

Family History Research Group

Newsletters 21-25

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Family History Research Group

Newsletter Twenty-One



STARTING SCHOOL – 1958

Pauline Critchley

I have some vivid recollections of my first day at school, possibly because there had been quite a build-up to it with parents, grandmother and aunts all asking me about 'starting school'. I think my mum had talked to me about the big day and what to expect so that I wouldn't be upset or afraid. So here are my memories of that day and thoughts on how it might be different now

I remember wearing a red and white striped cotton dress with white collar on my first day at school. This was a 'hand-me-down' from an older cousin and I had been longing to wear the dress but was told it was to be saved for going to school. Of course, no-one wore uniforms in state primary schools in those days.

When the day finally arrived, in late August 1958, mum took me along to the infant school to sit in a queue on the metal steps used for P.E. while waiting to register me. As far as I know, there was no advance arrangement about getting a place at an infant school. This was a Catholic school and if you lived in the parish then you attended the school for that parish. In the spring of 1958 we had moved to the new house that my father had been building just so that I could go to the local school after the summer, even though the house still needed much work to be done. There were no limits on class sizes then and I think no-one was too concerned as to whether a lot or a few children turned up to be registered. (By the time I was in Junior 4 we had 44 in the class.) When we got to the front of the queue, my mother gave my details to the headmistress and with this done, she sensibly asked what the school hours were. To this, the headmistress tartly commented, 'Good heavens, Teresa, it's not that long since you were at school yourself.' Mum was both hurt and annoyed by this 'put down'. I should add that she wasn't exactly a young mum being then 33 years old. However, it probably indicates that 8.55 am start and 3.45 pm finish were standard infant school times. There was a lunch break at 12 noon until 1.25 and morning and

afternoon playtimes of 15 minutes each. How different it is today with each school having different start and finish times and early finish days to allow for teachers' meetings. The incident also indicates that no prior information had been sent out to families about starting school as there would have been few if any facilities for printing documents in school. Information was largely given by word of mouth and for many years I recall that the start of the new school year was announced from the pulpit at Sunday mass as was the rationale for accepting pupils viz: those children whose fifth birthday fell in the following term could start school. Unlike now, there were three intakes per year, one after each main holiday break. How uncomplicated life was and free of printed information!



The 'babies' class of 1958 at the school entrance – only 21 pupils. I am seated fourth from the right.

Having got over this first contretemps, (I was quite aware of mum's annoyance and embarrassment at the headmistress's remark) I was taken to the 'babies' class'. (There were no PC qualms about calling the reception children 'babies' – everyone, teachers and pupils alike, referred to it as 'the babies' class.) This was a lovely bright room looking out onto a grassy lawn, across fields and to the twin copper domes of Coppull Ring Mills. There were reading books, 'Janet and John' series, in fabric pockets hanging from the wall at the back. Tables in groups of 4 or 6 were dotted around with little wooden chairs. There was a 'Wendy' house with red, painted brick walls and inside a toy cooker, a table and chairs and other toy domestic items. In another corner there were hammers, nails and pieces of wood. (Nobody worried about the Health and Safety aspects of this.) There was a sand tray and a water tray in the room and various jigsaws and other toys. There were two-sided easels set up with paper and with trays attached which held jars of watery paint. The teacher seemed ancient – probably in her 50s – with navy blue clothing and hair drawn back in a bun. Her name was Miss

Bithell but she was generally called Miss Bifell as the 'babies' struggled to pronounce 'th'.



Playing in the water tray which has been put outside the classroom on a fine day. I'm the one at the front in the Fair Isle cardigan. One of the Eileens is inside the classroom and the sand tray is just inside the door.

Some children were crying but I found nothing to cry about and couldn't understand their distress. My parents had talked of my going to school so often that I regarded it as a kind of adventure and one which I had looked forward to for some time. Mum had advised me to go and talk to other children and 'make friends' and, with this in mind, I approached two girls who were sitting quietly together and asked them their names. My confusion was considerable when the first one said 'Eileen' and then the second one also said 'Eileen'. When I asked them again and got the same answers, I gave it some thought and reckoned that they must be sisters! "No", they said "we live next door to each other". We have remained friends to this day.

