick with which to be punished. Now around the school house there were a large number of poplar trees, which as everyone knows grow lovely switch sticks. Hundreds of ideal ones for the purpose. This boy was outside for a matter of about twenty minutes, when he came in again, having a very hang-dog appearance, and presented the

63 Teacher with the stick, about a foot long and the thickness of an ordinary lead pencil. The teacher on seeing it, said: "Go to your seat". He didn't shew it to us but no doubt in his own mind he appreciated the boys wisdom.

On another occasion, he was punished for something he was quite innocent of. Later the boy was proved innocent, and was told that the punishment he had received, would be placed to his credit against the next time that he deserved one.

Another boy evened up matters of a punishment received, by destroying a setting of eggs. They failed to hatch in the ordinary way. There was another boy upon whom an undeserved punishment had been inflicted and the bitterness rankled, ~~and~~ and he vowed at sometime or other to get even. (But this was by an earlier teacher) In later years this boy, now grown to be a man, was employed on a farm in a district called Greendale.

This former teacher, was also in the same district. It happened one day the former pupil had occasion to cross the Selwyn river (at which time there was a considerable body of water running) with a horse and dray. With him was the former teacher, and when part of the way had been accomplished, he stopped the horse, & ordered his passenger out. Protest was of no avail, & he had to step out into the water & wade through. The man drove on with the dray & when over, he told his former passenger to get in again, as they were now quits. Explanations followed and so matters were evened up.

There was a time when catapults (or Shanghaes) as we called them) were all the rage. They were a very dangerous weapon, & were constantly in use, but very often they were used to kill birds, particularly parakeets, which at that time were plentiful. Stones used as ammunition was everywhere in abundance, but there was the danger, using them on the school ground of some one getting hurt, and also the possibility

of the school windows getting broken. One morning on going to school, or (rather after getting there) a boy offered to buy the Shanghai that I had. As he offered me fourpence for the weapon and paid "plump on the nail." I let him have it. Immediately after going in to school, the edict fell like a bomb shell upon all who had weapons. Deliver up all the weapons, which was done without demur & the teacher threw the whole into the fire and were destroyed. No doubt there were some heart burning, I presume the purchaser of mine felt rather warm, but I felt quite cool with the fourpence in my pocket.

One morning on our way to school, we, (my brother Lance & myself) came across a ^{clutch} ~~crowd~~ of young pheasants. They had just hatched and we decided to take them with us. Pheasants had not long been introduced into New Zealand, and were altogether protected in so far that they

66 were not to be shot only during a certain part of the year, & then only by holding a license to do so. We arrived at the school in good time, and with great glee, showed the young birds to the boys, but we got a big scare, when told that it was illegal to take them or have them in our possession, & there were hints of us being put into "chokey" or gaol. Our interest in young pheasants quickly vanished, for we had the "wind up", and quickly decided to get rid of them as speedily as possible. It was now just about a quarter past nine & school would be going in, in a quarter of an hour. However there was no help for it, so we together with another boy with us took them back to where we had got them, some were dead by this time, but our conscience seemed eased. As it was more than a mile to where we had got them, we were pretty late in getting back. The teacher asked where we had been as he had seen us on the school ground earlier. We made a full confession and

67 were pardoned.

There were several occasions upon which we had school picnics. The first I have a very faint recollection of, being one to Lake Ellesmere. It must have been a very slow journey, for there was ~~no~~ means of travelling only by going in a dray. All I can remember was of getting on some vessel which was called a schooner, but was water logged. The next occasion was one that we were all taken to Lyttelton, and ~~taken for~~ ^{had to} a sail around the harbour, in a big open boat. On this occasion, we went by the train getting on board at the Selwyn Station. When we got through the tunnel which had been made through the hills to connect Christchurch with Lyttelton. My first view of the water seems now quite fresh in my mind. It was a day ever to be remembered. We did not get the chance to travel about much in those times, for the usual method of doing so round about was in the dray. The horse would be put between the

68 shafts, and some straw in the bottom, and a few boxes to sit on. This was our only means whether to get to the railway station, or to Church, or in visiting the neighbours. No there were no fancy turn outs in those times. Every body was in the same circumstances. And it was years before there was such a thing as a trap or a buggy. I think that I was nine years old when I first went to Christchurch, and that was on an occasion of the Christchurch Show, which was held on November the Ninth, the then Prince of Wales' (later King Edward VII) birthday. The show ground at that time was on the Colombo Street, and in close proximity to the School, Post Office and the Methodist Church. This same ground is now occupied, a general park and sports ground. My visit to the show left little outstanding beyond seeing a few cattle. I was more interested in later years, but I can recall also at that time going along the street, into a store where they sold lollies and oranges. The first time that I had been into a store. Previous buyings had

69 been a pennyworth of lollies from the pedlar. It was ^{considerable} some ~~little~~ time after ^{that} I was in the city again. I had a look through the museum, and saw the workings on the Cathedral that was then being built. At that time the walls were only a few feet high in places. What a thrill of pleasure came upon me once, when it was announced that a Clergyman of the name of Cholmondeley (Chumly) was to give a Lecture on Sir John Franklin's voyage in the Arctic regions, in his endeavour to find a passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific. There was also to be shewn slides or pictures of the scenery. The Magic Lantern. And what joy when getting home from school one day I was told that I was to go. But seeing those pictures before my face, was the opening of a new world to me, but what a difference to now, when Pictures & the many other things bring not only the scenes, but also the voices from the far distance. The matter of the lecture itself

70 was of little importance at the time, but Oh those pictures! The ice fields and walrus and seals. And what a pleasure when we were taken to Christchurch to the Great Cooper and Bailey Menagerie and Circus. And there saw the elephants and lions, tigers and many other kinds of animals, and to see the performances of the various actors and acrobats, and most wonderful of all the ventriloquist.

