

# LEAVES ON THE TREE

by

*Wendy Baker (nee Clark)*

**AN ANECDOTAL HISTORY  
OF THE CLARK FAMILIES**



*"Bridging the Years"*

*1859 to 1995 and beyond ~  
4 generations and beyond*



## LEAVES ON THE TREE

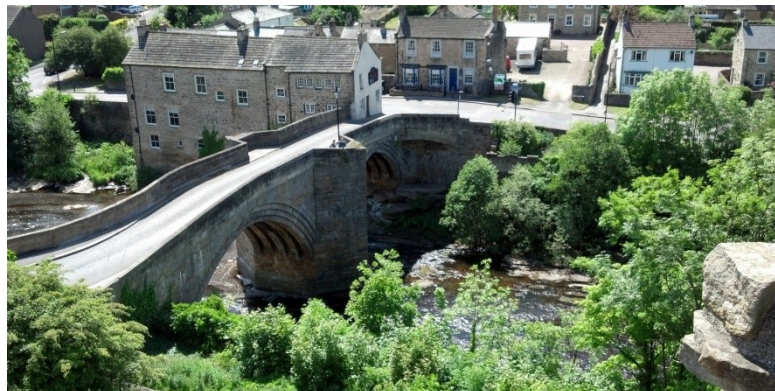
### Bridging the Years

#### *The Story of the Clarks*

Many years ago when I was in my early teenage years my father handed me a few family keepsakes. 'Here you are, I thought you might be interested in these one day,' was all he said. Dad was not really interested in his family's history, and gave me only a few clues as to the origin of these few photos and trinkets. I thought the world of him and kept the items purely because he had given them to me. However, as the years went on and I had my own family, I became curious and wanted to know about the people – my kin – who had owned them...

The ancient name of Clark has possible links with Clan Cameron and Clan Chattan of Scotland. Other sources also link Clark with Clan Macpherson. However, it seems that "my" Clarks, at least going back to the 1700's, were based in Yorkshire.

*The Oxford Dictionary of English Surnames* of 1997 mentions a Richerius Clericus of Hampshire as early as 1086. In its original sense it meant a man of a religious order, of the clergy. As all writing and secretarial work in the Middle Ages was done by the clergy, the term and hence the name gradually took on the meaning of 'scholar, secretary, recorder or penman'.

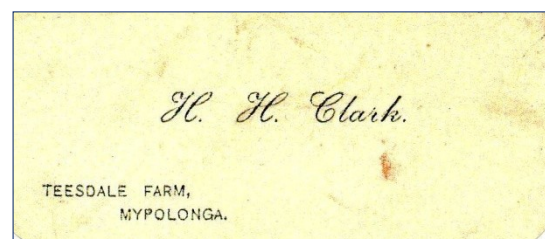


Bridge End, Startforth, Yorkshire UK (photo courtesy Steve Clark, USA)

The spelling of Clark in my family's history has apparently varied over the years and as recently as my grandfather's family, there was an 'e' on the end of the name on some official documents.

When my husband John and I toured the United Kingdom in 1997, in the south of Scotland I

purchased a blue wool neck-tie depicting, as far as I could establish, an appropriate tartan for the name of Clark, although by then I was starting to doubt that my origin was actually Scottish. Our tour coach passed over the River Tees, at Teesdale, Yorkshire; the name had intrigued me ever since my father gave me one of my grandfather's sepia business cards printed 'H.H. Clark, Teesdale Farm, Mypolonga'. The beautiful Tees landscape inspired me to further investigate my father's family background.



1854. Marriage solemnized in the Register Office in the District of Teesdale in the County of Durham & York

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
191	Twenty-fifth April 1854	Thomas Clark	26 years	Bachelor	Wright	Startforth	Thomas Clark	Wright
		Mary Ann Simonetta	22 years	Spinster		Barnard Castle	John Simonetta (deceased)	John Simonetta

Married in the Register Office according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the before by me, George Butlerfield Jr

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Thomas Clark Junr & Mary Ann Simonetta in the Presence of us, Thomas Dobson & Mary Ann Clark (Sr)  
John Simonetta & John Simonetta

Geo. Brown  
Supt. Regs

**Marriage Certificate (UK) of Thomas Clark & Mary Ann Simonetta, 25 Apr 1854 – Robert William Clark's parents**

Robert William Clark, senior, was born on 11 November 1859 at Bridge End, Startforth, at Barnard Castle in the district of Teesdale, in the counties of Durham and York, England. He was baptised on 27<sup>th</sup> November 1859 at St Mary's, Barnard Castle, Durham. His father was Thomas Clark (Jnr), a Master Cart Wright, and his mother was Mary Ann Clark, nee Simonetta. The birth was registered on 23 December 1859.

27. Certificate of Birth. Registry of Birth.

1859. Birth in the Sub-District of Barnard Castle in the County of Durham & York

When and Where Born	Name (if any)	Sex	Name and Surname of Father	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother	Rank or Profession of Father	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant	When Registered	Signature of Registrar
Eleventh 2 November 1859 Bridge End Startforth	Robert	Boy	Thomas Clark	Mary Ann formerly Simonetta	Cart Wright (Master)	Thomas Clark Junr Father Bridge End Startforth	Twenty-third December 1859	George Butlerfield Jr Registrar

I hereby Certify that the above is a true & correct copy of the Entry No. 132 in the District of Teesdale in the County of Durham & York on the 13 day of December 1859 at Barnard Castle

Geo. Brown  
Supt. Regs

**Birth Certificate (UK), 11 Nov 1859, Robert William Clark**

So began my paternal great-grandfather's life. In the 1871 UK Census he was listed as a 12 year old scholar – somewhere between then and 1978 he worked for the Midland Railway Company. Extensive research into Midland's records did turn up an R. Clark in 1879 – but I have primary proof of his emigrating to South Australia from the UK in the previous year.

The long economic depression in the U.K., dating from 1873, may have contributed to young Robert's decision to leave his parents, siblings and his work to come across the world. He sailed from Plymouth, England on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1878 on the six year old single-propellor steamship *Garonne*, arriving at Port Adelaide on Saturday morning, 14 September 1878. The *Garonne* was iron-hulled with compound steam engines, but barque-rigged with traditional masts and sails.

She brought Robert safely to his new country via the Cape of Good Hope. *R. Clark, joiner*, was listed in a shipping intelligence article in the South Australian Register of 14<sup>th</sup> September 1878 as one of seven joiners, all single men, on this ship. *Garonne* carried about 100 crew; she was 382 ft. long, 41 ft. in the beam with a gross registered tonnage of 3,876 tons. The 453 passengers - most of whom were destined for eastern seaboard ports - were divided into first, second, third and steerage classes and it can be assumed that Robert, as a government immigrant, would more than likely have been in steerage.

Among the interesting imports that came to Australia on the *Garonne* were, among many other items, 513 cases, 15 trunks, 1 boiler, 8 millstones, 6 guns, 4 carriages, 906 loose shells and 30 x 64lb shot, 1 wagon, 2 pile-drivers, 1 case of grease, 1 French cart, 6 hand barrows, and 190 boxes of raisins. There was also a quantity of ostriches to stock an ostrich farm in South Australia.

Name	Line or Station	Position	Rate of Pay.	Date.
<i>Clark Robert William</i>	<i>Pt Wakefield</i>	<i>Waggon Builder</i>	<i>5/6 p d</i>	<i>20 Sep '78</i>
	<i>Rivoli Bay</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>10/</i>	<i>25 July 79</i>
	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>10/</i>	<i>1 Aug 80</i>

*Transferred from 1 June 88 to folio No. 30 Loco Register*

19 year old Robert began work with Mellor Brothers, agricultural implement makers in Franklin Street, after the weekend of his arrival, but within six days of landing he entered the service of the Railways Department on 20 September 1878. He was located first at Pt Wakefield where he was a 'wagon builder' at 8 shillings and 6 pence per day. It was here that he fitted up the first narrow gauge bogie carriage assembled in South Australia. On 25 July 1879 he transferred to Rivoli Bay in the South-East of SA, maintaining the same pay and position. On 1 August 1880 his pay rose to ten shillings per day, according to State Records.

From SAR Staff Registers GRG 42/131 Vol. 1 Pg.119

How and when did Robert meet Anne Jane McEwen Smith? We do not know the answer, but we do know that he married her on 10 January 1881 at the residence of a W. Stuart in Beachport in the South-East. He was 21, a carpenter, and she was a 20 year old domestic servant.

Rowland Howard was the officiating Chaplain. The witnesses were George Hiscock, Engineman, of Gambiertown (a temporary name substitute for the gazetted name of Mt

1881								Married in the District of <i>Beachport</i>				
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age	Condition.	Trade or Calling.	Residence at Time of Marriage.	Name and Surname of Father of both parties.	Place in which celebrated.				
	<i>1881</i>	<i>Robert Clark</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>	<i>Beachport</i>	<i>Thomas Clark</i>	<i>Beachport</i>				
		<i>Annie Jane McEwen Smith</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Domestic Servant</i>	<i>Beachport</i>	<i>John McEwen Smith</i>	<i>Beachport</i>				

This Marriage was celebrated between us *Robert Clark* and *Annie Jane McEwen Smith* in the presence of us *George Hiscock Engineman Gambiertown* *Rowland Howard Beachport* *Thomas Smith Beachport*

The above-named *Robert Clark* and *Annie Jane McEwen Smith* were duly Married by or before me, at the time and place above-named, and in the presence of witnesses whose signatures are above written

Witness my hand this *10th* day of *January* 1881

*Rowland Howard*  
The Minister of the Gospel

Marriage of Robert William Clark to Annie Jane McEwen Smith, 10<sup>th</sup> Jan 1881



Who then would have helped Robert care for his five children while he continued working as a carpenter with the Railways? They were aged 10, 8, 5, 3 years, and the little baby. My late father's sister thought that without a mother to rear the five children, Robert's sister-in-law, Emily Louise Smith (known always and affectionately as Aunty Em) stepped into the breach.

Information on their childhood is patchy but Beachport school admission records for 1894 show 11 year old Emily Clark's "parent/guardian" as George Mackintosh and in 1895 when Thomas was 10, the parent/guardian was Gilders Martin.

In 1899 and 1900, I know that Clarice and Herb at least were attending "Near Narracoorte" school – I have Sir Walter Scott's "Kenilworth" presented to "Herbert Clark, Third Prize, 4<sup>th</sup> Class – General Improvement. Near Narracoorte. A.M. Sharpley, T. Xmas 1899". To hold this book, well over a century old, and read the inscription is a whisper from the past; my hands linking with those of the 11 year old boy who would one day be my grandfather.

I also have Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" "Presented to Clarice Clark for General Improvement" by Annie Sharpley, head teacher, on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1900.

Herb Clark's four siblings, three of whose lives were cut short, have a rightful place in this family story as they were my great-uncles and aunts whose names I often heard mentioned when I was growing up.

**Emily Olivia Clark** lived only for about 26 years, dying in 1909.

**Thomas Hutchinson Clark** died when only 33. Originally the family story was that he had "left and gone to America" but nothing more was known. However through internet enquiries I discovered that he left home and according to the 1910 U.S. Census arrived in the U.S. in 1904 where he became an ironer in a shirt collar factory. He then lived at Troy Ward 13, Rensselaer, New York and was married to Caroline Moon Van Pelt; her sister Virginia was at the same address on the census.

Thomas later worked on the barges in New York harbour and became a Captain. On the 5<sup>th</sup> March 1918 he suffered a terrible accident. It was described variously on different documents as dying from an overdose of anaesthesia in the operating room after the accident; dying from gangrene of leg after falling off a boat and having it crushed between another boat; and having a rope slip and sever one of his feet at the ankle.