At some point, I decided I should like to try my hand at making boats with the hammers and nails and paper sails. After all, my dad was a joiner and I had watched him nailing pieces of wood so I was keen to have a go. However, I had no sooner got hold of a hammer when old 'Miss Bifell' came over and took it off me, explaining that this was for the boys and that the girls should play with the dolls in the Wendy house - sex stereotyping or what?

There was another child in the class that I knew a little already and so I spent some time with her on day one. Her name was Imelda and when I heard the school bell ring, again I remembered my mum's advice: the bell meant it was home time and I was to come home for lunch. Being a confident little girl, I told Imelda that we should now go home and so, once out on the playground we went through the school gate –

not closed or locked of course – and we headed off down the road. Some of the older children must have spotted us and they informed the teacher on playground duty, one Mrs Cullinan, who came running after us followed by a little crowd of children and took us back. She kindly explained that the bell would ring again later and we would be able to go home then. Nowadays lunch breaks are very short, probably too short to allow for going home to eat. After this incident, I understood about playtime and indeed I did go home at the end of the morning, on my own. Then, after lunch, which we always called ‘dinner’, I went back to school unaccompanied and back home alone at the end of the day. My mother never took me to school or collected me at the school gates after the first morning.

So I had learnt the word ‘playtime’ but what did we do in the playground? I really don’t recall playtime on that first day but I know that in those very early school days we played circle games in the playground. As well as ‘Ring a ring o’ roses’, there was ‘Farmer in the dell’ where the person, ideally a boy – sex stereotyping again – was the ‘farmer’ and he took a ‘wife’. All this was accompanied by the circle of children holding hands and dancing round him singing:

“Farmer in the dell, farmer in the dell,
Eever-iver-over-i, farmer in the dell.

The farmer takes a wife, the farmer takes a wife ... etc.”

with the wife and farmer then standing in the middle and the ‘happy couple’ holding up their hands to form a bridge under which the circle snaked before reforming to start the chant again as the wife chose a child, the child a dog and so on until we couldn’t think of any more animals or until playtime ended. Another rather odd activity, which at the time I thought of as a game in itself, was that of gathering people to play a game. For this we would put our arms over the shoulders of two others and, in a row, wander about the playground calling ‘Join in, playing at (whatever game we intended to play)’. The ‘join in’ activity sometimes took more time than was left for actually playing the game. I distinctly remember the teacher, Mrs Cullinan, joining in with some of our games. Other playground activities were seasonal, the obvious one being conkers. I did collect them but, being a ‘scaredy cat’ and too afraid of injury, I didn’t participate much in the conker battles. It was in the early months of my school life that hoola hoops became popular. I think that they could be bought for a shilling or two on the market but my father, ever resourceful and unwilling to spend, said he would make me one. However, my green hoop, made from a perished rubber washing machine hose, was smaller and rather heavier than the manufactured ones and, however hard I tried, I couldn’t manage to keep it spinning for as long as my friends

did with theirs so it was a real disappointment. At other times skipping was popular and although we sometimes used individual skipping ropes, quite often the rope was a long piece of washing line with a child at each end turning it over (turning it 'up' was the expression) while a third child ran in and skipped. If the rope was to be turned very fast we called out 'pepper' and the child skipping had to respond to the speed. We played marbles sometimes and also jacks which consisted of bouncing a small rubber ball and before it fell a second time you had to pick up the jacks -small, metal, spiky objects – at least that's how I recall the game. Hopscotch was another game that was played sometimes. There was a climbing frame in the schoolyard but again, I was too afraid of injury to venture on it and it was generally used by the older, more daring boys. I have wondered what games are played by little ones today and have done a little research at the same school that I attended which is now both an infant and junior school. Perhaps surprisingly in these hi-tech days, the infants still play circle games including 'Farmer in the dell' and one called 'Duck, duck, goose' but now the reception class has its own play area with outdoor toys and a sand pit and the older infants still play hopscotch, ball games and have a large snakes and ladders game outdoors.



Although I don't remember them, we also had outdoor toys for the reception class as the scooter in the picture shows.