I think that it was early in the year 1840 that ^{the} first Sunday School was opened. I cannot really recall anything outstanding about it, nor who was the first Superintendent, but I think that it must have been Mr. Elman, who was in charge of the Public School. It was very soon after his coming to the district, and chiefly through his instrumentality, that the Methodist Church had been built. It was called the Wesleyan Chapel at the time, and the Church as a whole throughout New Zealand was known as the Wesleyan Church. Its adherents were called Wesleyans. The influence which he manifested

71 in the district remains even to the present time, and the Building is still in existence. Previous to this there were church services held in the Scotch Church as previously mentioned being used for school purposes.

I can recollect a Mr. Stewart and also a Mr. McCleary conducting services, but there was no stationed minister in charge. I can also recollect going on the Sunday to services being held in private houses, one in particular at Mr. Moor's, & I think that there were also services held in our house.

After the Wesleyan Chapel was opened a minister by the name of Mr. Keall, used to come occasionally, & it was under his charge or circuit of Springston that had the oversight. Well I remember his once coming to our place and staying the Saturday night with us after his visiting around amongst his people. At this time he was not married. There was not much accommodation in our house at the time, as there were so many of us. However he closed in

72 with my Brother William. Early on the Sunday morning, after the milking had been done I was trying to feed a very young calf, and like a good many calves even at the present day, are a bit obstinate. I tried the usual method which I have often since seen done, of holding the calf's head in the bucket and ^{trying to} forcing it to drink, this only resulted in a bubble and noise in the bucket, and a fierce jump to get breathing again. On this occasion I gave the calf a kick on the nose for its pains. I did not know then that the minister was at this time looking through the window of the bedroom. When I came to the house afterwards, and he had come outside, he said "Put your nose down Tommy and let me kick it" I don't remember anything else being said, but I wasn't slow in the intake & knew well what was implied. There must have been nearly fifty children attending the Sunday School, which was held at two o'clock in the afternoon. After the morning service the older folks went home

73 and we children played about for about two hours until the teachers returned having had dinner. Occasionally we rambled about a good deal, no one having charge of us, and followed the creek, before mentioned around. One boy ^{started} sucking the nectar out of a flax stick which was then in bloom. It happened that at this same time, a bee which had arrived earlier, and was engaged on the same job, and stung the boy on the lip. This swelled up very considerably and was very noticeable when back in the Sunday School, the Superintendent at that time a Mr. Moor spoke upon the sin of Sabbath breaking. Yes, they were stern times and the big stick was a great incentive to proper conduct. Not that the cane was ever used in the Sunday school. There comes to mind one being told by a boy attending the Presbyterian Sunday school that for something or other that he had done, the teacher warned him, ^{and others} that if they were not good, they would go to some

74 place where ^{their} ~~his~~ father or mother would never be able to get them out.

We always looked anxiously forward to the Sunday school anniversary when was held the tea meeting, and afterwards at the public meeting prizes would be distributed. We practiced special hymns for the occasion, but this was more especially for the night of the prize giving, and not on the Sunday. It was very noticeable that for several Sundays previously there would be quite an increase in the number of scholars, but slackened off soon afterwards.

These anniversary functions, whether in the Church or Sunday School, were great occasions and the whole of the district people turned out. Every body in their happiest mood.

There would be generably six tables or trays as they were called. These were presided over and given by the women folk of the several families. Each one would be expected to supply enough food for about three dozen people. The present fashion of pooling was

75 not in vogue then, so that there was a good deal of rivalry and sometimes jealousy as to who had the finest set out, and really the displays were exceedingly good, and it was not a matter of buying from the confectioner, but it was all home made and together with the tarts, cheese cakes and "blanc Mange", there were no jellies then as now, but this shivery coloured blanc Mange was something to make the mouth water. All was good and wholesome. I particularly remember one such tea meeting, for to me it was a complete dis-appointment, not because the food was not good, but because I started on the good things at the wrong end. At that particular time "Short Bread" was my especial choice, and I started straight away on that. They were not little dainty pieces, but good sized squares. By the time I had finished one piece, my capacity was ~~exhausted~~ full up, I could eat no more. What were all the tarts & other good

things to one then; they knocked one. But I learned wisdom from experience. Never again was I caught in like manner. But taken altogether what pleasant times they were. There was no such thing in those days as the pictures, nor the radio, nor nor telephones nor motor cars, nor flying machines.

But the remembrance of one thing calls up another. It was on one of these occasions when things were being got ready, one of the teachers, in fact the Superintendent, was attending to the boiling of the water, and had hung up his coat on the parallel bars in the school ground. I was amusing my self on those bars, and he issued a very strong warning, that if I knocked his coat off, he would give me a kick on the place unmentionable here. — But I think it began with H.

In the earliest period of my attendance at the Sunday School, it was customary to distribute tickets to the scholars, on which was printed a verse of scripture. This was supposed to be committed to memory

and recited the following Sunday. After six tickets had been received a card was given, and later, a bigger card still. But the system was altered, and there was supplied at the beginning of each year, a list containing the lessons to be used on every Sunday through the year. On this list was also given the text of scripture to be learned. This was one verse from the Chapter of the Bible being read, or the portion for the day.