The actual death certificate signed by Dr Tong, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in the Borough of Brooklyn NY, reads "*I hereby certify that on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of June 1918 I made an exam. of the body of Thomas H. Clark now lying dead at Long Island College Hospital and upon investigation of the essential facts concerning the circumstances of the death and history of the case I am of the opinion that the case of death was Chronic endocarditis and compound dislocation of ankle. About a month ago while at work on his boat, his foot became tangled in an iron cable and he suffered a compound dislocation at the ankle – he has been in the hospital since – infection developed in the joint – he was taken to the operating room to have a pus pocket cleaned out and died during the operation.*"

Thomas's residence at the time was 703 West End Ave NY. His body was identified by his wife.

The death date of 6 June 1918 at age 33 is consistently documented. He was buried three days later at the Woodlawn Cemetery, New York, USA, leaving his widow and children.

His widow Caroline also died unexpectedly six years later from acute appendicitis, leaving the orphans to be fostered into care. One of these children, also named Caroline, would later have a son whom she named Thomas Hutchins Clark. This young child was adopted by another family who renamed him Richard. I am indebted to Richard (formerly Thomas) who provided me with his family's background via the internet.

**William Clarence Clark** died when he was 55. The youngest of Robert & Annie's children, he later became 'Uncle Bill' to Herb's children, Clarice and Robert William (Bill) and worked in the drapery department in Myers. Some time after, he had a shop in Mount Barker. Clarice told me that when the shop was sold, or perhaps when it was refitted, one of the low stock tables was handed down to her. It was so stable that she used it to stand on when painting.

**William Clarence Clark**



William Clarence married Ellen Jane Maddigan and they had two children, Joan Mary Clark (who married Leigh Grist) and Margaret (Peggy) Clark (who married a Jim Stevens). William and his wife are buried in the Catholic section of Centennial Park Cemetery. The headstone inscription reads '*Clark – in loving memory of William, Beloved Husband of Ellen and Loving Father of Joan and Peg. Died 4<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1947 aged 55 years.*'

On the 5<sup>th</sup> August 1947 a brief article on page 3 of The Advertiser (Adelaide, SA: 1931 – 1954 (Ref. National Library of Australia) stated that 55 year old shop assistant William Clarence Clark of Crewe Street, Henley Beach, "*collapsed and died in the Myer men's clubroom, Gresham street, city, yesterday afternoon ... A report is being prepared for the City Coroner Mr. T.E. Cleland.*"

**Clarice Ada Clark** was 72 years old when she died in 1962 at Maylands, South Australia, never having married. (Her brother Herb Clark, my grandfather, was also 72 when he died in 1960.)

Returning now to their father Robert William Clark, his career in the railways came to an end in 1901 when he joined the Factories Department. It is reasonable to suppose that he moved to the city from the South-East at that time, although the Sands & McDougall directory did not list him as such until the 1902 edition. The directories up to and including 1901 place him residing at Naracoorte.

His Railways Department Employee records, dated 10 June 1901 by authority of the C.M.E., reads: 'Transferred to the (Factories) Department under the Hon. Minister of Industry he having been appointed Assistant Inspector of Factories. (Paid up to the 8<sup>th</sup> June 1901 by this Department.)'

Name	Date of Birth	Entered Service	Station	Position	Cause of Change	Date	Authority	Awards, Penalties, and Special Leave of Absence	Rate of Pay	House Rent
Clark Robert William	11 <sup>th</sup> November 1859	20 <sup>th</sup> September 1878	Narracoorte	Carpenter	Increase efficiency	10 June 1901			14 p.d.	
<p>Transferred to the Department under the Hon. Minister of Industry he having been appointed Assistant Inspector of Factories. (Paid up to the 8<sup>th</sup> June 01 by this Dept.)</p> <p>1901 10<sup>th</sup> June L.M.C. 926/01</p>										

**From SAR Staff Registers GRG 42/131 Vol. 4 Pg.53 – Transfer to Asst. Inspector Factories**

He worked his way up to Senior Inspector in 1911, and in 1920 he was presented with a Souvenir Booklet on his appointment as Chief Inspector of Factories in South Australia, and I quote from this:

*'Mr Robert William Clark, Acting Chief Inspector of Factories since the death of Mr John Bannigan, was appointed Chief Inspector by the Executive Council on Wednesday, April 21, 1920. Mr Clark, who has had a long experience of factory work, was born at Barnard Castle, Yorkshire, on November 11, 1859. He lived in England until 1878, and spent some time in the carriage workshop of the Midland Railway Company. Mr Clark came to South Australia in the ship Garonne, which reached Port Adelaide on 14 September, 1878. He went to work for Messrs. Mellor Bros., in Franklin Street, on his arrival, but almost immediately joined the Railways Department. The workshops were then in the Adelaide station yards. Thence he went to Port Wakefield, where he fitted up the first narrow gauge bogey carriage assembled in the State. He returned and afterwards undertook work at Beachport. The railway rolling stock then was practically all imported, and he had considerable experience in building work. His capacity and training as a tradesman had been such that he was able to undertake such varied work as boiler-making, carriage building, painting, lining and lettering of carriages, masonry, and plastering.*

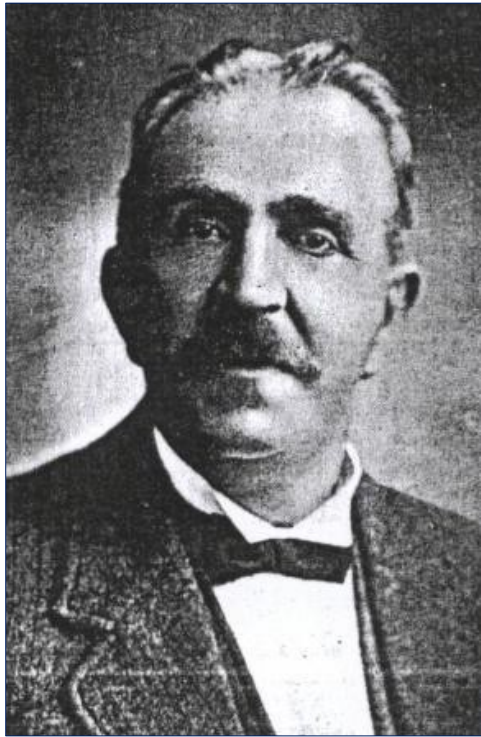
*'His next work was at Millicent, whence he removed to Narracoorte. He was later transferred to the Factories Department, and received his first appointment as inspector on June 10, 1901.*

*'An illustration of his personality is afforded by an experience which he had very soon after taking office. He was informed that there was an establishment in the city that he should keep out of, as otherwise he would be thrown out. This was one of the first places he visited. He was received by the proprietor, who observed, 'Look here, Clark, use a little commonsense, and whatever you want done here will be done.'*

*'Mr Clark was appointed senior inspector in the department on July 1, 1911. He has been connected with various public bodies, and has given a good deal of his time to religious work, especially in Sunday Schools.'*



The South Australian Almanac of 1911 lists him as '*Clark, R.W., Inspector of Factories, Government Buildings, Victoria Square East, principle residence Frederick Street Maylands*'.



**Robert William Clark, my paternal great-grandfather**

After his Frederick Street address, Robert William Clark had a house built at 8 Dover Street, Maylands, the plans of which were held by his late grand-daughter Clarice Masters. In 2017, no. 8 Dover St is a bluestone cottage which would be the right vintage. Sands & McDougall post office directory 1912 lists him as "*Senior Inspector Factories, Victoria Square East, p.r. Dover St Maylands.*" Perhaps his promotion to Senior Inspector enabled him to build the new house.

He was a Freemason, a member of Leopold Lodge, No. 31, S.A.C., and was installed as Worshipful Master on Thursday, 21 May, 1914 at the Freemasons' Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Bill's sister Clarice recalled that Aunty Em was an excellent cook. The house in Dover Street was sold, perhaps because of financial problems, and another built in Albert Street, Payneham. Clarice recalled that that house had a servery hatch between kitchen and dining room, something of a novelty then. Aunty Em and Herb's sister Clarice Ada Clark (Aunty Clarice to my father and his sister), lived together in the house in later years – neither of these women had children of their own. At some stage, Aunty Clarice moved into the home of a family friend, Mrs Ferguson, in Frederick Street, Maylands.

After Aunty Clarice's death on 3 July 1962, I remember going to that house as a young teenager with my father Robert William (Bill) Clark, her nephew, and her three nieces – Bill's sister Clarice, and Joan Grist (nee Clark) and Margaret (Peg) Stevens (nee Clark) - the two daughters of Herbert Clark's brother William and his wife Ellen. There were many trinkets and memorabilia and the fairest way worked out was for the four recipients to draw lots for the items they wanted. Old Aunty Clarice had hidden money in various places around the house – under the linoleum floor covering and in tea caddies etc. It was rumoured that much more had been 'parked', but it was never found – at least not by the rightful recipients!

The names on a family headstone in Payneham Cemetery, S.A. Western Extension, Sites 46S&C, Grant No. 2024, (photographed in 2002), were confusing at first because of some apparent anomalies. At the top it reads "*In Loving Memory of*" and below this the names are in two columns; on the left "*Robert & Emily Clark.*" And on the right "*Sarah & Emily Smith*". Below this reads "*Also Clarice Ada Clark died 8.7.62 aged 72 years*". The lease on this site has since expired.



**Payneham Cemetery (SA) Sites 46S&C, Grant No. 2024, (photographed in 2002) (lease since expired)**

Ada Clark is Robert's other daughter (died 8<sup>th</sup> July 1962, aged 72). Her birth name was registered as Ada Clarice, but her death as Clarice Ada, as on the headstone. There seems to be an uncanny proliferation of the number 2 among all these dates! I was puzzled as to why Robert was not buried with his wife until I found Annie had died and been buried at Naracoorte, far from where he lived with his family in the suburbs after 1901.)

(Robert is of course Robert William Clark (died 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1922); Emily Clark is his daughter Emily Louisa Clark (died 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1909 at Maylands aged 26). Sarah Smith is Robert's mother-in-law (died 18 February 1911 at Maylands). Emily Smith (died 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1951

Adelaide) is Sarah's daughter. And Clarice

Robert William Clark was talented. While still living in the South-East he drew up a 'Plan of Church of England Parsonage, Naracoorte' dated 15 December 1896 signed 'Robert Clark, Architect'. The execution of the design is a work of art in itself, but unfortunately is too fragile to copy. When his grand-daughter Clarice Masters showed it to me in January 2003, she also showed me an earlier design for the same parsonage by a Mr Smeaton, drawn 20 June 1896. It is uncertain whether either of these designs was actually used.



**Unsigned oil painting by Robert William Clark. Original in care of Wendy Baker (nee Clark).**

As well as his expertise in engineering and carriage work, carpentry and design, Robert was a painter of flowers in both delicate pastel shades and vibrant colours. His works are unsigned. He painted in oils, and two special paintings were hung in his granddaughter Clarice's home. They were two post-card size works depicting pansies and poppies, painted on a substance not unlike ceramic tile in appearance, but translucent when held to the light. I asked Glen Irvine, an experienced Victor Harbor picture framer, what the medium might be. His opinion, from my description, was that they could well be lithophane – that is, oil painting on a flat, thin porcelain sheet. This was popular between about 1900 and 1920. I have another of his oils, which Glen framed.