The babies' class was at the end of the corridor and next to it was a covered area where the milk crates were stored. Each day, before morning playtime, we were given a third of a pint of milk, no doubt as part of some post-war plan to improve the nation's health. When I first started school I was able to drink milk but, in those first

few weeks, I stopped taking it as it was sometimes warm and slightly sour and I've never been able to drink it since. Infants under the age of 5 still get free milk but parents must pay for it after that age unless they are on low incomes. Infants also get a free piece of fruit at break time and free school dinners. These used to cost 5 shillings a week when I was in the school.

In those first weeks, as I talked to other children I began to discover new expressions; I remember puzzling over the meaning of "round are end" (meaning 'the area where I/we live') and 'our Susan/Mary/Christine etc.' when referring to siblings or even cousins. I recall with embarrassment now arguing with one little boy that the word was 'chimney' and not 'chimbley' as he chose to call it.

As for lessons in the 'babies' class, I think there were very few, structured play being the order of the day. We weren't expected to sit still all day but could wander about and play with different items for much of the time but we had to put them away after we had played with them. The headmistress was rather a forward thinker in infant education. I do recall some 'religious lessons' as they were called with large coloured pictures of a bearded Christ walking in a garden and I'm sure that we were taught basic prayers and some hymns. I think we did a little reading of the first 'Janet and John' books with blue covers and possibly learnt a few key words with flash cards which were used extensively in the two later infant classes. Although, the 'Janet and John' series was probably good in its day, I remember wondering what Janet was supposed to look at when I read the urgent command "Look, Janet, look!" as I couldn't see anything worth looking at in the coloured drawing opposite and these were the only words on the page! I'm not sure what number work we did but I can remember playing with shiny shells which were for counting purposes. The school day in the babies' class ended with us all sitting on the floor around the teacher who would read us a story. I think some of these were fables from the 'Beacon' readers which were our reading books in later classes with stories such as 'The Three Pigs', 'Chicken Licken' and 'The Billy Goats Gruff'.



*Inside the classroom
The little boy seems
quite upset over
something. The double-
sided painting easels
can be seen in the
background with what
is probably the
teacher's desk.*

My time in the reception class was short, only one term, as the class was deliberately kept small in number. The 'babies' class' was a time for settling in to school and making friends, for learning to sit and listen for short periods and for learning to obey the teacher and I had probably achieved those goals in that first term. I think this approach to reception teaching with lots of time for play was quite modern for its time and for this the credit must go to the headmistress as I suspect that Miss Bithell only accepted the new-fangled methods under sufferance. I'm sure that this or something very similar is now the norm. Perhaps any of you who have taught infants can tell us. Also, it's good to know that not everything has changed since I started school and that young children are still enjoying - or not enjoying - school milk and still playing 'Farmer in the dell'!

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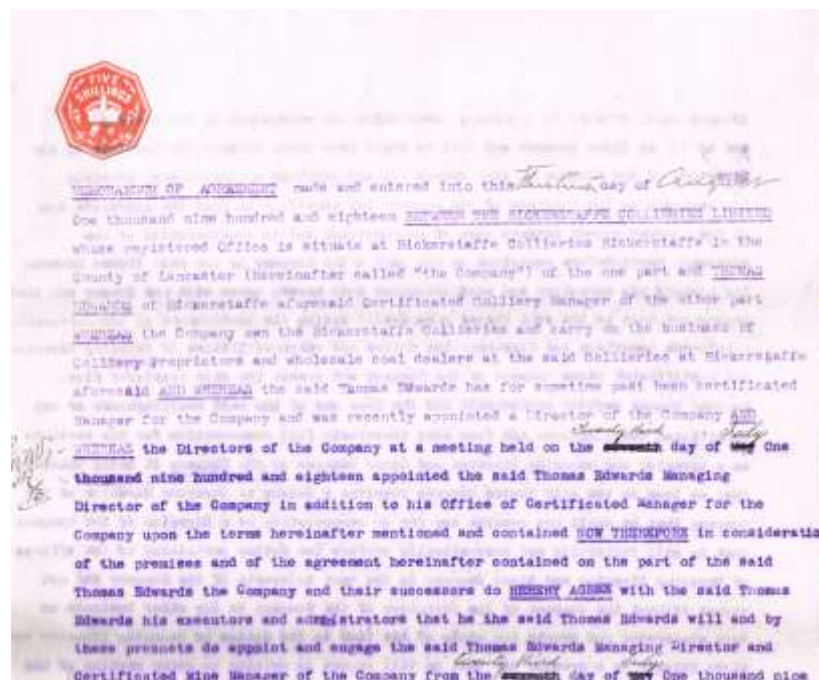
Newsletter Twenty-Two



Bickerstaffe Collieries, Thomas Edwards of Skelmersdale and me!