On this list were given a few rules to be followed. First and foremost, was that it should be placed or fastened on the inside cover of the book, so that there would be no necessity or possibility of its being lost. This was a good rule, & did away with any

worry as to where the list was, and to be asking, where is my list? I cannot find my list. Each one of us had our own Bible, and here I might say that it was customary even in the Church services for every one to have their own Bible and hymn book, and

78 generally when the preacher read the lesson each one would open their books, and follow as he read)

On this list was also another suggestion, which at the time I could not understand. It was, "Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest". Perhaps I had heard of digesting my food, but it was another matter to digesting what was on the list. ~~For~~ it we were also enjoined to learn our lesson early in the week so that we would know them when called upon to say them. This rule was very seldom kept, and very often, there was a hurried attempt to learn, even whilst in class, and the ~~one~~ last one had the best chance. But there was a good deal of prompting, and the teacher would say, you haven't learned it at all, which often was quite true. In addition to our Scripture text there was a hymn verse to be committed to memory, and also several questions from the catechism. So altogether, with day school and Sunday school, we had to stow away a lot of material. Whilst on this matter of

79 reading the scriptures, I would call to mind that during the whole of my career at the day school, it was part of the educational system, that there was half an hour spent each morning directly the school opened for us to have Scripture lessons. And we started at the first book in the Bible: Genesis. Which means the beginning of things, and followed on through the whole of the historical books, and thus we got a thorough grounding in the history of those early times and of the children of Israel and the Jews. It is nearly sixty years now since it has been allowable for the book to ^{be} used in the schools of the Dominion.

These various matters that I have recorded cover a period until I was about fifteen years old and when my school days concluded. There were other matters which were no doubt equal in importance, such as my eldest sister's wedding, when I was about eleven years old, & I must here

record that her husband was in my estimation, the nicest man that I have ever met in my life. It was always a pleasure to one when I could visit them, and once I even stayed all night at their home which was out of the ordinary. It was this person who paid the pence for me to go to the lantern lecture before mentioned; and on another occasion, he gave me a heifer calf, which I kept for several years and finally sold for the huge sum of Six pounds. What a magnificent sum of money to handle. (£6) really! The money boxes in those times, were not like many now a days. and I think of the pleasure of a glance occasionally of the contents. There was tragedy in their home, when their little baby girl was drowned, she was ^{less than} two years old, & I think of the evening before, when we had the little girl at our house and what a fuss we made of her, and we all sang little hymns & she was a good talker & could sing with us "Rock of Ages". Next day when we were at

school, my brother William came for us & told us that she had been drowned. So mingled together there is joy & sorrow, sunshine and cloud. In the mean time, or during this period, as our family was growing up, we each ultimately took our places. After my sisters marriage, we had a girl engaged to assist in the home work. My eldest brothers, engaged in the farm work & my twin brothers became pupil teachers in the school & later on my youngest brother, & all ultimately entering upon the teaching profession. I had no hankering for that career, I would have preferred some trade (carpentering for preference) but a severe illness which mother developed was the occasion for my quick removal from school, to assist in the dairy work. And at this, I remained for over three years and then passed on to the general farm work, altho never having any particular liking for it.

82. The extent of our farm was originally sixty five acres, of freehold as previously mentioned. A little later was added fifty acres of leasehold. The owner of this got a big fright as the result of the flood previously mentioned and leased ~~it~~ ^{the farm} to father for fourteen years at a rental of £1 per acre. When this lease expired it was renewed for a further 21 years at a slightly higher rental. Then there was a forty acre ^{piece} which the owner getting into some difficulties sold for £25 per acre, these three places together made up what we called the homestead totalling 155 acres. ~~Over~~ Another 100 acres was also purchased, about 1 1/2 miles away, but was heavy swamp land, & having been at one time heavily timbered, but there was only the buried timber consisting of Totara, Matai, Takamatea, & Manuka. This was only seen after the swamp had been drained, ~~when~~ the timber showed up & the ~~ground~~ land settled ^{down} & the whole of this area was ~~then~~ also covered with dense flax. In later years after drainage & sown down with English grass. It was mostly used for running dry stock

83

For cropping purposes, it was not the best beyond producing enormous quantities of rough feed but too much straw when cropped.

Taken altogether the farm as a whole was more suited for grazing purposes, & altho. very good and heavy crops were grown on it, yet its carrying capacity for stock was exceptionally good. The extent of our cropping rarely exceeded sixty acres. But it would carry a beast to the acre, & this is generally reckoned as first class. We did not go in at any time for sheep. Father at one time said that he was no judge of cattle, but he was a good judge of horses. He never developed as a breeder of high class horses, but he certainly did become a breeder of very high class Short horn cattle, & was known all over the country as a breeder, & was in general request all over Canterbury as a judge of that class of cattle at the various agricultural shows. At that early time, the Short horn cattle

were the predominant breed, and the very earliest people who came to Canterbury had brought out that class of cattle. The Deans, Rhodes, Hays & many others had these cattle running on their various station properties, & hence a good class of cattle were in existence altho. the general run of folks in the farming line did not bother about the pedigree. So what cattle father got at the start, altho. not having a recorded pedigree, ~~however were or not~~ aristocratic names yet were good stuff for a foundation. Of such I remember "Old Maggie, Old Betty, which later had a daughter named Young Betty (a prize winner at various shows) & Hayflower, Lily, Roney &c. A good foundation for what came after, when he went in for pure bred stock. His first purchase of a sire was an animal called "Marquis of Waterford" from a milking strain of A. A. Lanthams. Later he purchased one, an importation from Victoria "Alvies Heis"

by the same name. And he was the progenitor of a good many heroes on the show grounds. We confined ourselves as a rule to milking forty cows, & we manufactured cheese in the summer time & butter in the winter. This was the only time when there was a payable price for butter. And it was only possible to do so then, as it was before the days of refrigerating & too warm in the summer time. Sometimes, however, a quantity would be salted down as we called it and put into casks. Each cask or firkin holding seventy pounds. The milk was set out in flat pans, so as to allow the cream to rise & mostly kept fresh for a couple of days, when the cream was skimmed off, with what we called a skimmer, & this cream kept for a week, & Friday was generally the big churning day. Compared with present-day methods, there was nothing very scientific about it, either in the making of cheese or butter. All the same we had a name for making both good butter & cheese, & often gained prizes