**Great-grandfather's paintings, possibly on lithophane**

*thoroughly honest, trustworthy and reliable and has good abilities as a Salesman. He has a good knowledge of the wholesale Drapery, especially in the Dress Department. I can recommend him with every confidence. Signed, H. Savage''.*

When Robert William's son Herbert left school in the South-East, he went to work for a Henry Savage in Adelaide. On leaving that employment the reference written for him was headed *'The Specialty Warehouse, 41 Grenfell Street, Adelaide. 5 December 1911 – Henry Savage, Importer and Agent for Manufacturers and Specialty Warehousemen.'* and states *'To whom it may concern – I have pleasure in stating that Mr Herbert H. Clark was in my*

*employ for over nine years, during which time he gave me every satisfaction. He is*

Apparently when Herb started work there as a young lad he had to stand on a box to answer the telephone, because he was not very tall and the old-style telephone was mounted too high for him to reach!

**Herbert Hinde Clark as a young man**



There was some talk in the family that Herb had a connection with the drapery department in John Martins Department Store in Rundle Street (now Mall) Adelaide; of this I cannot find firm evidence, although as a wholesale drapery business the Specialty Warehouse may have had dealings with John Martins.

Herb's father Robert had always been keen on agriculture and horticulture and maybe this influenced Herb to make a radical change in career. He gained his wool-classing certificate at the (then) School of Mines and Industries on the corner of North Terrace and Frome Road, Adelaide, and went wool-classing for a while - before his third career change.

At that time, there was a positive move towards reclamation of swamplands bordering the River Murray's lower reaches. I quote from the book *Mypolonga 1914-1996* compiled and edited by Irene Hughes:-

*'Although the Surveyor-General of the day had realised the potential value of the swamplands and had recommended to the government as early as 1887 that some such lands be withheld for the purposes of reclamation, the government was apparently deterred by the likely cost of such projects until 1904.*

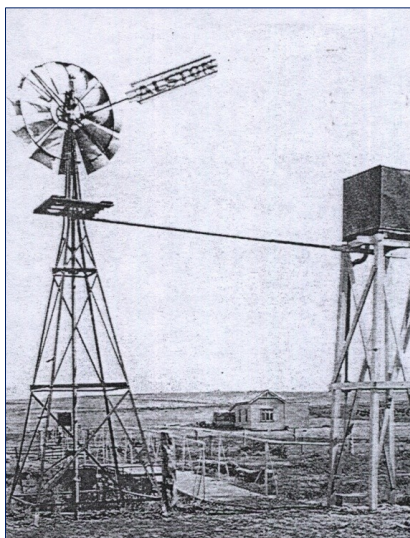
*'In 1904-05 the Surveyor-General was authorised to proceed with the construction of embankments at Mobilong and Burdett. (The base of the embankment at Mobilong had been constructed by unemployed persons during 1886).*

*'.....Other swamps at Mypolonga, Pompoota and Wall Flat were purchased and the work of reclaiming the Mypolonga swamp area commenced during April, 1909. The embankment was completed during June 1913. The first settlers took occupation on 24 July 1914. Early pumping plant was driven by either gas (produce gas) or crude oil engines with some windmills in the very early days.'*

In the *Chronicle* of 1918 an article appeared entitled *Story of Achievement*, which states *'When Mr Clark, senior, was able to place his son on Mypolonga he realised one of his most ardent ambitions. Mr Clark, senior, had always taken a keen interest in agricultural and horticultural pursuits...'*

The first reference I can find to Herb Clark being on a block at Mypolonga is in the Sands & McDougall Directory of 1915, which lists *'H.H. Clark, Blocker, Mypolonga.'* so this puts Herbert at 27 years old when his father *'placed'* him on Mypolonga. I have sometimes wondered why my grandfather Herb did not enlist to fight in WW1, but assume that being involved in farm production was his contribution. The article continues:

*'...Among the happiest and most enterprising settlers are Messrs Clark, Hall and Pickering. The holdings of the two first named adjoin, but there is another block between that of Messrs Clark and Pickering. The fact however has not prevented the trio from working together in the fullest spirit of co-operation ...Between them the trio have 50-60 dairy cows, they also deal extensively in pigs. Recently they installed a modern milking machine and a power driven separator and the whole... is now completed in a couple of hours. Two of them attend the milking and the other devotes himself to the pigs and other work ... there is no wasted effort ... Requirements of the livestock are met by growing barley, oats, wheat, lucerne and maize. Off swamp land this season Mr Clark took approximately 4 tons of wheaten hay to the acre, and the land that carried the crop is now being prepared for Maize.'*



**The tank & windmill. Clark's house (& community hall) in background. Section 741 South Bokara Road. No trace remains of the house.**

*'One of the first things Mr Clark did when he took possession of his block was to erect a large wood and iron building of four rooms – three for living in, and the other for church and other public purposes. The latter is capable of accommodating 180 persons...'*

A contemporary newspaper report reads: *'One of the most enthusiastic settlers is Mr H. H. Clark, a son of Mr R.W. Clark, Senior Inspector of Factories, who may be said to have advanced from the counter to the farm. (This was in relation to Herbert's first job as a draper.) He is a strenuous worker, and one of the type of fine men who will make a magnificent reputation for the reclaimed swamp lands. He took possession of his block about the middle of August,*

*and immediately set to work to effect the necessary improvements. He erected a strong wood and iron house, including a room 30 by 16 feet, which has since been regularly utilized for public purposes, and then completed the fencing of his property. Early in November he sowed two and a half acres of the swamp land with lucerne, and about the middle of December another two and a half acres with sorghum, millet and maize. The first cut of lucerne was obtained on January 7, ... capital third growth. The maize stands more than 12 ft high in places, and the cobs measure as much as 18 inches in length. At present Mr Clark is feeding about 30 head of horses and cows – some of them his own, and the remainder farmers' animals – which relish the succulent fodder... A block of 12 acres is being graded, and at the proper season the whole of this will be placed under lucerne. Another seven acres will be kept for the production of maize, mangolds etc. It is Mr Clark's intention, when he has the place properly established to go in almost exclusively for dairying. He proposes to run between 30 and 50 good Jersey cows, and personally to manufacture all the cream into butter. Other settlers near to Mr. Clark, whose farm, by the way is named Teesdale, after a dale in the north of England, are Messrs G. G. Hall, T. Pinches, P. Pickering, and J. Mills ...'*

Herbert's daughter Clarice said that Robert William Clark, as well as the neighbours Hall and Pickering with whom Herb was to farm as a trio, all helped Herb with the construction of his home on Section 741, South Bokara Road. No trace remains of this building.

An article in *Mypolonga 1914-1996* about St Etheldreda's Church of England, states: *'Records show from 31 October 1914 to 1915 services were conducted regularly by the Rev C. J. Whittfield in Clark's Hall, South end of the settlement. Land was procured in the township of Mypolonga, which was laid out and gazetted in 1915.*

*'Early in 1915 a wooden Church was shifted from Owen, South Australia, in sections and erected by volunteer labour ... the Church was dedicated on 26 June, 1915 in the presence of the Bishop of Adelaide, and the Rev. Dr A. Thomas D.D. who made the journey on the river boat, 'The Murrundi'.'*

My father Robert William Clark, Herbert's son, later attended this little wooden church for Sunday school classes. After the 1917 floods, it was decided to build a new church on higher land. This happened in 1933 and subsequently *'the old wooden Church was purchased by Mr F. J. Cawte & Company, moving it in sections to Murray Bridge where it was erected next to the traffic bridge, next to the wharf, and used as office premises.'* It was a well-travelled church!

Another article about the Institute states: *'1914 – Social life of the settlement was held in the Clarks' Hall, situated at the South End of the settlement. Many functions were held, church services, dances and fetes, to raise money with the thought of building an Institute for the community.'* Clark's Hall continued to be the social venue until June 1920 when the new timber and iron Recreation Hall was opened with due celebration.

The article *Methodist Uniting Church* also refers to Clark's Hall. *'...Services were conducted there until the iron and timber institute was erected in 1920.'*

Soon after the establishment of his home, Herb Clark started on the infrastructure of his property. A *Chronicle* issue in 1918 states *'Later a windmill on a 20 ft stand was placed in position near to the back channel, so as to provide a supply of fresh water for the livestock and the house. then a 200 gallon tank was reared on a stand 14 ft high and from this the water, which flows into the channel from the river, gravitates to a 400 gallon tank further back whence it runs to the house and a 140 gallon trough regulated with a ballcock.'*



**R.W. Clark's 89 year old prefabricated bridge at Mypolonga, as it was in 2003**

The channel is now silted up and heavily overgrown. A 1918 *'Chronicle'* article waxed lyrical about the project. *'A work of which not only Mr Clark, but also the whole settlement is proud, is a reinforced concrete bridge which has been built across the back channel, and the existence of which is a great convenience, providing as it does, direct access from the homestead to the front of the block, and saving a long round about journey. Like most of the other improvements practically the chief credit of this belongs – not to Mr Clark, but to his father, Mr R.W. Clark, the Senior Inspector of Factories, who resides at Maylands ... The bridge is 44 ft long and 5 ft wide, and it is formed of old tram rails, which were removed from the Magill road (this refers to the horse-tram rails first laid in 1883) during the process of electrifying the Adelaide tramway system. Mr Clark accrued a quantity, and had them stacked in his yard at Maylands. He prepared his plans for the bridge, and worked on the rails on Saturday afternoons and holidays. With an 8 inch hacksaw he cut the rails into the required lengths, and bored the necessary holes in them – about 140 – with a hand ratchet brace. The operations occupied a long, long time, but eventually they were completed, and the rails sent to the swamp, where they were deposited on either side of the channel. About 10 bags of cement were purchased, and stone was obtained from the high land at the rear of the block to make the concrete. So accurately had everything been planned that within two hours of starting the iron work of the bridge was firmly fixed in position, and bolted together. The reinforcing was then done, and the concrete introduced. For the hand or guardrails 1-1/2 inch black iron piping was used, and on one side this support is utilised to convey the water from the tank near to*

Then Robert William Clark (senior) was able to put his engineering talents to practical use on his son's block, and constructed a prefabricated bridge which was still there 89 years later in 2003 although a little the worse for wear, like the Back Channel which it spans. A contemporary photograph of the bridge shows it in its glory days spanning the mighty back channel which was dug with the aid of a steam-driven mechanical excavator.



**The bridge over the back channel, Mypolonga in 1918, courtesy "Chronicle"**

With an 8 inch hacksaw he cut the rails into the required lengths, and bored the necessary holes in them – about 140 – with a hand ratchet brace. The operations occupied a long, long time, but eventually they were completed, and the rails sent to the swamp, where they were deposited on either side of the channel. About 10 bags of cement were purchased, and stone was obtained from the high land at the rear of the block to make the concrete. So accurately had everything been planned that within two hours of starting the iron work of the bridge was firmly fixed in position, and bolted together. The reinforcing was then done, and the concrete introduced. For the hand or guardrails 1-1/2 inch black iron piping was used, and on one side this support is utilised to convey the water from the tank near to

*the windmill to that at the rear. Officials of the Irrigation Department have pronounced the structure to be admirable, and so it is.'*

My great-grandfather must have felt accomplished and well-settled in life. By 1918 he had become Senior Inspector in the Factories Department, had established his son on a dairy farm and was receiving rural press accolades. And then came the news of the death of his son Thomas Hutchinson in far-off USA. The Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA: 1867-1922) of Thursday 29 August 1918, reported:

*"Death of Captain Clark – Mr R. W. Clark (Senior Inspector of Factories) has received information from America that his son, Captain Thomas Hutchinson lark who was in charge of a freight lighter, died on June 6, as the result of an accident. He was hoisting freight when a rope slipped and severed one of his feet at the ankle. The accident happened on March 5, and the sufferer was taken to a hospital, where he remained till his death. A widow and five children are left. Captain Clark was well known and highly-respected in South Australia."*

Robert had already lost first his wife, then his daughter Emily and now Thomas. It must have been a sad loss, all the more so in knowing that he had several fatherless nephews so far away.