Joy Lofthouse

My grandfather, Thomas Edwards (1870 – 1929) moved as a young man from Mold in North Wales to Skelmersdale. He took qualifications and eventually became the under manager of White Moss Colliery and on 13th August 1918 became Director and Mines Manager at Bickerstaffe Collieries which were located immediately West of St Helens – Ormskirk Road (A570) and approx. 500 yards South of Four Lane Ends crossroads. The owners from 1892 were Foster, Williams & Co. Ltd and it later became Bickerstaffe Collieries Ltd.



The beginning of the agreement document

Thomas Edwards front row second from the left.



CLOSURE

Bickerstaffe	Collieries	Ltd.,	bankrupt	July	1929
Re-started	1930	by	P.H.		Swift
Wash	Drift	abandoned	November		1931

Nos. 1 and 2 Pits abandoned September 1936

NMRS Records: G. Hayes Collection

The Lancashire coalfield was one of the most prolific in England. Its [coal](#) seams were formed from the vegetation of tropical swampy forests in the [Carboniferous period](#) over 300 million years ago.

The [Romans](#) may have been the first to use coal in [Lancashire](#) and its shallow seams and outcrops were exploited on a small scale from the [Middle Ages](#) and extensively after the start of the [Industrial Revolution](#). The coalfield was at the forefront of innovation in coal mining, prompting the country's first canals, use of steam engines and creating conditions favourable for rapid industrialisation.

The number of shafts sunk to gain coal numbered several thousand. Lancashire miners used terms in different ways to other coal mining areas. A mine in Lancashire refers to a [coal seam](#), so the [Doe mine](#) refers to the Doe seam. The term pit was used for the shaft sunk to the access the mine and the term colliery was used to describe the whole of the surface area including the headgear, wash-houses, offices, trams etc.
NMRS information

The Edwards family lived in a house on to the Derby estate until around 1927, 'Brookdale', in Coal Pit Lane Rainford which 'came with the job'. About 35 years ago, my aunt, Thomas's daughter, decided we would go for a ride to see if 'Brookdale' was still there and as older aunts embarrassingly do, she decided we would knock on the door! Unfortunately, the front door was on the opposite side to the road so we had to walk all the way round. Surprisingly it looked very similar to when she had lived there from 1914 to 1927, apart from some ivy up the front wall. No extensions

etc., it is now part of a tenanted farm on the Derby Estate. They obviously had lots of fun with annual garden parties in the grounds.



'Brookdale', Coal Pit Lane

Garden parties around 1920 and 1923



In 1990, I saw an open day advertised at Brookdale and went along to be nosey, still the same lawns; no changes to the house and the Skelmersdale Prize Band were playing.

As well as managing the Colliery, Thomas Edwards was very involved in the life of the town of Skelmersdale; he even played for Skelmersdale FC in his younger days. The Town Hall flag was flown half-mast for his funeral.

Avenue Colliery was one of the Bickerstaffe Collieries ... it is described as a "day high" mine and operated between 1929 (the year my Grandfather died) & 1952. The

shaft depth was 360 feet. It was the last colliery to extract coal in the Rainford area. I have certificates showing the liquidation of assets from this Colliery to my father and his cousins in 1955 but I cannot find any other information about it.



Avenue Colliery



As you can tell ... I know little about mining in this area and maybe it will be a project for this winter. I found it hard to believe there were so many mines in this area, most now hidden. Avenue comes in a list of over 150 St Helens Collieries.

Does anyone else have links to Lancashire mining in this area, I wonder!

Mystery Object

Anne donated the photograph on the right to what I hope will become a fine collection of interesting objects. So, what do you think it might be?