86 for The same at the various shows which were held. There is a beautiful Silver Cup which I had in my possession for a long time but now is in the possession of my son-in-law. At this particular time of which I speak before the advent of refrigerating, it was only possible to cure bacon between the months of April & August, so there was no such things as fattening off the pigs during the summer, but between those months or during the summer, when we made cheese the whey was given to the pigs mostly & there was a big lot of baconers to be got rid of at the end of the season but topped off, with grain & peas mostly. There were several companies operating from Christchurch who purchased these pigs at so much per lb. on the hook. These pigs had to be driven to the various factories on the ^{railway} station, and it was very seldom that any one saw their pigs either killed or weighed, & I know that very often there was a suspicion that the proper weights

87 were not always given. Prices varied from three pence per pound to four pence. There was no such thing then, as what we have now (the bobby calf trade) All calves that were born alive were kept on the place, the keepers to take their places in the herd at three years old, or sold as springing keepers and the steers kept mostly until the same age. There was no stinting of the milk they received when young, in fact from present experience, they got far too much, but they developed into splendid animals, & there was not the disease amongst the herds as at the present day. In winter time supplementary feed was given to all the stock, but this mostly from straw & hay & turnips & mangolds. The first horses that were on the farm was a gelding called "Tommy" and a mare called "Polly". Both of these were light draught, but of splendid quality. Polly was the mother & grandmother of all the draught animals that we ever had on the

farm. And we had, "Prince" Geordie, Bonny, Duchess, Robin, Charlie & others, but none of them as good as the two original ones, as far as staunchness was concerned but a failing was that the work they had to do was not always continuous, & they got a bit collar proud at times (a failing not always confined to horses). I particularly remember "Geordie". When in the team, was always first ready to tighten the chains, but if the others were not equally ready, he gave in & then the fun began until he was warmed up. & then was a splendid worker. Poor fellow. His latter end was tragic, when carrying on with these pranks, he quietly fell back across the harrow, & gave up for good). The saddle back, was one ^{we} called "Duke" (I think originally "Cantal") He was really a colt, sturdily built, but low set. He was a fine animal & much like the "Brook" could about go on for ever. He had one very bad fault and that was he was a "terror to catch" & generally it was an hours work & more for

I believe that my brother
himself was a culprit in this last

to get hold of him, & this with all available hands possible.

At the commencement of these matters recorded I mentioned that of dividing the farm into paddocks, by means of digging ditches & making a bank whereon we planted gorse for a hedge. In addition to the boundary fences there was also the cross ones, as the ground was cleared & prepared for cropping, whatever was sown first in any particular piece, was called by that name. There was one exception and that was the one nearest the house which was called the "Croft". I presume, this was an English custom. A small enclosure near the house went by the name of the garth. But the other paddocks went by the name of the wheat paddock, or oat, or barley as the case may be. There was one by the name of the Old Hay paddock & another as "seeds" I presume because, it was the one in which, potatoes or other root crops were grown. There were no double furrow ploughs

90. & the earliest were single furrow swing ploughs that is without any wheel at all. Then came the wheel plough & afterwards the double furrow with handles similar to the single. And then later the Lever plough. These very quickly got established where big areas of ground were to be turned over. These required three horses, whereas the single only required two. The implements of ploughs & harrows were mostly made by the general blacksmith but later, there developed the noted Reid & Gray of Dunedin, P & J Duncan of ^{Christ-}Church & also Booth & Mc Donald ^{factories}. These firms later introduced the Disc Harrow & Grain Drills. Previous to the introduction of these latter implements all the various grains were sown broad cast by hand & the ploughed ground ~~was~~ harrowed down. In general therefore it was necessary that in the ploughing operations a good clean furrow should be made, & compacted to the previous one so that there should be a good seed

91. bed, allowing for as little as possible of the seed going through ~~between~~ the furrows. With the coming of the seed drill, the ground was prepared first & then the drill put in the seed at uniform depth. Really less seed was required, & better crops resulted. The harvesting operations was a much longer process because there was no machinery for reaping. The introduction of the reaper and binder for harvesting purposes, was not introduced into our district until the year 1848 & 1849. It may have been in other districts, but I think not, & my father, ~~and~~ Mr Cunningham, & Mr Washburn were the first to introduce the Mr McCormick reaper. Previous to that, some of the harvesting at a very early period was done in the old fashioned style, with the sickle, & the scythe. The scythe had an attachment which enabled the cut grain, to be kept together, so as to be easier made into sheaves. It was called a cradle attachment I never saw it in operation, but I can remember the sickle being used, but only in a small way, such as cutting around

92 x The corners of the crop being reaped. Our first reaping machine, was a very heavy cumbersome affair and very heavy to the draught draw. The main driving wheel, was solid cast iron, I think about five feet in diameter & about six or seven inches broad. There was a segment attached (that is cogged all around,) & in the gear box also made of one casting, was the smaller segment wheel, to drive the knife. another very heavy chain was worked from the big wheel which turned the fans, to draw the cut grain onto the platform. The whole, was very cumbersome. The driver sitting on a high ducky seat, & another person walked behind with a big drag rake, to pull off the reaped grain, when sufficient had fallen onto the platform. The size of the sheaf was according to the persons ability to judge. These sheaves lay on the ~~lay on the~~ ground until time could be found to bind them up. Often they lay unbound for weeks, because, not always was labour available. ~~The~~ Our first machine was an importation from Victoria, & made in Ballarat.