Herb, of course had also lost his mother, a sister and now his long-distance brother. But the young farmer had plenty to occupy his time, because farming life was difficult in those early days of Mypolonga's settlement. 1914 was a year of severe drought, while in 1915 salt killed anything growing and people had to buy water at a shilling a bucket, brought down by boat from beyond upriver Mannum. That was prior to the building of the locks and barrages, and so whenever there were strong winds from the south, the salt water was pushed miles upstream to Mypolonga and beyond.

Herb Clark may not at first have realised the significance of one James O'Brien's move to Mypolonga from Bull Creek at the end of 1915. Tough times? There were no dwellings on the property which James bought, so he lived in a covered trolley or wagon until a house was built. Although close to the mighty Murray, O'Brien had no water supply, and ferried it from the channel in casks. All this obviously did not deter young Lillian May Moore from marrying the strong young James. Lillian was one of the daughters, who were known collectively as the 'belles of the Valley', of William and Lucy Moore of Highland Valley sheep station just north of Strathalbyn. She and James had met when he lived at Bull Creek.

They married in 1916 when he was thirty and she 29 years old, and had their first child in 1917. James was used to hard work having worked for McHarg (of McHarg's Creek near Bull Creek,) for three years, and was a very strong man, wonderful with a whip, according to his son Vinton, my second cousin. He recalled the hundreds of native quail that used to get caught in the mowers and were quickly and humanely dispatched with a crack of the whip. 'Mum used to cook them,' he said. 'They were always good to eat, but there's hardly any around these days.'

When I met Vin in 2002 he was a fit 85 year old living in a retirement village in Murray Bridge. His wife Sheila passed away in 2000 after a long illness.

19 19		Married in the District of Strathalbyn				in the State of South Australia			
When Married	Name and Surname to be written in full	Age	Place and Country of Birth	Condition	Trade or Calling	Business at time of Marriage	Name and Surname of Father of both Parties	Place to which C	
July 2nd.	Herbert Hinde Clark	31	Beachport South Australia	Bachelor	Farmer	Mypolonga South Australia	Robert Clark	Christ Ch Strathal	
1919	Ruby Gladys Moore	26	Woodchester South Australia	Spinster	Home Duties	Woodchester South Australia	William Moore		
Marriage solemnized by me, at the time and place above named, and in the presence of us		Name of Groom		Name of Bride		Name of Minister		Name of Witnesses	
Herbert Hinde Clark		Ruby Gladys Moore		G. G. Hall		D. B. Wood		M. H. Wood	
The above-named <u>Herbert Hinde Clark</u> and <u>Ruby Gladys Moore</u> were duly Married by me, at the time and place above named, and in the presence of the witnesses whose signatures are above written.									
Witness my hand this <u>second</u> day of <u>July</u> 19 <u>19</u> .									

**Marriage of Herbert Hinde Clark to Ruby Gladys Moore, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1919, at Strathalbyn SA**

Herb's neighbour, was his best man, and another of the Moore girls, Bertha Mary Ann, was Gladys' bridesmaid and both were witnesses to the marriage. The wedding group photo shows Gladys' parents, William and Lucy Moore, her brother Lindsay and bridesmaid Bertha, Herb's father Robert William Clark, Herb's two sisters Emily Olivia and Ada Clarice, and best man Gordon Hall.



**2nd July 1919 - Herb Clark & Ruby Gladys Moore**

Herb and Gladys' firstborn was my father, Robert William Clark, born 2 April 1920. Dad told me once that he was named after both of his grandfathers, taking the 'Robert' from his paternal grandfather Robert William Clark, and the 'William' from his mother's father, William Moore. All his life he was known as Bill, by all his friends and relatives except one aunt and his high school teacher who both called him Bob. He accepted it from those two people, but nobody else could call him "Bob"!



**Robert William Clark born 2 April 1920. Known all his life as "Bill".**

His silver christening mug is engraved with the initials *RWC* and his birth date. He was baptised in St. John the Baptist church, Murray Bridge, on 27 June, 1920, and at fourteen and a half years old was confirmed on 7 December 1934 in the same church by the Reverend A. Nutter of Adelaide.

Gordon Hall was not only best man at Herb's wedding, but also Godfather to the second child, Clarice Lucy. Gordon's wife Nellie Hall was Clarice's Godmother. Clarice recalled that the couple had no children of their own, but loved little ones dearly. When they went 'to town' they often came home with clothes they had bought for Billy and Clarice. They must have been wonderful neighbours.

Lillian May had four sisters and two brothers. One sister, Ruby Gladys, went to Mypolonga to stay with James and Lillian for a while ... and met my grandfather Herb Clark.

On the 2 July, 1919, Herb and Gladys, as my grandmother was always known, were married in Christ Church, Strathalbyn. Gordon Hall,



The South Bokara Road neighbours of Hall, Pickering and Clark were somewhat entrepreneurial in that they installed an RID model milking machine - one of the first, if not the actual first, to be used in Mypolonga. They later had a Lawson milking machine, which Vin O'Brien described as a 'miss and hit' engine! The milking machines must have made a tremendous difference to the dairymen's day – James and Lillian O'Brien had 35 cows, which took three and a half hours to milk and separate the cream. In 1922 they installed a 3-1/2 hp LKG milking machine and reduced the time to 45 minutes.

Messrs Hall and Clark also jointly owned a Friesian bull by the name of *Longbeach General Botha* which was shown at the Royal Adelaide Show with considerable success in many classes over at least three years.

Royal Agricultural & Horticultural Society Yearbook records compiled by Marilyn Ward 16 October 2002 show the following details for the Champion Friesian Bull *Longbeach General Botha*, previously shown for a third place by F. E. Hannaford in 1922 as '*Bull, calved before July 1, 1918*':

- *1923: Bull, calved before July 1 1919 – 1<sup>st</sup> H H Clarke & G Hall's 'Longbeach General Botha'.*
- *1923: Champion Prize for Best Bull, Gold Medal (presented by SA Government) – Hall & Clarke's 'Longbeach General Botha'.*
- *1924: Bull, calved before July 1 1920 – 1<sup>st</sup> Hall & Clarke's 'Longbeach General Botha'.*
- *1924: Champion Prize (presented by SA Government) for Best Bull – Hall & Clarke's 'Longbeach General Botha'.*
- *1925: Porter Challenge Cup – 2<sup>nd</sup> Hall & Clarke*
- *1925: Bull, calved before July 1 1921 - 1<sup>st</sup> Hall & Clarke's 'Longbeach General Botha'*
- *1925: Bull, calved between July 1 1924 and June 30 1925 – 1<sup>st</sup> Hall & Clarke's 'Etandua Major Botha'.*
- *1925: Champion Prize (presented by SA Government) for Best Bull – Hall & Clarke's 'Longbeach General Botha'.*

My great-grandfather did not live to see his son's show-ring success with his cattle. Robert William Clark the Yorkshireman passed away in 1922 at 63 years old, only two years after his promotion to Chief Inspector of Factories. The *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill) in August 1922 mentioned briefly in 'Personal' notes that "*Robert William Clark, Chief Inspector of Factories, died suddenly*" and page 4 of the *Narracoorte Herald* (SA: 1875-1954) of Friday 18 August published a respectful obituary as follows:

*"Death of the Chief Inspector of Factories – The numerous friends of Mr. R. W. Clark, Chief Inspector of Factories in South Australia, in Narracoorte and other parts of the South-East will regret to hear that he died suddenly at his residence in Malvern, in Adelaide, recently. Mr. Clark was connected with the Loco. Branch of the Railway Department in the South-East for many years, and was at Beachport, Kingston, and Narracoorte. He resided at Narracoorte for a number of years, and was greatly esteemed by our community. At Narracoorte he was foreman of the carriage branch of the Loco. workshops, and was a first-class workman, and could*

*turn his hand to anything where tools were concerned. Before coming to the South-East he was in the Port Wakefield Loco. shops. Mr. Clark was born at Barnard Castle, Yorkshire, on November 11, 1859. As a boy he was engaged by the Midland Railway Company at Leeds. He arrived in South Australia in the steamer Garonne on September 14, 1878. He went to work for Mellor Bros. in Adelaide and afterwards joined the South Australian Locomotive Department. While in Narracoorte applications were invited for an inspector in the Factories Department, and Mr. Clark received the appointment, which dated from June 10, 1901. This meant his transfer to Adelaide. He became senior inspector on July 1, 1911, and on the death of Mr. John Bannigan he became Chief Inspector of the Department in April, 1930. He had an illness a few months ago, but it was thought that he had completely recovered from it. While a resident of Narracoorte with his wife and family he took an interest in the affairs of the community, and made a large number of friends. He took an active interest in St. Paul's Church of England while residing here. The Commissioner of Public Works (Hon W. Hagus), who is the Minister controlling the Factories Department, stated that the late Mr. R. W. Clarke [sic] had been a conscientious, capable, and painstaking officer, and his death was a distinct loss to the service. He had a practical and extensive knowledge of his duties, which he had performed in a most satisfactory manner."*

In 1923 or 1924 Herbert, Gladys and their young son moved from the South End of Mypolonga to higher ground in what has always been called 'The Basin', a topographical depression. Severe flooding in 1917 had caused thousands of pounds' worth of damage and extreme hardship for those living in the low-lying areas.



The small four-roomed house to which Herb and Gladys moved was built of limestone blocks, one of several of a similar style already established in that area. The house still existed in 2002 but was in poor condition when I saw it. A semi-circular asbestos addition at the front was made by a later owner, but the Clarks had a lean-to built at the back of the house.

The front room on one side of the house was Herb and Gladys' bedroom, and the next room along was their son's. A new window was built into the side wall of the house, as the original would have looked out into the 'sleep-out' at the back. The other end of the lean-to accommodated a bathroom. The kitchen had two windows looking into the back enclosure. Clarice Masters told me that an unusual feature, for those days, was the floor-to-ceiling built-in cupboards on either side of the fireplace. The toilet was 'out the back'.

The orange orchard on the property was not a viable proposition and Herb's interest was really only in dairy cattle. Although the contemporary report had mentioned that he would have 'good Jersey cows', the dairy blockers discovered soon after settlement that Friesians were the best cattle for the swamps. Vin O'Brien, my second cousin, told me that a fellow blocker, Prosser, had Jerseys, but they did not do well. Vin's

parents James and Lillian had Shorthorns, but the Friesians, he says, were the better milkers.

Herb and Gladys had thirty to forty acres of swamp directly below their house and dairy on Coolibah Drive, safely out of reach of floods on the hill opposite the Mypolonga Co-op, now Mypolonga Traders.

Their daughter Clarice Lucy Clark was born 23 September 1925. She told me that as a small child she slept in her parents' bedroom, and only took over her brother's room when he left home at fourteen to continue his schooling and live in the city. Bill suffered from asthma and severe eczema, which the river, swamp and dairy environment seemed to exacerbate.