Family History Research Group

Newsletter Twenty-Three



Our Virtual Museum of Curiosities

Through our lives we acquire stuff; we keep it in our attics, the back of cupboards and in our garages. We sometimes come across these “treasures” and wonder why we are still hanging onto them when they are often of no value, use or beauty. The plan is to dig out and share some of these objects, please feel free to add to our collection.

Something Collected

Anne Sheppard

I bought this many years ago in a car boot sale in North Wales I had no idea what it was but the stall holder enlightened me and told me that it was a “snap tin”. It seems that the coal miners who worked at Point of Ayr coalfield used them to carry their lunches in to stop the rats eating their lunch before they did. In the Lancashire coal pits they would be called a “butty tin”. The thing that struck me was how small it was (7” across 4” deep and 5” high) that is smaller than the butty box my 5 year old son used to take to school. And the miners were probably working a 10-12 hour shift plus the time taken to walk to the coal face which at Point of Ayr was under the sea so would have been a considerable distance.



I have no idea how old it is but maybe one of our members with connections with the Lancashire coalfield areas may have come across something like it?

<https://www.qualitylogoproducts.com/promo-university/history-of-lunch-boxes.htm>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Point_of_Ayr_Colliery_Company

Something Saved

Joy Lofthouse

I thought these were may be topical as we are coming up to Christmas, whatever Christmas may be this year.

These pressed flower Christmas cards were made by my Grandmother (Harriet Edwards) on single sided stiff card.



She has signed them on the front H. Seddon (her maiden name) and has written the names of the recipients on the back, Thomas - her husband to be, Lily and Lizzie - his cousins and Mr & Mrs Hackforth (separate cards) her uncle and aunt. They are quite small, all slightly different sizes, ranging from 4½" x 3½" to 4" x 3".



I don't know what year they were made; Harriet as she signed herself informally was born in 1875 and married quite late so they were probably made around 1905. Her first child was born in 1910.

Why do I keep them? They seem too pretty and delicate to throw away, knowledge about interests of a



grandmother I didn't know and a piece of social history from over 100 years ago. Where do I keep them? In a box labelled 'Edwards' on a top shelf in my study. This seems a shame but what else is there to do with them besides framing.



Who have I shown them to before you? No one! I need to show my daughters how neat and precise their great grandma was in her creativity.

Perhaps I or others might have time to make Christmas cards this strange year but maybe it is too late to press the flowers?



Something Remembered

Janice Parr

I would like to add clouds to our collection of curiosities; they were just one of the many things used as a source of wonder and entertainment for children in the 1950s.

When I was very small, I used to lie outside with my auntie Annie and watch the clouds pass over. We saw the shapes of dragons, lots of old men with long beards and all sorts of weird and wonderful creatures. As we lay there we made up stories about what we saw. I wonder if this is something she did with her mother and whether children still do it today.



<https://duytom.com/en/photo-news/32-interesting-sky-photos>

- Seeing recognisable objects or patterns in otherwise random or unrelated objects or patterns is called pareidolia. The ability to experience pareidolia is more developed in some people and less in others. I don't think it is anything to worry about!
- Cloud gazing is used by some as a way of experiencing mindfulness and meditation.
- Cloud watching is a recommended I spy activity for children.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/no-33-go-cloud-watching>

Challenges of the Week



This rather fine photograph was taken on the 22nd October 2020 at 4.15 pm on the island of Tilos. Can you identify any shapes in the clouds?

Photo taken by Maria Xaralampakh

What do you think this is?



Did any of your ancestors take up any hobbies, perhaps a craft, sport or D.I.Y.? Do share any information you may have with us?

How about writing something about Christmases of the past?

Family History Research Group

Newsletter Twenty-Four



Our Virtual Museum of Curiosities

A bit of a puzzle

Christine Garrity

I rediscovered this mystery object whilst tidying out a drawer the other day. It's a puzzle, made by Auntie Nellie using a treadle fretsaw. As a child I was fascinated by it and would spend hours taking it apart and putting it back together again.



She was always making things out of wood and I remember my brother and I having matching toy farms which she constructed and painted for us one Christmas.

A bit of a hoot!

Joy Lofthouse



I brought this from my Father-in-law's house when we were clearing out in 1991, I really don't know why? It says 'Good luck' on it.

What is it? What does it do?