93 There were other kinds, such as the Hornsby, & Samuelsons side deliveries, which automatically put the reaped crop on the platform & delivered it on to the ground. These were the most popular machines until the arrival of the Binders which did the whole job in one operation. The original machines did the binding with very fine wire, but later, ~~these~~ machines did it with string. There were very many different kinds, & in every way, very greatly improved each year. The harvesting period was the one that I liked best, with the stack building & threshing. The first threshing plant, was owned by Messrs Cunningham & Boag in conjunction & was of English manufacture, & did excellent work. This plant, engine, combine & elevators was portable, that is to be drawn about by horses, and there was often a lot of trouble ~~as~~. Later came the traction engines which got about from place to place much quicker. It was fortunate for me, so I always think that the binders came out at the time when

94 otherwise I would have had to take my place
both in the harvest field to tie up the sheaves,
but also at the same time would have had
to swing the scythe in cutting the hay.
But about the same time we got one of the
earliest grass mowers. So my experience with
the actual work on the farm coincided with
the Mechanical Age. &

On the introduction of the reaper & binder
most of the farmers were very sceptical as
to their ability to do the work. It was
said that it would not be possible to build
a corn stack with the sheaves, & the labouring
men, who depended on the harvesting work
to make a bit of money, were equally
pessimistic that there would be no work for
them to do, and I heard at the time of
several machines being set on fire.
However, it was soon discovered that there
was no diminution of the work, for crops
were grown far more extensively, &
millions of bushels of wheat were ex-
ported, during the years from 1885 onwards

In the early 80's
over 13,000,000 was grown

95 There was considerably more wheat grown
in those times than has been the case for the
last thirty or forty years. Also enormous
quantities of oats were grown, for to feed
the horses that were used & also very large
quantities of these cereal were also exported.
The prices were not always very satisfactory.
It was a time when the supply of everything
completely overran the local demand.

Between the early years of the 1880s
there was introduced by the H. of Government
a system of free emigration, and
people flocked into the country by thousands.
The quality of some was not of the best
and a proper system of selection was
not always carried out. Emigration agents
were employed in England to get people
to come & these agents got so much ahead
for all they sent out. It was recorded at
about that time that one agent got his
supplies from a penitentiary. Certainly
a great number came out, who were
weavers &c from Lancashire, & were not at all

96

suitable for development purposes. However most amongst them were ^{of} ~~men~~ ^{women} of fine stamp & quality. There were no steamships at that time and all had to come in the sailing vessels. Lyttelton was a very busy port, and the Harbour full of vessels, which on their return trips to England carried the grain away. That was about all the kind of cargoes available.

Then came a period of very deep depression and it was only after the discovery of the Refrigerating, that the country took a turn. Before that, Boiling down establishments were erected and the sheep were killed and boiled down for the tallow. A leg of mutton could be purchased for less than what a pound costs now. The only sheep my father ever had he bought a line of 200 hoggets for $1/6$ each. Fattened them on rape and sold for $3/6$ per head. When a sow farrowed, we killed the little piglets, as it did not pay to keep too many. Of course as far as the Producer was concerned, we did not starve, as there was

97.

plenty of potatoes & meat. It was marvellous what a change came over the country, when the frozen meat industry started. It was found to be a better proposition to grow fat sheep & lambs, than to grow wheat; and consequently the area under cultivation diminished greatly.

During this depression, very many of the farmers who were being financed by the Banks were unable to meet their commitments & were quickly turned off. But no wonder, when accommodation could only be obtained by paying the enormous sum of from 8 to 10% for the money. No mercy was shown, & if a man had a few hundred pounds to invest & went to the Bank to enquire as to any openings. It was generally met with the reply. "Oh yes, we have just the place that will suit you", & he was given put on the place of some poor unfortunate, & often the same fate attended him later on. It was under these conditions until later under the Right Honourable R. Seddons govern

98. ment that the "Advances to Settlers" Act was brought in that, ~~together~~ with very much lower rates of interest, and the freezing industry, the farmer was very much more secure in his home. However, when one comes to consider in these later days, there does not seem to be by any means the same self reliance as ⁱⁿ those early settlers. There was no sympathetic governments to which every one could run, when the least bit of hardship had to be endured. They battled away on their own bat. And it was surprising when one comes to think of it how many managed to pull through. There was one thing however that it is only right to mention, that in that far away time the families were very much larger, and it was not a very general custom that the boys on the farms to get anything for their labour beyond their food and clothing. What a difference now. The general current wage for a working man was £1 per week & keep. £5 extra for harvest, payable generally at the end of the year. Those who were

99. inclined to be industrious, would get a weeks holiday at the end of the year ~~buy~~ ^{buy} a new outfit of clothes & bank the rest, perhaps £40 or so a year. Then go back again to the same farm. The ordinary daily wages was five shillings ~~per day~~. In harvest time one shilling an hour. Reverting back to the farming and harvesting operations, and the large amount of grain that was grown. In our district alone, there were several who would have from fifteen to twenty thousand bushels and I remember on one occasion of four threshing mills in operation at the one time. The cost to the farmer for threshing was at so much per bushel, generally from three pence to four pence per bushel. In the earlier period it required ten men to operate the mill. The farmer had to provide the meals for the engine driver and feeder, the rest of the hands had to find themselves and do their own cooking, and find their own accommodation, when the whistle blew

100 to stop work the belt was pulled off
and the pay stopped. At that particular time
it was $\frac{1}{6}$ per hour but there was no limit
to the hours and the more hours they worked
the more shillings were received. It was very
common to start at as early as four o'clock
in the morning and continue as long as there
was any light. There was generally a rush
as soon as the whistle blew, as to who could
get to the engine fire box first to put their
bellies inside to boil the water.