Herbert Clark, following in his father's footsteps, also became a Freemason and the *Installation of Br. H. H. Clark as Worshipful Master* in Mypolonga Lodge, No. 121, took place on Wednesday 29 August 1928 in the Methodist Church at Mypolonga. This would have been the stone church. Clarice recalled from her childhood the 'ladies' nights', the sing-songs, and the wonderful suppers set out by the ladies for the Lodge members. Her mother Gladys, and Godmother Nell Hall, are shown, along with seventeen other wives, in a proud photograph of one such evening. Four long trestles covered in starched white tablecloths are laid for supper, with such a profusion of arranged flowers on the tables that there seems scarcely room for plates. As Clarice said, *'I think they overdid the flowers!'*

Herb was a member of Lodge No. 121 until they retired to Littlehampton in 1946, but his son Bill did not follow him into Freemasonry.

My father was never really interested in history but he did tell me once that he remembered the Captain Sturt stern-wheel paddle steamer plying the river, clearing snags. This magnificent vessel was imported from U.S.A. in kit form and assembled here to become instrumental in the building of the barrages. All that remains of the Mississippi-style sternwheeler is the scarcely recognisable, last rusting fragments of her stern wheel at a Goolwa marina.



Clarice as a teenager on "Belle"

Another incident he recalled was when his young sister, while riding her pony to school, was attacked by nesting magpies. Her solution was to drop the reins on the pony's neck, hold her school-case in both hands above her head, and kick the pony into a canter to get past the 'danger stretch'.

When I was young Dad impressed upon me the strength of a galah's beak when he told me how, when on the way home from school one hot day, he and his mates found a galah almost dead from heat exhaustion. Thinking to carry it home and give it some water, they wisely checked to see how exhausted it was by putting a half inch thick green gum twig near it, which the bird promptly snapped in two. The good Samaritans decided the galah did not

need rescuing after all!

Dad was never fond of horses or riding, although he did say that his parents once got him a pony to ride to school. However, it was prone to suddenly dropping to its knees and rolling, and Dad thought that his parents probably sold it. It was his sister who loved horses and riding, no doubt inherited in part from her mother Gladys. I have a photo of a teenage Clarice on a black pony 'Belle' – whether it was the same one she rode as a primary school youngster I don't know.

He mentioned the day a circus came to Mypolonga and tethered its animals, including camels, among trees below the Lands Department shed. Along came Mr Yelland the butcher with his horse and cart on his meat delivery round. The horse took umbrage at the smell of the camels and absolutely refused to go anywhere near them, so Mr Yelland had to find an alternative route that day!

There was a tendency for doctors in the 1920's to 'take your tonsils out' almost as a matter of course, and Dad remembered his having been taken out – not in hospital, but at home on the dining room table. Another time, after a bout of some childhood illness, he went to stay at Mindacowie Guest House at Middleton on the south coast. He also stayed at Arnella Guest House, Port Elliot, once, and I have a photo of Herb taken by the rocks at Port Elliot.

The picturesque south coast must have appealed to the Clarks. When Dad was in his sixties he gave me a couple of old postcards. One was entitled *At Granite Island, Port Victor, South Aust.*, and written in a mature hand *Wishing you Many Happy returns of the Day with Father* written below that. It was addressed to *Mr H.H. Clark, Teesdale Farm, Mypolonga*. Although it seems a little ambiguous, we believe it to have been sent by Robert Clark to his son Herb, rather than from Robert (Bill) Clark to his father Herb, because the handwriting is different from Bill Clark's.



**Mothering Sunday postcard from "Billy & Clarice" to their mother Ruby Gladys (known always as Gladys)**

As previously mentioned, Dad gave me one of my great-grandfather's delicate oil paintings, which I had framed, and a number of old books including an original Beatrix Potter story, *Ginger and Pickles*, published by Frederick Warne & Co. Ltd. It is minus its cover and the binding is fragile, but it was well-read and well-loved, according to Clarice. Many of the black and white drawings in it are carefully coloured; 'I was a devil for colouring in – I'd colour anything,' she said. The inscription on the fly-leaf is *'To dear Billy, with love from Joan and Peggy, Xmas*

The other was a Mothering Sunday postcard, with a sentimental verse *'Greeting to my Mother – All the fragrance of the Spring Mingling with the love they bring, Home, like birds on eager wing, Thoughts fly mothering'* It was signed by *Billy & Clarice* in their children's cursive.

1925'. This was a Christmas gift from Bill's cousins Joan and Peg, William Clarence Clark's daughters.

*Philips' New Comparative Commonwealth Atlas (1932)*, with its vast patches of empirical red splashed across the British Commonwealth of Nations map was used first by Billy and then Clarice at primary school. Then there was *Kenilworth* by Sir Walter Scott, given to Herb Clark in 1899 and passed down to Billy. *In the World of Books* was a 'collection of poems and prose passages from English literature .. to arouse interest, romantic, historical, literary, and to afford an introduction to some of those great books which the pupil is able at this stage to appreciate. As in the Junior Book of this series, the compiler has tried to make the readings as suggestive as possible for the teacher of literature and general history.'

*Suggestive* had a different meaning in the 1930's!

In 2002 Clarice gave me two of Bill's schoolbooks, the *Adelaide Geography, Grades VI and VII* published in 1934. On one of the fly-leaves Dad wrote, as children still write in their books when they are discovering the wider world around them, *Billy Clark, Mypolonga via Murray Bridge, River Murray, South Australia, Australia, World*. It seems quaint now to read that 'London (8 million people) is the greatest city and the greatest port in the world'. As a little boy, one of Dad's favourite books was *Six o'clock Stories* – cost, two shillings and sixpence; the book's value to the young Billy, judging by its very well-thumbed appearance, was priceless.

Originally 'presented to Gladys by her teacher' when a child still living at Highland Valley, Woodchester, the rather heavy English Reading Book for Middle Forms was also given to Billy.

He also acquired his mother's *Simple Studies in English History* by William Gillies, M.A. 'written to meet the Requirements of the Fifth Class Programme in Victorian Schools.'

Handed down to Billy from his grandfather's sister was *Uncle Tom's Cabin, a tale of Life Among the Lowly* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, with original illustrations, published by Frederick Warne and Co. It was presented to 'Clarice Clark, Near Narracoorte School, for General Improvement on 21.12.1900 by Annie Sharpley, Head Teacher.'

Also among the books is *Pears' Shilling Cyclopaedia* including a Twentieth Century Census which gives the population of Australia as 3,767,443 (South Australia 362,604). The Cyclopaedia is in a very fragile condition and undated, but makes reference to the Commonwealth having been formed in 1901.

There was some lighter reading, such as the English publication Horner's One Penny Weekly *Sunday Stories*, issue no. 550 dated November 3 1906. The major sponsor appeared to be Fry's Pure Concentrated Cocoa, and who could have resisted the Edwardian characters on the front cover with the tantalising words 'Suddenly Peggy was set free, and Mannering, white to the lips, was gripping Brompton's shoulder... See Complete Story Within' !



Passed down to me also is a pair of beautiful gold cufflinks with my great-grandfather's initials RWC engraved on them. For one of my birthdays Dad had a short length of 9 carat gold fob chain and bar made into a brooch for me. It belonged to either his father or grandfather; Dad was uncertain who, but I value the family connection.

Dad sometimes mentioned '*During the floods ...*' The major flood that affected his home life occurred in 1931, when the Clarks evacuated to Harrogate in the north-eastern Adelaide Hills with their cattle. The water, of course, covered the river flats so that there was no feed. By the time the water receded at Mypolonga, water was becoming short at Harrogate, so they were able to return.

Vin O'Brien tells the story of the time during one flood when Uncle Lindsay, his mother Lillian's brother, came to visit with Robert Moore, Lindsay's grandfather, an old bullocky with the loud voice usually associated with those of that calling. Vin said that while his uncle looked shocked at the floodwaters, Robert snorted and said '*A coupla thirsty bullocks'd drain that in no time!*' Robert Moore was the patriarch of the Moores, having emigrated from County Tyrone, Northern Ireland as a young man on the "*Tyrone*" in 1855.

During that particular flood Vin's parents also took their cattle away, to Pfeiffer's property at Woodside. The relationship got off to a rather strange start when the Pfeiffers told James O'Brien that no women were allowed on the property. James said that it was necessary for his wife to assist with the milking. It was evidently then suggested that children were not allowed, but within a short time the two families were quite good friends. It turned out that during the 1917 floods apparently some rather wayward women from Mypolonga had gone to Woodside and earned the rest of the good townsfolk a dubious reputation!

Herb Clark also had a block on what was locally termed 'the high lands', which provided alternative pasture. The site of his block is opposite the T-Junction of the Mypolonga North and Balanada roads. The local signs at the junction indicate Woodlane Reserve, 6.4 km, Oval, and Mypolonga Traders. Woodlane Reserve was formerly Kittelty's Landing but in 2002 was a picnic venue with a boat ramp for the pleasure seekers, adjacent a housing estate, some of whose residents worked in the city. 'Woodlane' referred to the landing's use as a wooding-up area for the paddle-steamers.

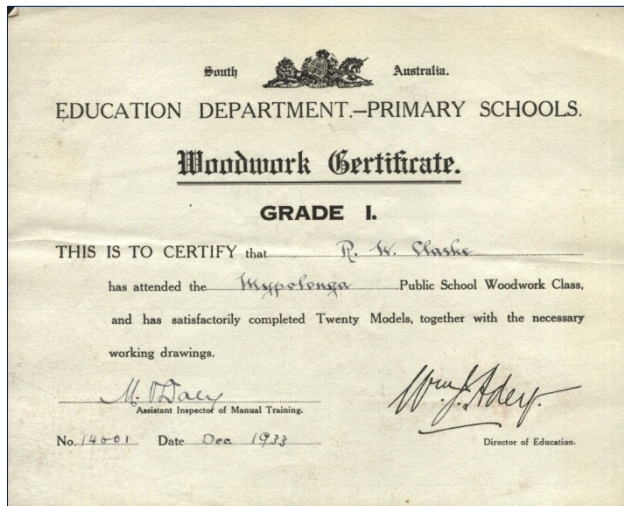
Many other dairy farmers removed their cattle to distant places during 1917, 1931 and later in 1956, year of the biggest flood in living memory. Much of the stock was taken to places like Bull Creek, in the southern Adelaide Hills, where feed was plentiful. During the latter two floods, the Mypolonga Irrigation Office 'went under'.

Lands Titles Office records show that Herb had about five blocks at Mypolonga, one in the Hundred of Mobilong, one at Aldgate North, three at Maylands, and one at Hallett's Cove Estate.

In 1920, my father's birth year, a dozen or so "Mypo" fruit-growers held a meeting to consider the establishment of a Co-operative Society to help them market their produce, dried fruit. It finally showed a profit in 1928, and commenced dealing in citrus fruit in 1930. 'The Co-op' was built on 6 acres opposite Herb and Gladys' Teesdale Farm, and although it now operates as Mypolonga Traders, it is still on the original site.

Vin O'Brien told me that Herb purchased a Model T Ford in 1933. He bought another Ford near the beginning of World War II. Vin pointed out a section of the original road followed by the Clarks on their trips into Murray Bridge. 'There were only two sorts of roads – sand and floating,' he said. Floating roads were 'metalled' with loose, ball-bearing size gravel. The old road eventually became impassable after a succession of flood washaways.

Billy Clark's school photo of 1934 shows 44 boys with their teacher J. Blizard. There



**Bill Clark's certificate in woodwork, Mypolonga Primary School 1933.**

were only two classes, one for girls and one for the boys, and each one contained all grades, a formidable task for both teachers and students. His sister Clarice's school photo for the same year shows Miss Jessie McLelan with her 39 charges.

It appears that Mr Blizard was paid an annual salary of 253 pounds + 126 pounds 8 shillings (for qualifications) minus 30

pounds for rent.