It is a Victorian whistling mug with bird detail

The *whistle mug* or *hubble-bubble* is an amusement mug. It has a hollow handle which can be blown through the mug like a whistle. With an empty mug, only one note is emitted, whereas a filled mug produces melodious trills and warbling.

'Fun Fact'

Q. Wet one's whistle... is it true?

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice'.

A. Most likely not?

You can be sure that no pub cup or mug ever had a whistle fitted to it for this purpose. If you wanted another drink, you went up to the bar and asked for it. In the expression, *whistle* is just a joking reference to one's mouth or throat and to the fact that one can't easily whistle when one's mouth is dry. It's a very ancient expression: its first recorded appearance is in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* at the end of the fourteenth century, and it must surely be even older.

A bit of a fright!

My Devil Box

Anne Sheppard



I was very frightened of this box (a portable writing "desk") which was in my grandma's dining room when I was a child. It is made of black lacquer (rather battered at the corners) and inlaid with ivory. It depicts three devils and some flowers and leaves. I don't know if it is Chinese or Japanese but one of my grandma's

brothers, who were all in the Royal Navy, may have brought it back from their travels. This would date it to the early decades of the 20th century. The interior is in better condition and has several little compartments for ink, pens etc. plus an unusual cylindrical ruler. There is also a drawer at the bottom for documents. I use it for official documents-qualification certificates, my will etc.



My Devil box is 16 inches by 11 inches across and 7 inches deep

A bit of a blast!

Janice Parr

Uncle Bill was my Godfather and the husband of my auntie Annie. When I qualified as a teacher he gave me his Acme Thunderer, an item I found very useful as I loved teaching P.E. During WW2 he



served in the Military Police and I know that he spent time in North Africa and Germany. Could the whistle he passed on to me be the one he used during the war? I do know that Acme



made whistles for all the Services during both World Wars. He brought home his camp bed made of heavy duty canvas and wood, my little brother slept on it for a while when he got too big for his cot. Other things I remember are the cuckoo clock auntie Annie used to teach me how to tell the time and two pairs of lederhosen one for my brother Frank and one for his son Bill, they were both very young at the

time. Perhaps they looked rather cute in them and the shorts would certainly have been hard wearing.

So what did I spot in the skies above Tilos?



Not the best example of this phenomenon, but have included it because I had just been sent the photo.

Those of you suffering from pareidolia may have spotted Rudolph galloping across the sky and a vulture sitting on the top of the mountain. If you ever go to Tilos and have lunch at the tavern at the bottom of the gravel track on the photo, you will see that the island looks like a dragon emerging from under the sea.

One of our members has confessed to seeing images in flowing river water and has passed on



photos to prove the point. You probably think we are both quite crackers!

Mystery Object of the Week

Janice Parr

So, what do you think this box was used for? If the story I was told by my mother is correct, it must be at least a hundred and twelve years four months ago.



Please send in your thoughts about the mystery object or anything else in the Newsletter.

Family History Research Group

Newsletter Twenty-Five



Recreating a life: fragments of evidence of a child emigrant, P.O.W. and merchant seaman

Ronald James Knight 1914-1997

Linda Mogg

On a shelf I have a musical Australian swagman, and a much loved toy koala bear, the childhood gifts I received from my uncle Ronald. As a child I sent many airmail letters to this uncle in Australia. He was born in Carrbrook near Stalybridge, the eldest of three children to Walter Knight and Ethel Marion Lane in May 1914, a year later sister Gwendoline arrived followed by my mother Ethel in March 1920. Three days later their mother Ethel Marion died of pneumonia. My grandfather remarried in 1922, his second wife was Mary Louisa Jeater his first wife's cousin, the children's second cousin and then their stepmother.



From personal memories Mary Louisa was a Victorian in outlook, "children were seen and not heard". My mother conveyed the impression that their stepmother didn't create a particularly happy family. All three children left when they were very young; the girls became nurses while Ronald left school and Manchester in 1929 aged fifteen on the 'Hobson's Bay'ⁱ from Southampton bound for Sydney, Australia. The steam ship sailed on the Australia routeⁱⁱ I have no concrete evidence that Ronald left on a child migrant scheme, but these dated back to the early

twentieth century so possibly he left under the Big Brother Movementⁱⁱⁱ founded by Sir Richard Linton in 1925.