After the coming of the Traction Engines
there was a different method adopted.

The men were generally paid by so much
a thousand bushels. Their pay ranged from
 $15/-$ for the driver and down to $11/-$ for the
other workers. The gang employed a cook
and paid him so much per head & he supplied
& cooked all the meals. It was a very much
better method. Each mill owner during the
season would thresh from fifty to seventy
thousand bushels. Those very early mill
owners were, as before mentioned Cunningham &

101 Boag, Sowdon & Lill, and Portable and
H. & H. Hall two machines & Mojan Davies.
Traction

It was well on in the eighties, that the
Humble Bee was imported into New Zealand
& had the effect of bringing in another very
big source of revenue to the Farmer. Previous
to this time very heavy crops of Red Clover
could be grown, but owing to non fertilization
no seed could be obtained. But after the intro-
duction of the Bee, very heavy yields were ob-
tained as much as two hundred pounds or
more per acre & at a price obtainable of about
one shilling a pound it was a very big
help to the industry. And meant that there
was no necessity for any further importation.
The first importation of a seed sheller to the
District was a man called Thyer or Thyer.
There was an attempt made in the very early
times to utilise the flax for ^{the} fibre purpose.
A mill There was east areas of the flax & par-
ticularly, around what we called Washburns
Creek. A mill was erected at a junction
between two streams near Washburns home.

Phosphorus
Tensile

Later operated
& continued for many years

Hungarian

I do not think that it could have been a success. Later on scutching the flax was also undertaken by a Mr. Chas. Mitchell but it was not continued for long. At a later time and after the advent of the Reaper and Binder, a big demand was the means for the start afresh for the manufacture of twine required for the binding purposes. This mill was in operation for a long time the flax was converted into the twine.

There was also erected a flour mill by a man called John Cole. It was water driven and a very large dam made near where the Brookside School stands. It was originally a grinding mill, ~~done~~ the wheat being ~~man~~ ground between large grinding stones. In later years this was converted into the roller grinding process, & in later years after the reticulation of the district by electricity was electrically driven. The mill still stands, but has had various owners.

It was customary after the threshing season was over to take their seconds ^{that is broken grain} wheat & get

it ground into flour, & get the bran and sharps back again with the flour. This offal as it was called being used for pig fattening purposes and the bran mixed with the horse feed. A whole years supply was generally got as far as the flour was concerned. But, the mill did also other kinds of work as to ^{crushing} grinding oats grinding up barley and peas or beans into meal.

It was a good many years before a chaff cutting mill, was carried about, in fact there was no demand for the chaff beyond the local supply and each farmer had their own cutting plants often turned by hand, but some driven by horse works, and a few where water was available made themselves a water race had a large wheel put in position. It is marvellous to think now, that what was once such a hard job as turning the hand chaff cutter after the ordinary days work was done, can now be done by the pressing of a button or a switch & the wheels go round.

In that early time the ~~of~~ public affairs

104 of the ~~various~~ country was governed according to the various Provincial settlements. Within the province again there were County Councils elected, these were generally to see to the undertaking of the larger works such as the main through ^{Roads} Bridges &c that were required. Within the counties again were small - or Committees elected, these were called the Road Boards, & certain defined portions would be entitled to elect a member. The combined work of the Board was first to levy the rates and see to its collection and distribution of the work, of making roads, erecting Culverts or small bridges. There was often a good deal of rivalry & sometimes, it was thought that ^{money} ~~was~~ were spent in places where it was not almost always required. But this attitude is not confined to any time or place, and there are even now many that always have a grievance. The general overseeing of the work was put in the hands of some qualified man. In our district, which was administered by the Ellesmere Road Board, was under the cap.

105 able hands of a Mr Lunn, and I think he occupied that position for well over thirty years until these ^{were merged into} ~~provinces~~ was divided into a good many more Counties which took over the work of the Road Boards. The Ellesmere Agricultural Society came into existence sometime during the period between 1870 & 1880. This had the object of creating an interest in the development of all branches of agricultural pursuits and the breeding of good stock. Shows both of general produce and various classes of stock were held each year in Leeston. Our district of Brookside, became noted for the breeding of some splendid animals, & which held their own in competition at the largest show in the country and in competition with breeders from all parts of the South Island. Amongst the breeders most prominent, were Mr John Boag of Middle Rigg Farm. Noted for his

106 Clydesdale Horses. His original purchase came from Tasmania, & one celebrated mare called Marchioness I had an unbroken record for very many years at the various shows. He made a number of importations also later on of sires from Scotland. The stamp of horse at that early time was ~~was~~ much different to that in favour now. Then it was a low set animal with plenty of hair on the legs. They were invariably very slow in action. About forty years ago another style came into fashion, which were cleaner in the leg, more upstanding and in every way very much more active in their movements. There was not the same uniformity as now, when to look at the horses in the show ring from a distance, they appear much the same as "peas in a pod". with their outstanding four white legs, & a white blaze down the face. There were a few others interest was in horses, particularly a Mr. Cunningham