On a nostalgic trip to Mypolonga, Clarice showed me a small building with stone end walls in the primary school grounds, and said 'That's where we used to eat our lunch'. It has since been converted to a classroom.

She later attended Murray Bridge High School, travelling on Lintern's Mail Bus. Because it was during the Second World War, the bus had a gas producer which was somewhat unreliable. Clarice said that her teacher, Miss McKechnie, once remarked as the children came yet again late to school, 'When the Mypolonga contingent has settled down, we can commence our work.'

After leaving school, Clarice worked in the office at the Co-op, where Mr Arch Burrett was manager. She later joined the WAAF's and trained as a Flight Mechanic. Gladys, my Gran Clark, told me once, 'Clarice told me she wanted to join the WAAF's in the war. I told her she could join the WAAF's if she



**Clarice Lucy Clark, Bill's sister, in her WAAF uniform**

wanted to; she could do anything, in fact, so long as she didn't drink or swear!

Vin O'Brien took some of the credit for having introduced Clarice to her future husband Reg Masters. One day the bus broke down and he offered to take several of the young people in his car – long before the time of seatbelts. He knew both Clarice and Reg independently. 'You won't all fit,' he told Reg. 'But if you let her sit on your lap, I can take all of you!' Reg's parents, Mr and Mrs Robert Masters, had gone to Mypolonga to live while their sons Reg, John and Des were serving in the War - Reg and John overseas in the Army, and Des in the Air Force. Reg's parents later retired to Littlehampton; Reg's mother passed away in 1954 and his father in 1977. The Masters' old house was still standing at Mypo when I visited the township with Clarice.

Clarice said that she never really knew her older brother Bill 'that well'. He was five years older than she, and the girls' class and the boys' class were two separate entities at the primary school. When Clarice was nine years old her big brother had to leave home and move to Adelaide to further his education. He lived with his Uncle Ted (Edward) Simmons and Aunt Olive (nee Moore – one of his mother's sisters) in a double-fronted house in 25A Cumming Street, Mile End. The Simmons had three sons – Donald William, Gordon Edward and Geoffrey Clive. Geoffrey passed away in Queensland, about mid-2002.

Due to ill health Bill repeated seventh grade at Mypolonga School and consequently gained two Qualifying Certificates, dated 15 December 1933 and 14 December 1934 respectively. In 1933 he received a Grade 1 Woodwork Certificate, having '... *satisfactorily completed Twenty Models, together with the necessary working drawings.*'



**Bill Clark, 1st year Thebarton Technical School 1935. He is standing, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right in the second row down. (wearing shorts and long socks)**



Dad went to Thebarton Boys' Technical School in 1935 and showed great promise. He was 14 years and 8 months old at the beginning of the first term, about a year older than the average for his class, and his school report reads for that term *'I congratulate Bob on his position as top of his class and think that he has thoroughly earned his distinction. He is a capable student and behaves always as a gentleman.'* At the end of the second term *'Bob is to be congratulated on again holding the position as Dux of this class. He is a boy who is able to excel both in the theoretical and practical subjects. Criticisms from all teachers are to his credit ... A. G. Paull, Headmaster'*. His best subjects (and this in a class of 39 students) were Arithmetic, Algebra, Theoretical Geometry, Experimental Science, Geometrical Drawing, and Woodwork.

At that time there were two year and three year courses, but Dad finished after only two terms. It seems a pity that he was encouraged to leave school when a local furniture manufacturer was looking for a 'bright boy' and according to stories told by my mother, went to the school to seek someone suitable; Bill was pointed out by his teacher as a worthy candidate for the position and was very happy to accept it. He was indeed a bright boy and in different circumstances could have become an engineer – he was always drawn to metalwork and even bought a metal lathe and taught himself to use it in his retirement.

But with youthful enthusiasm Bill did his cabinet-making apprenticeship at Rhys Jones Furniture Co., together with his close friend George Jones. The name was coincidental and there was no family connection. The term 'apprenticeship' is used here loosely; although Dad served his time I believe there were no official papers. His status was probably that of 'improver'. In 1938 he passed a *'Course of Instruction in Cabinetmaking'* at the School of Mines and Industries. The elaborate certificate was signed by J. Langdon Bonython on 3 January 1939.



**3rd Jan. 1939, Bill's certificate in cabinet-making for 1938 from the School of Mines & Industries (corner North Tce & Frome Rd, Adelaide)**

Bill did not give up study as he had a thirst for knowledge that came perhaps from his grandfather Robert William, and while still single studied 'wireless' technology and electrics by night at the School of Mines on North Terrace, Adelaide while continuing to work in the furniture factory.

Roller-skating at Our Boys Institute at 221 Wakefield Street, Adelaide was a favourite pastime for many young people then and Bill was no exception. A part of Adelaide's heritage, the O.B.I. as it was known had been built in 1897 to cater for the *"physical and mental health of 13 to 18 year old boys"*. By the 1930's the organisation widened to include both males and females, and occupied the lovely three-storey Venetian Gothic-style sandstone façade building until in 1961 the O.B.I. amalgamated with the Youth Clubs Association of SA.

The heritage-preserved facade of the building remains in 2017, incorporated in a boutique hotel, but the building was used for a time as offices by the Education Department after it was no longer used by the OBI. Dad's friend George Jones also used to skate there.



**The OBI building, Wakefield St, in 2017**

Bill was on the learners' roller rink on a wet Anzac Day, practising figure three's and eight's, when he met his first and only sweetheart, Pearl Aileen Hastwell, on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1939. He was 19 years and 3 weeks old, and she 19 years and 2 days. The next time she went skating, Bill was waiting for her. It was the beginning of their friendship.

On Boxing Day 1940, a Thursday, Bill wrote to Pearl at her home address of 3 Chapel Street Plympton, to let her know that the bus from the city would be leaving at 6.15 pm, if she was thinking of visiting him and his family at Mypolonga where he had gone home to spend Christmas. He must have enjoyed his Christmas dinner, as he wrote '*...what with the goose, ham, pork, and pudding I had just about enough to eat*

*... Clarice has a little ginger kitten now ... Dad and Clarice and I went fishing last night and had our usual luck "0" ... we are going to Murray Bridge Friday night to do some shopping ... It was beautiful and cool here last night ... "Bruce" is still as lively as ever and works just as well. He goes and gets the cows on his own when we tell him it's time ...'* This was the voice of the country boy, writing to his girl of the simple pleasures he loved, a world away from the noise of the furniture factory and the suburbs. It shows, too, his quiet sense of humour that Pearl loved.

Bruce, of course, was the dog, and Dad often told us how Bruce liked to play with the farm kittens, picking them up gently, one at a time, by the scruff of the neck and carrying them to the other end of the verandah, until he or they tired of the game.



**Bill Clark (enlisted 1940) with Pearl Aileen Hastwell**

Around that time Bill moved from Rhys Jones' furniture company to George W. Smalls on the corner of West and Meyer Streets, Torrensville.

Bill enlisted for the Australian Army at Southwark, South Australia, on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1940. The Second Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1939-1947, Series B884 Army Citizen Military Forces (National Archives of Australia) show that his service no. was S29110, but no other official information is available. However he told me that he did some training at Warradale army camp, but was rejected because of lung damage due to his asthma. I have a

photo of him in uniform beside Mum, posing among the orange trees at Teesdale Farm.

Mum said that it was one of the very few times in her life that she ever wore a hat for fashion. A city girl, she often told me how shocked she was at what she considered the primitive conditions of Dad's parents' home at Mypolonga. She disliked flies and spiders and was 'scared stiff' of cows, and there were plenty of all three.



**15th Jan 1944 - Marriage of Bill Clark to Pearl Hastwell. Col "Robby" best man, Joyce bridesmaid.**

However, she loved Bill, and they married on 15 January 1944 in the Plympton Methodist Church on the corner of Mooringe Avenue and Marion Road, Plympton, South Australia.

As Pearl's health was not robust enough to work in munitions she had to leave her sales assistant's job in G. J. Coles to work in food production at Bryces, the egg processing company, in Ebenezer Place off Rundle Street East. Pearl did not have enough clothing coupons to buy a wedding dress, but one of her work-mates lent her one. Her bridesmaid was Joyce, another work colleague and remained her closest and literally life-long friend. After a small reception at Pearl's great-aunt Edrie's home

recalled the three hour train trip each way and her dismay that there was no toilet on board!

in Chapel Street, Plympton, the happy couple had a three day honeymoon at Pipiriki Guest House, Victor Harbor. Mum

One night in the early years of their marriage, my mother told me, she and Bill had retired to bed when they heard explosions and the sound of fire. They dressed quickly and ran to the scene to find the furniture factory well alight. The cabinet-makers' workshop and the polish shop with its volatile materials were burning fiercely, the corrugated iron curling in the heat and an outside power box flaming. Mum recalled Dad saying at the time '*Oh, our tools – all our tools!*' They were saved, however; tools were an important issue because in the mid-forties it was not simply a matter of buying a replacement set, even if one had the money. Dad valued his hand tools all his life.

Despite my mother's strong recollection of this fire I have been unable to verify it; all I found was an *Advertiser* article in December 1929 about a fire at G. W. Small's furniture factory, but I have no reason to doubt that a fire may also have happened in the 1940's.



During the war years George W. Small switched

from furniture manufacture to munitions cases, and in fact the bedroom suite which Dad helped make at Smalls for him and Pearl was the last suite of furniture to be made before War restrictions. It was passed on to my husband John and me when we were married in 1971.

The Clarks' back fence was part of the side fence of Thebarton Boys Technical School. Because of World War II it was extremely difficult to obtain accommodation, as people were unable to build homes due to materials shortages. Evidently this old house was not the cleanest when they took up residence and Mum and Dad used a lot of elbow-grease in cleaning it, a difficult task without the benefit of modern easy-clean surfaces.

In 1946 Herbert and Gladys Clark relinquished their Friesian stud in 'The Basin' at Mypolonga, and bought 40 acres of prime land at Littlehampton in the Adelaide Hills, near Mount Barker for their retirement. On this property they ran about ten cows of differing breeds, some agisted for other people, and a bull.



**Hampton Lodge, 1946, Littlehampton SA**

The rectangular-plan house, 'Hampton Lodge', was built in the 1860's for a doctor from England. One section of it was evidently built a few years before the other. The roof pitch, chimneys and stonework on the front and the back of the house are of differing architectural styles, according to the National Trust. The doctor must have experimented with a few vines, as there were remnants of old grapevines still on the property when the Clarks purchased it.

As was often the case with country houses built in the 1800's, the kitchen was not under the main roof, due to fire danger, but in an iron outhouse separated from the main dwelling by a breezeway. Clarice said *'It was only just a kitchen, it was pretty crude.'* Herb had the old outhouse demolished as soon as he could, and built a new kitchen onto the end of the old house, in bricks from the Littlehampton brickworks.



**Clarice Lucy Clark's marriage 13 Sep 1947**

After her 1946 discharge from the RAAF, Clarice at 22 years old married Reginald Burton Masters on 13 September 1947 in St John's Church of England in Halifax Street, Adelaide. Petrol was still rationed and the couple decided on a central location for the wedding so that guests would be able to attend. Clarice said that even on the farms, coupons had to be used for petrol to operate milking machines, chaff cutters etc.

Pearl and Bill's first child, Wendy Robyn, was born in autumn 1947, but while she was still only a toddler Mum and Dad faced eviction from their rented home when the owner Mrs B., who had previously gone to live with her

hotelier sister at Naracoorte in the South-east of South Australia, needed to resume tenancy of her own house.