This was designed to provide young boys with a mentor and employment. According to one of Ronald's friends he worked on coastal ships, but the depths of the Depression forced him to return to the land buying a bicycle to cycle round Australia taking any work available on the farms.

The poster from 1925 was found on thebigsmoke.com



In 1939 Ronald seems to have returned to the U.K.

at some point joining the tanker 'Harlesden'^{iv} On 22nd February 1941 Ronald was a fireman and trimmer on the tanker which was attacked and sunk by the 'Gniesau'. He was later picked up by the German crew.

As a teenager I found his P.O.W. letters as we cleared my grandfather's house. As there were so many, my father insisted I kept only two which I still have, but if only I had been able to retain all of them! From his P.O.W. number^v was able to trace Ronald to Marlag und Milag Nord near Bremen which had a section housing merchant navy and foreign seamen.

Marlag and Milag Nord started out as a naval prisoner of war and internment camp near Sandbostel, Germany,^{vi} where Ronald received his early Red Cross parcels.^{vii} The camp was moved to a former Luftwaffe barracks near Westertimke between May and July 1942 under pressure from the Red Cross, U.S. and Swiss governments in an attempt to improve conditions. Interestingly prisoners were held in a number of separate camps depending on their status. Marlag for officers, their orderlies, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men, Milag was primarily for the merchant marines captured aboard allied shipping.^{viii} I assume Ronald was imprisoned in the latter.

In August 1942 he wrote to his parents, "This week I had six letters which was very gratifying... I had a suit of underwear from the Australian Red Cross last week".^{ix}

The Prisoner of War' a Red Cross newspaper for November 1942 described the camps as divided into five sections and still under construction by the inmates. In 1943 there were over 3,000 internees in Milag, "...clothing conditions are bad and more was necessary before winter." Two tier bunks, two blankets, straw-filled palliasses were provided for the rooms of fourteen to sixteen men. A new delousing station, dentist, hospital, religious chaplains, recreational and educational facilities were created, but internees had only one hot shower a month. "Theoretically these internees do no work, but over 400 of them work on camp maintenance and a few of them work on farms outside the camps."^x

In June 1944 Ronald's postcard home commented on the lack of mail arriving and the weather, "...80 degrees... I have a decent colour... you would think I had been on a vacation instead of a prisoner".^{xi} As mail was censored prisoners were left to leave much unsaid. The camp was liberated by the British 11th Armoured Division in April 1945.

Ronald returned to Australia in August 1945 on board the 'Maloja'^{xii} steam ship built in 1923 and owned by P.O. He continued to work on various ships around Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea until retirement. In 1963 he married, unfortunately his wife died in 1973. In 1975 he visited England when I met him briefly for the first and last time. He continued his cycling and photography around Australia until his death in 1997 in Faulconbridge, N.W.S. At his funeral a friend described him as a dedicated Trade Unionist, "...a man of high principle, one of the finest human beings, I have been privileged to have known and been ship-mates with".^{xiii}

Websites of the Week

Janice Parr

The first link will take you to a website giving a rundown on what the Big Brother Movement was all about. It also contains several links to more information.

The second link will take you to a you tube video which appears on the website, it lasts about 14 minutes and is worth taking a looking at.

<https://www.thebigsmoke.com.au/2019/12/29/the-big-brother-movement-and-white-australias-search-for-a-better-class-of-boy/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mv6xRWdt_4/

Outward Passenger lists 1890-1960. Ancestry

ii <https://passengers.history.sa.gov.au/vessel-voyages-all/927853>

iii <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/collections-and-research/guides-and-indexes/child-youth-migration-the-20th-century>

iv Family photos taken in Manchester and S. Shields

v P.O.W. Records Ancestry

vi Wikipedia/ <https://www.frankfallaarchive.org>

vii P.O.W. 87462 letters home

viii Wikipedia/ <https://www.frankfallaarchive.org>

ix P.O.W. 87462 letters home

x Wikipedia/ <https://www.frankfallaarchive.org>

xi P.O.W. 87462 letters home

xii Outward Passenger lists 1890-1960. Ancestry

xiii Find a grave / tribute paid at the funeral <https://www.findagrave.com/>