107 and, Mr. Choak and O. Miller. A Mr. Charles Withell was a very noted breeder of Lincoln Sheep, & as I mentioned before my father noted for his Shorthorn herd. There were others who also had there interest in this breed, particularly Mr. Mawson, Mr. Cunliffe, Lam, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Hight and Mr. Arthur Chamberlain. My connection with father's herd ended in 1890, a few years later it was disposed of, and ~~was~~ ~~used~~ helped to build up other herds in the country. But mostly the Shorthorn herds were of the Beef Class, and I cannot remember the mention of such a breed as the Milk-
ing Shorthorn as distinct. I mentioned before of the High Class Cows as foundation stock. But there was not that desire for mating purposes to develop butter fat production. The Jersey as a breed was practically unknown. And there were also no Friesians or Holsteins in

The country. I think the first importations of these were brought in by a Mr. J. Gregg of Long Beach. The Agricultural Show at Christchurch (which was always held at that time on November 9th (The then Prince of Wales Birthday later King Edward VII)) was the big high day throughout the country, when the competitors from the various local shows throughout the country met, to show their ^{of their stock} qualities against each other. Many a hope had vanished after the show (bald) what feeding & grooming and washing before & on that day, but when all was over & the cattle home again, turned out with the rest to look after themselves.

After that period previously mentioned when there was such an influx of immigrants from the old country and the fall in prices generally, the full effects were very clearly manifested when an exodus from New Zealand set in, and ship loads of people went to the neighbouring colony of Victoria. As near as I can remember something like ten or twelve thousand people left our Dominion.

(Altho. it was not named Dominion at that time). There was not at that time any ~~thing~~ thought of levying an unemployment tax. Every one had "to paddle his own canoe", and do the best for themselves. So I have recollections of as many as sixty people, with their swags on their back, calling at our place in one ^{season} week for a drink of milk or a bite of "tucker". Amongst that class were some who had come from aristocratic families in England, and I knew of two that had been educated at Oxford University. But it was no uncommon thing (so I have been told) that many of these ^{class} had lived riotously & had been sent here so that they ought have an opportunity to "straighten themselves up a bit". This class would receive remittance from home, but it is strange to think that with the best environments & education, it requires something more than these to develop the best in human nature.

In those early days the public house was a great institution, and as the population

110 was very scattered. These wayside houses were planted in every direction. It was not until much later years that after a Local Option Act was passed the people were given the right to vote on the matter that a great many of these houses were closed. But it was a very conservative attitude that was held in reference to this matter, and altho. a great many of the houses were necessary for accommodation, yet they were merely drinking places, and it was a very common attitude for folks who had worked for considerable periods, would ask for their money & make for the nearest public house, hand over their Cheques to the publican, & tell him to say when it was finished. It was no uncommon thing, and drinking and crawling was very continuous. Besides many of these places had their constant customers, and there were some even in our surrounding district, that were victims of this habit & their homes & families in sad condition. This habit of handing over the Cheques was no uncommon

111 one, & I have heard of as much as forty or fifty pounds to be gone through in less than a week & the poor unfortunate sent on the road again. This method of treatment by the publican was called "Packing down". Sometimes the matter would be taken before the Magistrate. But very largely public opinion did not seem to be much troubled about it. Hotels were allowed open from six o'clock in the morning until eleven o'clock at night. It was this appalling condition of things, that public opinion began to be educated so as to bring in a change in these conditions. Temperance societies were formed in all directions. The principal of these was the Good Templar Society. There was also formed the New Zealand Alliance for the suppression of the Liquor traffic. This has not yet been accomplished, but a great alteration has taken place, & great restrictions have been placed on the sale of Intoxicants. Public houses or hotels are not allowed now in this year 1939 nor have been since during the period of

11.2 of the great war 1914-1918) to be opened before
9 o'clock in the morning & closed at six o'clock
in the evening. My own particular district ^{was} singularly free from much over-indul-
gence, altho. I can remember ~~it~~ once when
after a service held in the Church, a preacher had
taken as his text "Be Sober Be vigilant" ~~and~~
made an onslaught on Moderate Drinking. I heard
the remark made after service. "When we want
a man to preach Temperance we'll send for him.
But times changed.

Our district was really a very religious
community, altho. according to the times, any
overstepping of the line of strict morality,
the poor unfortunate was almost looked upon
as an outcast. "But Charity suffereth long
and is kind" It was a Church going com-
munity, and I cannot recall more than
perhaps half a dozen of the residents who did
not attend Church on Sunday.

The Presbyterian Church ^{building} was the first erected
later the Wesleyan & then the Anglican as
previously mentioned

11.3 That really was a characteristic feature
of those early days, what might be called
the mid Victorian age. There was little
or no past history, as far as the country or
communities were concerned. And what
we now call the "Old Pioneers" had come
from the old Land England, Scotland &
Ireland. Home it was called, and they
brought the old ideas and amongst them
was a habit of Church going, and soon
practically every district had one or more
places of worship, and it must be said
(I think with truth) looking at the matter
from this later time, that there was a good
deal of bigotry and narrow mindedness
but I must also say that there was
also sincerity in their in their beliefs.
But there was always a good feeling manifested
at anniversary time, when all united at
the tea tables, those were days when there
were large families, and the congregations
filled the Churches, and two of them
had to be enlarged. The same buildings

are in existence yet but the comparisons I am given to understand are very meagre in comparison. Sunday was the medium day when neighbours had the occasion of seeing each other and hearing passing news. A common thing also was an invitation given after the morning service to "Come and have dinner with us!" Here this Sunday, somewhere else next, and so around. But visitation during the week was ~~not~~ confined to the women folks, and so the time was passed in quietness and contentment, no hurly-burly and rushing around for excitement.