**Bill & Pearl's first home, (rented) at East St Torrensville, SA. The huge "radiogram" on the right eventually moved with them to their own home in Trennery St West Richmond, SA.**

*don't like having to tell you we are coming down, but maybe we can come to some agreement, we are getting the summer at last, just a little too hot for my liking, well cheerio for now kindest regards to you both, Yours sincerely, D. B."*

Her previous letter, only three weeks before, gave no hint that the situation had changed, so receiving this must have been a real blow to my parents. They knew how difficult it would be to share the house with the landlords, and so Dad took their case to court, to no avail.

All their lives my parents kept those statements of rejection from letting agents, their company names rubber stamped on the pages of a notebook and signed and dated with "*Nothing available*". Days of my father going to one office after another, while my mother pushed me in my wooden-framed pusher, common at that time. They exhausted forty different agents between the 10<sup>th</sup> April and 15<sup>th</sup> June. Reluctantly in 1948 they moved into a couple of rooms at 3 Chapel Street Plympton with Mum's widowed aunt Edrie.

(Edrie Williams (nee Davies) and Justus had raised Pearl as their own daughter after the death of Pearl's father, Albert John Hastwell, at 35 years of age in 1922 when Pearl was only 22 months old. This left her mother Gladys with a mortgage, three young children and seven and a half months pregnant with twins. Gladys' childless sister was only too happy to take baby Pearl off her hands until she could cope, but somehow a few weeks became Pearl's entire childhood.)

She wrote, on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1948, "*Just a few lines to let you know that Mr B. has got a transfer to Adelaide and we will be wanting the house to live in, but if you have no other plans I am quite willing to share it with you, I cannot tell you for certain when we will be leaving here, we don't know anything definite ourselves yet, but soon has [sic] I do I will let you know, I will very likely be in Adelaide early next week and will call and see you, so you two talk it over and let me know, I know it's hard to get a house these days and I*



**Bill with 6 month old baby Wendy, & wood-framed pusher.**

The years my parents spent at Edrie's house were not the happiest for them, as they had to share meagre facilities with Edrie and later with her spinster sister Olive as well.



**Edrie Catherine Williams (nee Davies) with Bill & Pearl's first daughter Wendy**

Edrie was widowed and my mother was always trying to devise ways of keeping me quietly amused without annoying my great-aunts. There was no hot water, it all having to be heated in a copper; the toilet was at the bottom end of the back yard (I recall a monstrous ornate bowl with a heavy wooden seat through which I was positive I would fall, if I was not to be first flooded by an angry-sounding cistern with a handle on the end of a chain.)

The bathroom was separated from the kitchen in the corrugated iron lean-to by a partition and although I have no real memory of this (apart from watching the bathwater gurgle out through a pipe into an open drain to the rhubarb patch) I am sure it must have been hot in summer and very cold in winter. I shared my bedroom with boxes and stored furniture whose shapes frightened me at night. The dining room was dark and gloomy and the walls covered in equally dark and gloomy English landscapes.

(The house became sub-standard over the years and was eventually sold, demolished and a two-storey block of flats built on the site some time in the 1970's)

Bill and Pearl had managed to buy a block of land on a new sub-division of a dairy farm on the eastern boundary of what would become Adelaide Airport, a fact not widely known by the general public when he made his purchase in about 1949. Parafield Aerodrome was then the city's airport. The land where the airport was to be sited was swampy, with market gardens, almond orchards and dairy farms abutting Marion Road.



**Bill Clark with Wendy on his bike**

During the years spent at 3 Chapel Street, my parents saved up to have their house built on their block at Penrhyn (now West Richmond), where they spent most fine weekends clearing boxthorn hedges and preparing for construction. Mum used to be fond of saying 'We went without lamb chops for five years to save money!' They cycled everywhere, as Dad did not have a car until 1955, when I was eight.

I remember Sunday bike-rides, with me sitting on a special seat Dad had fixed to the crossbar in front of him, to see the almond blossom flanking the southern end of Marion Road. I can still see the frothy white blossom and hear the zinging sound of bees working the flowers. The strong crisp smell still lingers on my memory of the rows of celery in the

market gardens that we passed. The plants had boards fixed around them, keeping out the light so that the stems grew crisp and pale, but the tops were bright green and leafy.



**Building in progress about 1951 - 18 Trennery St, Penrhyn (later changed to West Richmond)** Dad when they finally moved into their own home at 18 Trennery Street, Penrhyn in 1952. The builder was Westbury & Light, for a total cost of two thousand and fifty five pounds. Trennery Street was an unsealed dusty road. In a photo Bill took at the time, there was a house, later demolished, on the corner of Trennery Street and Marion Road. This site was occupied over the years since by a service station, a Woolworths supermarket, and in 2017 a liquor outlet.



Bill was still working for Smalls Furniture Manufacturers when he, Pearl and Wendy moved into number 18 – in fact, he worked at Smalls for 34 years until Christmas, 1975 – and I remember him in the early 1950’s rising early and in winter donning a leather flying helmet with fur-lined ear flaps, leather gloves, wet weather gear, and riding his bike to Edwardstown from Penrhyn. He had to leave in the dark to get there by 7 am, but was always home at 4.10 pm sharp unless he had overtime. Mum was a worrier and would be watching the clock anxiously if he was even five minutes late, convinced that he had met with some accident. We did not have a telephone back then.

In the matter of discipline Dad rarely raised his voice and rarely punished, but I certainly knew my boundaries. I don’t recall my age, but I must have been old enough to give cheek to Mum – which he would not tolerate – and young enough for him sit down on the wood-box, turn me over and paddle my backside with his big hands! It was a lesson well learned – mostly because of my hurt pride.

What did exasperate him were things “being used for what they were not meant”. I remember when my sister was quite young he made her a little wagon with wooden blocks in it. Not content with pulling it around the garden paths, she experimented with using it as a sort of scooter, with a predictable buster and floods of



**Bill & Pearl's second daughter to arrive, Lyndell, at about 8 months.**

tears. There wasn't any sympathy from Dad – she had, after all, been using the wagon “for what it was not meant”!

In the next three years before we acquired both a motor car and my sister Lyndell Joy, born July 1955, Bill and Pearl made a number of visits ‘home’ to Herb and Gladys at Littlehampton. Their first attempts by motor coach were disastrous as I suffered from travel sickness, but after a friend suggested train travel, things improved. Whether it was the smoother passage or the hypnotic ‘clickety-clack’, I was not train-sick and enjoyed the journeys. It also engendered a passion for rail travel, despite my being terrified of the panting, belching steam locos. We had to alight at Mt Barker Junction, where there was no platform, and I vaguely remember being lifted down by Dad. It always seemed to be at night.

That railway line featured largely in the family. Herb drove a Ford soft-top which he had purchased near the beginning of World War II. I remembered Dad telling us about ‘the accident’ from which Herb Clark and Reg Masters walked away with only abrasions to Reg’s ear. I asked Clarice Masters if she could remember more detail and she wrote *‘It (the Ford) came to grief in 1955 when Herb and Reg were going to work and they were hit by a train at a level crossing at Littlehampton. At that time the bushes and small trees near the crossing made it impossible to see trains until you were almost on the line. After many near misses and finally the accident the Railways cleared things up which made vision a lot better and it now has a stop sign. Herb only had a few minor bruises and Reg had a few cuts and the car was a write-off. When they went to the wreckers next day to pick up a few things from the car, their lunch flask was still okay with hot tea in it!! He then bought an F.J. Holden – very smart at that particular time.’*



**Herb, Clarice, Bill & Gladys Clark, a “tall, imposing woman with white hair”**

The environment at ‘Hampton Lodge’ helped nurture my love of the hills country, of animals, and of reading. I remember Herb Clark as Grandpa, a small man but very big in my adoring eyes, with a rather prominent nose and a kind, soft voice. Grandma was a tall, imposing woman with beautiful white hair which, it is said, was white before she was forty. She wore glasses and had one eye which turned in, apparently the result of an altercation with a horned cow some time in the 1920’s during her dairying days at Mypolonga.

On the rare occasions when we visited, Grandpa used to wake me early from my temporary bed in the ‘box room’ off the hallway, and encourage me to eat a couple of biscuits – something I was never permitted to do at home – before breakfast. I was then allowed to watch him do the milking. I remember being impressed, though never afraid, of the big bull that he had in a yard near the dairy.

Occasionally Gran and Grandpa came to visit our house along with Clarice, Reg and our cousins. This usually seemed to be just before the Royal Adelaide Show, and Grandpa used to give me two shillings to buy myself a sample bag. I recall these kind



country relatives always brought a dressed fowl wrapped in damp newspaper. In the 1950's, prior to inexpensive processed frozen and fresh chicken being available, chicken was a rare treat for our table and something usually enjoyed only for Christmas and birthdays.



Later in the 1950's when Dad drove our 1937 Morris to Gran and Grandpa's place, my cousins Ian, Susan and Deidre would come over from their nearby house, and we would play in the 'pine forest', a stand of native pines. At other times, Gran and Grandpa, Mum and Dad, and Aunty Clarice, Uncle Reg and our cousins would all go for a walk over the farm, picking wildflowers. They were sweet, magic times and I thought they might always be.

When I was twelve Grandpa Clark died from a heart attack on the 10 January, 1960, aged 71 years. He had changed quickly after being out for the day and had gone alone to feed the chooks at the top of the hill. Taking ill, he had evidently reached for his heart tablets, only to realise too late that they were still in the pocket of his good trousers back at the house.

Herb Clark was buried in St James Church of England cemetery at Blakiston, between Littlehampton and Nairne. The story goes that the gravediggers encountered solid rock which had to be blasted.

My mother never attended funerals. I remember the radio being on, and the tune 'My Grandfather's Clock' being played. For a lonely child with a keen sense of the melodramatic, it was devastating.

The black clock from the mantel in Grandpa's living room at Hampton Lodge is now in my sister's loving care, although as a small child she was frightened by its wheezing build-up to chiming the hour.

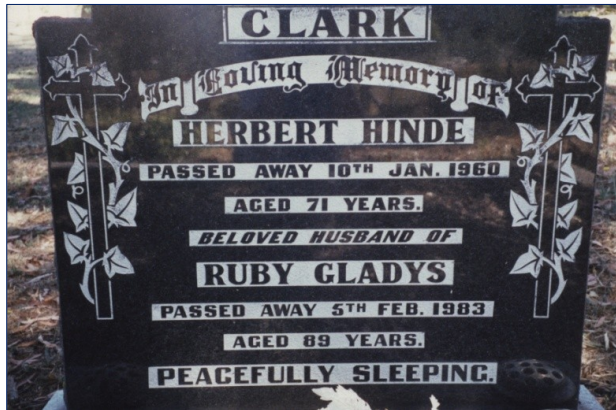
My grandmother survived Herb by 23 years. In her later years the 40 acres of the farm were sold off to developers and she had a house built of local cream brick facing the main road, while Bill's sister Clarice and Reg continued to live in their house next to the Littlehampton Church. A row of huge pine trees mark the street frontage of this very deep block and in more recent times a new house has been built between Clarice and Reg's house and the road.

When Clarice's daughter Deidre married Kym Kumnick they built a house on West Terrace, on one of the boundary blocks of the old farm.

Reg and Clarice Masters went to live in the West Terrace house in about 1992 when Deidre and Kym moved to a larger house they built on one of the other subdivided farm blocks.

Gran passed away on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1983 in her 90<sup>th</sup> year. My husband John was one of the pall-bearers who took Ruby Gladys on her last brief journey from St James church

at Blakiston to be buried with her Herb in the church graveyard. She had lived long enough to see her great-grandchildren.