The Daily newspaper, was the source of general information, and at that early time. The "Lyttelton Times" and the Press were the daily Papers and the "Canterbury Times" and "Weekly Press" the "weeklies". These two papers represented the different phases of Political thought. The Times represented the Liberals and the

Press the Conservatives. The former edited I think by Mr. Pember Reeves. I cannot remember the other, but such names as Rolleston, Richardson, Sir J. Hall & Major Atkinson are very familiar. Things in general were very lively in those times and very much bitterness was displayed until the elections were over. Our electorate was represented in Parliament by a Mr. Richardson, later Sir John Hall and E. Jermyingham Wakefield. This was after the Provincial Governments were abolished. It was under Sir John ^{George Grey} ~~Hall~~ Government that the "One Man One Vote" came into operation. Before that time, the franchise or right to vote was only to persons who owned property. & the elections not being on the same day as at present, a property owner might be able to vote at different electorates ~~about~~ ^{his own} property in those districts. Also a defeated candidate had the chance of putting up for another electorate.

I cannot recollect that our community was noted for being great readers. The

Not quite sure whether it was a Mr. Estlin.

about 1870

116 hard times and long hours & heavy labour
militated against it, but there were ~~few~~
facilities granted for it - and buildings were
erected in most districts and well ~~equipped~~
equipped with the best of general literature
~~and~~ by the government, & these libraries
were subsidised each year according to the
receipts from membership fees. ~~In~~ This
building in our district was used for meetings
in general has been moved on several occasions.
It is still in existence.

Whilst I have mostly recorded my own
recollections, and as applied to my own
district much would apply to other places
as well, particularly in general matters.
My connection with was severed from
New Zealand in 1890 and for about fifteen
years, I was a citizen of Australia, in both
Victoria and New S. Wales. Mostly the latter.
In summing up these reminiscences & general
observations there are a few things that ought
to be recorded as impressions of that early

117 period in general in comparison with the
present times. & In every phase of life there
have been wonderful changes, both in mode
of living, manners, and customs, also
We say now that we have reached a very
much higher state of civilization, because
so many different openings are available, we
have better houses, better transport, we have
the telephone, the automobile, the aeroplane
as our means of communication, we
have the radio, the wireless, and electricity.
In every thing there is speed. The scriptural
prophecy is true of our times. "The Chariots
shall race in the streets and the people rush
too and fro". By the pressing of a button we
can get to the other side of the world and know
what is transpiring. Our pioneers had to wait
six months ^{more} to get into communication with
those they had left behind when they came to this
strange land. Now we can send a message
in a few minutes. We call it civilisation.
Yet in years gone by there have been great
wars. Our own country was engaged in war

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New m.
 end of
 1939

when I was born, and ~~in~~ in one part of
 the world or another, there has been wars, and
 the last one is said to have been the greatest
 in all history. Another seems to be looming
 in the near future, and we wonder. Are
 we with all our boasted civilization, and
 our knowledge of the great mysteries of the
 universe, really much better underneath
 than the savage Maori that we say
 massacred our troops, whilst ^{we} adopted more
 civilized methods of destruction. We ~~speaking~~
 in general, with our engines of destruction
 and bombs and poison gas, and torpedoes
 very highly technical methods. This is
 what the world has come to. In some
 respects, we have got a long way further
 ahead and whilst I am a New Zealander and
 a citizen of no mean Country, I could to a certain
 extent acknowledge my connection with the Great British
 Empire. I have a thrill inside of me that
 there is developing within us or has developed
 a conscientiousness of what is right and just
 justice. It is right and just under some cir-

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constancies to shed blood for the righting of
 wrongs, but it is sad to think that with all our
 learning and teaching and marvellous ingenuity
 it should be necessary.

In our social life, we at the present day are
 I think ^{as a whole} more concerned for the "Under dog" we have
 our humanitarian institutions, our hospitals, homes
 and asylums, and a general feeling that we
 are our brother's keeper, but then again there is
 not that same honesty of purpose in giving
 a "square deal" to all who are entitled to it.
 and value given for value received. What are we
 heading for and what are we coming to. Is our
 creed to be "Of all the human family, I love
 myself the best, and Providence take care
 of me and Sambo take the rest".

I don't think there is any thing at the present-
 time like the snobbishness that there was in
 former days, between the different grades of society
 I can call to mind an instance of a Colonel
 in Christ Church, who took legal proceedings against
 another ^{civilian}, because he failed to salute him as
 an officer.

There is one thing however, which I think the present attitude of our people is not as praiseworthy as those of earlier times. There is a general state of grumbling and dissatisfaction, the and every other class, are not by any means a contented people. The more we have and get and the better our conditions are, the more we want. It has become the habit, to go to the Government for everything, and it has now gone so far that there is no turning back, and instead of depending upon our individuality, we are becoming altogether socialised. Perhaps it may be the best in the end. Our destinies are in higher hands than our selves. "Do justice, love mercy walk humbly" We only pass this way once so if there is any good that I can do Let me do it now for I shall not pass this way again.

"For the Cause that lacks assistance
Against the wrongs that need resistance
For the future in the distance
And the good we all ought do."

May this be our motto

Thieval. Porridge stick
Wesfurt. Cask or yoke or Reg
Yat stoop gate post 200
~~Pow-ha~~ Pow-ha. Post hole

"Swiel or sweat" ! The blaze of ^{or flame} freshly
burned grass.

Po-wha post hole

Shilvans frame for drag.

Gang ~~over~~ to go away
galluses braces

Larrakin I heard the owner of this who
said to the Magistrate before whom
he had brought some offenders.
"Shure" your worship. They were
a Larrakin (Larrakin)

a grouse a digging fork
billy hook a short handled slasher
with cutting edge on both sides
the back like a chopper
a circular coultter used on a plough
a kind of spade with a
kind of circular blade.