Bill Clark was only 55 when Smalls Ltd., for whom he had worked so long, ceased trading on 23 December 1975 due to family reasons within the management. The premises at 9 Lindsay Avenue were sold and demolished to make way for a section of car park when the Castle Plaza Shopping Centre was built. The machinery was sold and all employees sacked, including of course Dad. What an

unhappy Christmas they must all have experienced. Bill's reference spoke of his '*...flair for the making of jigs, fixtures, etc.*' but a tradesman in his mid-fifties had few job prospects.

At the time my mother was in very poor health and although it was a very difficult time financially, Dad's enforced early retirement freed him to be her full time carer as by this time glaucoma had robbed my mother almost totally of her sight.



Bill Clark was, like his father, a quiet and unassuming man. And like his grandfather Robert William, he was a superb wood craftsman, with an inventive flair and an enquiring mind. He made the most beautiful furniture, and his modest twelve square home had built-in storage units everywhere – island cupboard in the kitchen, and floor to ceiling wardrobes in both bedrooms as well as dressing tables, a kitchen dresser, a fold-up homework desk

for me, a buffet unit in the lounge and various other smaller cupboards.



The toys he made were superb and nothing was too difficult for him to make. No other child, I was sure, had a dolls' house like mine, with hand-crafted replicas of the furniture in our own house. Before my sister was born, he made me a doll's pram from plywood, with springing and a folding vinyl hood, and my mother fashioned a mattress and bedding. The pram



**A sturdy chalkboard for Lyndell's 6th birthday**

was painted cream, with dark brown lining on it. Knowing now about his grandfather Robert's carriage-work, I realise where Bill's skills came from. He handed down his love of timber to both of us girls.

Dad made a canary cage for one of my birthdays out of masonite with an old wire refrigerator shelf for the front, in which he fabricated a slide opening. It came complete with a pair of canaries and he hung it on the wall of the back porch. I loved the birds but I wasn't quite so keen on cleaning out the cage, and although I always hoped there would be baby birds it never happened. However the canary cage with a succession of occupants was a part of the back porch for many, many years and we all loved the whistling birds. And the dolls' house with miniature replicas of our household furniture ... what more could a little girl wish for?

We lived in the flight path of the Adelaide Airport and Dad used to tease us as the planes flew low overhead. "Can you see the pilot's gold tooth?" and we would anxiously peer at the planes, trying to spot that gold tooth. After all, if Dad hinted that it could be seen, then it must be real!

In the later fifties, sometimes at the end of a really hot summer's day Mum would have home-made pasties ready by the time we got home from school, and when Dad got home from work we'd head to West Beach for a cooling paddle in the sea. Then we would enjoy our tea. But the best part of the evening was building a giant sandcastle with Dad, fashioning little windows and tunnels in the big mound decorated with shells and seaweed. Then came the magic; Dad would screw up little bits of paper, poke them inside the sandcastle, and light them with his cigarette lighter. The little flames flickered and lit up our castle and it became something very special.

Later of course we had to come home to a stifling hot house, but the memory of the sandcastle stayed with us – and still does.

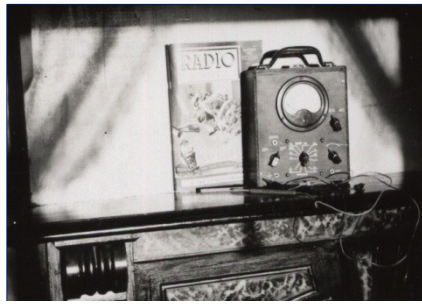
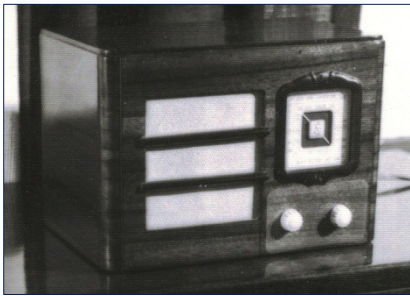
One thing Dad could not do was sing! Whenever the first notes of "God Save the Queen" was played at any public event he stood to attention with everyone else in the crowd but his rendition was more of a gravelly one-note growl.



**Bill Clark made this for his grand-children's pleasure**

How many sixteen year olds' fathers made them a table tennis table for their birthday? When his grand-children came along, he stripped two old record-players and turned them into a Ferris wheel and a merry-go-round where the miniature horses rose and fell on tiny cranks. These treasures delighted his children, grandchildren and I turn his great-grandchildren.

Bill did all his own car maintenance most of his life, even cycling miles on his bike to obtain materials with which to make parts for the old Morris when parts were no longer available. With careful saving he progressed eventually to a Vanguard and through Holdens to his last car, the Toyota. Bill loved photography and early in their marriage did darkroom work, after making his own enlarger, to earn some extra cash, usually while Pearl was sewing buttonholes in garments for people, for the same reason.



Multi-Meter, at Torrensville house

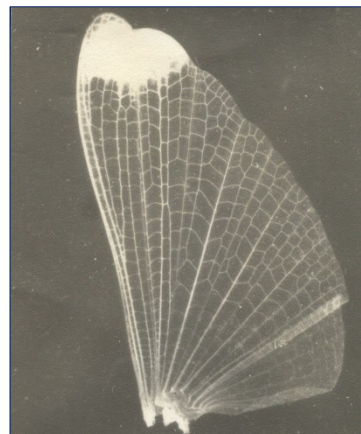
Jig-saw



Clarice, Bill & their mother Gladys



Working the belt sander at Smalls 1970



Enlarged photo of grasshopper wing, home-made enlarger on left



Bill Clark on his 70th birthday, with Pearl

Bill Clark had a broad general knowledge acquired from observation and a passionate interest in reading anything scientific or instructional. He built a wireless, and a radiogram on which I first heard *Swedish Rhapsody*. When CB radio was popular he joined a CB club. He was a member of the local photography club, and when personal computers first became available he taught himself to use the original Commodore 64. He bought an electric organ – not because he had any musical ability (in fact, I think it must have been the only skill he lacked) but because he was intrigued by the way it worked, and it was in a good timber roll-top cabinet. He made beautiful cabinets for Mum's three sewing machines, designing a new cabinet to fit each one, and later, one for mine. Dad was able to both knit and sew. He made a canvas tent, sleeping bags and mosquito nets for our many camping excursions.

Dad sometimes said that he wished he had gone into the metal trades, and he often turned his hand to any sheet metal work needed around the house, garden and shed. He was good at welding. He even bought a metal turning lathe in his retirement which he taught himself to use to make all types of gadgets. When he was a young man he had learned wood turning and I still have a mulga-wood eggcup.

Above all he was a family man. He loved his grandchildren - daughter Lyndell's Terri Pearl, and John's and my children Mark James and Valerie Robyn. As his mother would have wished, he did not drink - although I am sure he was man enough to have made up his own mind on that! I never heard him swear. He gave us children love and discipline in the same measure, and carried out both threats and promises, neither of which were lightly made. If I have mistakenly painted him as a saint, then perhaps I should say that he was quite capable also of being grumpy and exasperated at times. It was usually my mother who was the motivator for outings and trips as in that aspect of life he was not an imaginative person, preferring the routine and 'comfort zone' of his home and work.



He loved Pearl dearly, caring for her devotedly during her many years of ill health and blindness. However, nothing could diminish their joy in celebrating their golden wedding anniversary at home with friends and family in January 1994.

In 1995 an unaccountable fall in the kitchen damaged his spine. We never really knew whether his spine collapsed, causing him to fall over one night when he went to get a drink of water, or whether the fall caused the break. He was in bed for weeks and in severe pain for a few months, but gradually began to walk again with a frame.

One evening John said to me “We should go and see your Dad – tonight!” He couldn’t explain his sudden urge to visit his father-in-law, particularly as we had visited my parents on Father’s Day not long previously. So we went, and found Dad looking the best he had in months. He even talked of perhaps being able to one day drive his beloved old Toyota again. “I might even see if I walk as far as the driveway tomorrow morning,” he said. “You know, see if I can just sit behind the wheel.”

The next morning, 1<sup>st</sup> October, he woke in terrible pain from an abdominal aneurysm but mercifully was unconscious within minutes. Despite Mum managing to call the ambulance, he died in hospital that morning. Within a couple of hours his children, their husbands and the grandchildren had all rallied around Pearl to help her.

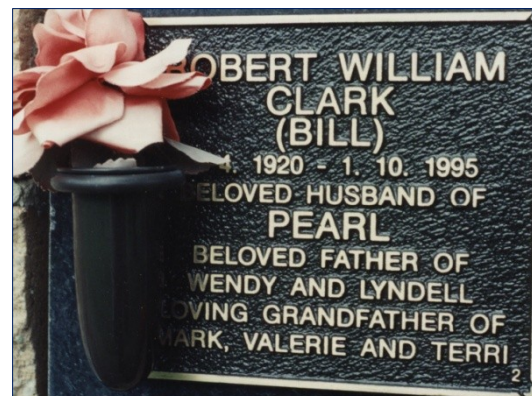
He was cremated at Centennial Park Cemetery, where a plaque on Affinity Wall 214 reads: *‘Robert William Clark (Bill) 2.4.1920 – 1.10.1995. Beloved husband of Pearl. Beloved father of Wendy and Lyndell. Loving grandfather of Mark, Valerie and Terri.’* His funeral was simple and secular, in keeping with his wishes. He was only 75. He had always wanted to see the new century, but he was cheated by five years.

With an iron will and help from family, friends and carers Mum managed to stay on for seven and a half years in the home she and Bill had made fifty years ago - blind, partially deaf, but always with the feeling that with his imprint on the house she was never quite alone.

In 2003 our mother moved into the ACH Aged Care Centre at Yankalilla on the Fleurieu Peninsula – only because of her physical disabilities, for her mind was quite sharp. Her grandson Mark – and her great-grandson Ayden - lived in the house for many years before it eventually passed out of the family’s hands in December 2016. Mum died in 2012 at the good old age of 92.

The day before Bill Clark’s funeral, our daughter Valerie, then seventeen, was moved to write these words:

*‘A smile  
A moment  
Laughter on remembrance  
A life  
More than this;  
A love, to love forever  
A child  
A tear  
A loss more infinite  
Than words  
A smile  
Cherish the moments given  
A smile  
Of love  
For my special grandpa.’*



Now, although it is 22 years since my father's passing, I still think of him every day; when I smell wood shavings, hear the sound of hammering, read about some new invention, it reminds me of him.



**Robert William Clark's carpentry hand-tools ... handed down the generations to his great-grand-daughter Wendy**

Our daughter Valerie once said, after she had taken her future husband Graeme to meet her Nana, Pearl Clark, 'It's so sad that Grandpa could not know Graeme. They would have got on well together, because Graeme is interested in so many of the same sorts of things like good workmanship, good tools, machinery and general knowledge.'

Those words were a tribute not only to my father Robert William (Bill) Clark, but to his father Herbert Hinde, and my great-grandfather Robert William Clark who embarked on that first bold venture to South Australia.

\* \* \* \* \*



***Sources and Acknowledgements:***

Clark, Moore and Davies family photographs, letters and memorabilia

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Extract on page 11 from “Mypolonga 1914-1996” compiled and edited by Irene Hughes

Trove Newspapers (NLA) – various newspaper articles and notices

Steve Clark, USA for his photo of Bridge End, Startforth, UK

Richard Warren, USA for his information about Thomas H Clark

SLSA - Sands & MacDougalls Directories, SA – various addresses & occupations

TNA (UK) – For birth & marriage certificates issued in UK “Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.”

